

Motivation—Part of Managing A Crew

One of the golf course superintendent's main jobs is to get his crew to do what he wants, when he wants, the way he wants, and to have them want to do it.

For that, he needs the respect of the crew and the authority to direct them. He has the authority because he is the superintendent, but for him to be effective, the crew must accept his authority and allow him to use it over them — something they won't do unless they respect him. So the essential ingredients for good management, respect and authority, must be given voluntarily by those to be managed.

Getting respect and authority from a crew takes deliberate effort, careful thought and effective actions, but most of all it takes motivation.

Satisfaction is the biggest motivator. All people, not just golf course crew members, have certain needs, and if they can be satisfied, morale will rise and the crew will perform better. An individual's needs include: to do a good job, to receive individual recognition, to advance, to feel balance and order, and to belong.

Set An Example

People naturally want to do a good job. The fact that they may be doing a lousy job now doesn't mean they like it that way. It's up to the superintendent to help them do their best. The example he sets is probably the most effective way to show the crew that doing a good job counts. Attitudes are contagious, and the superintendent's attitudes are reflected in those of his crew.

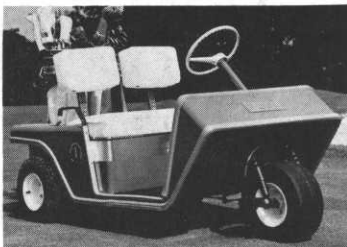
For instance, the superintendent can set a standard of excellence by always doing his work correctly. If employees see the superintendent use a pesticide without measuring or reading the label, they'll do it too. If a superintendent slides through a training session with little attention to detail or the feelings of his trainees, the crew also will pay little attention to details or the feelings of others. Even the smallest things, like being obviously glad to come to work in the morning, will rub off on the crew. Never underestimate the power of personal example.

Give Recognition

Another thing people require is genuine recognition for individual effort and contribution. They want to be assured that the superintendent knows when they have done a job well; they want their work to be appreciated. Recognition doesn't have to be a certificate or a direct compliment. The simple statement that John is a fine irrigation man may be reward enough, as long as it's deserved and honestly given.

When something has gone wrong, it is valuable to criticize only the job, not the person. A superintendent may say, for example, "John, you normally do a fine job of syringing the greens, but this afternoon some of the low spots were very wet. I think they need more attention." That tells John that he's all right — he does a fine job of syringing — but it also lets him know that the job he did was not satisfactory.

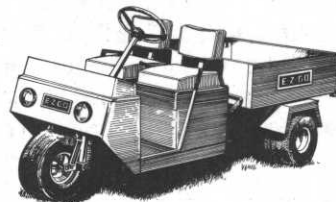
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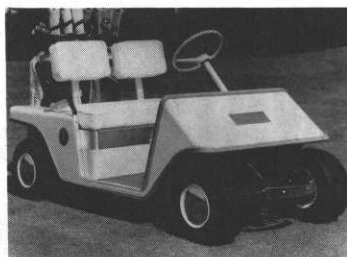
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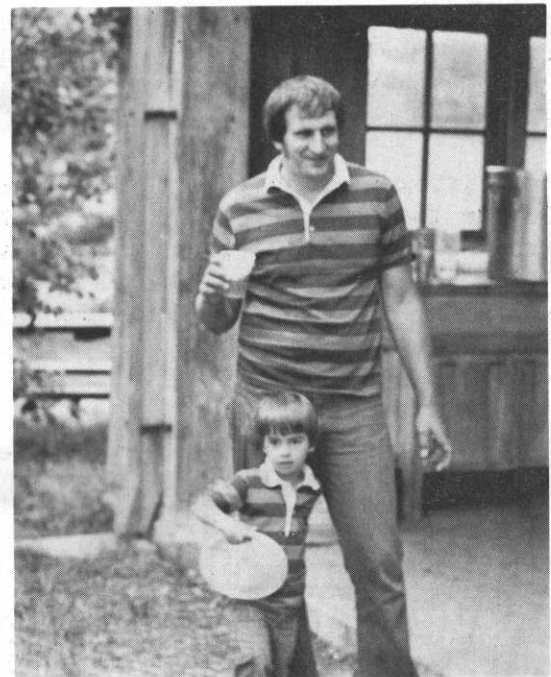
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Says young Mr. Jennrich, "Hey, Dad, quit drinking beer and come play frisbee with me".