

Real Salesmen Bring Donuts

By Monroe S. Miller
Editor, Grass Roots

(Ed. Note: With all due respect to Monroe Miller, editor of Grass Roots, published by the Wisconsin Golf Course Superintendents' Association all references to the Badgers have been changed.)

It seems enough time has passed for those humorless souls among us who were offended by our last "real" articles to have recovered. We are, in effect, going to reload and take a few more harmless shots.

Same gun, new target. Easy marks this time. Real easy—I almost feel guilty.

I simply cannot resist the calls for more any longer. The time has come for the sales people in our business to step forward and take a turn.

And, frankly, I received a lot of encouragement and help from a good friend of mine who just happens to be a salesman. His insights were more than helpful, and I thank him. He will remain nameless; I have to respect his request for anonymity.

Good sales people are always welcome in my shop. I learned early in my career that they can be a tremendous resource. They are almost like turfgrass extension agents when they have a good educational background to go with their experience and wide travel.

So here we go. A warning to the thin-skinned and politically correct—if you cannot find your sense of humor, do not read any further.

• Real salesmen making early morning calls always bring donuts. Fresh ones, not day-olds. If you are coming from the Racine area, you may bring a ring of fresh Kringle with you.

• A real salesman NEVER has to ask to borrow a pen.

• Real salesmen NEVER have to ask the golf pro or the clubhouse manager "how do you get to the shop?"

• Real salesmen don't wear:

Earrings
(saleswomen may, however)
Wing tip shoes
Polyester pants
Bib overalls

• Real salesmen tell the truth at least 50% of the time.

• A real salesman always remembers the assistant golf course superintendent's and the golf course mechanic's name.

• A real salesman knows he will never sell any piece of equipment with a half-hour demo while he looks over everyone's shoulder. That's worse than no demo at all.

• Real salesmen don't show up at the editor's office unless they are *Hole Notes* advertisers.

• Real salesmen brush their teeth regularly and buy breath mints by the case (cheaper that way).

• Real salesmen never gossip.

• Real salesmen don't rip on their competition, preferring instead to sell the strong points of their own line.

• Real salesmen don't have low handicaps. Customers get to thinking that all they do is play free rounds of golf.

• In that same vein, real salesmen don't drive around with their clubs in the box of their pickup or in the trunk of their car.

• Real salesmen show up on time, or at least on the right day of the right month.

• A real salesman doesn't drive a fancy, new or expensive vehicle—Lexus, Explorer and similar brands. Convertibles are forbidden, too. It's pretty tough to convince some of us of how low your prices and bids are as we look out the office window and see a \$25,000 vehicle. Maybe we are jealous—so what? Let's face it—a real salesman would be smart to drive a pickup truck that was a couple years old with a bit of a worn look. It should be clean, however.

• Real salesmen don't try to "act

cool". Real golf course superintendents don't appreciate it. Lose the sunglasses on a necklace, wear socks and for heaven's sake, don't dress like a golf pro.

• Just as the real golf course superintendent is disgusted by implications of the title greenskeeper, the real salesman loathes the connotations carried by the contemptuous title peddler.

• The real salesman knows the jacket size of all his customers!

• Real salesmen don't make their calls wearing tennis, basketball or soccer shoes.

• Real salesmen don't wear a suit for golf course calls.

• Real salesmen wipe their noses between calls.

• Real salesmen always pick up the tab when sharing a meal with a golf course superintendent. The reason is that most salesmen usually make more money than golf course superintendents, and they most certainly have a bigger business expense account.

• A real salesman never tries to "smoke" his way through a question. Golf course superintendents are shrewd people and aren't fooled by fast talk and false pretense. If a salesman doesn't know the answer to a question by a superintendent, he should reply, "I don't know, but I'll find out."

• A real salesman knows, either by instinct or through experience, when to leave.

• Real salesmen are able to handle, even enjoy, an occasional humorous jab at themselves.

• Real salesmen keep a case of hats with them at all times.

• In Minnesota, the real salesman is a Gopher fan, or at least pretends to be. If he secretly likes another collegiate team, he does his rooting quietly in a closet. The same is true

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Environmental Guidelines Booklet Available

RGF Environmental Systems, Inc. a member of the RGF Environmental Group, West Palm Beach, Florida is offering a free booklet entitled "Environmental Guidelines for Golf Course Maintenance Facilities". This

booklet is offered as a free public service to give golf superintendents guidelines on reducing the risk of contaminants entering the environment and possible fines resulting from such actions. The subjects include: EPA laws, maintenance shop housekeeping, mix & load operations, storm water run-off, managing hazardous waste on site and pollution solutions. For a free copy, contact RGF Environmental Systems, Inc. 3875 Fiscal Court, West Palm Beach,

Florida 33404, 800-842-7771 or 407-848-1826.

The RGF Environmental Group consists of six companies all dedicated to design, engineering, manufacturing and sales of pollution prevention equipment. Founded in 1985, RGF employs 78 people in its 50,000 square foot facility in West Palm Beach.

Real Salesmen —

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with the Vikings, Twins and Timberwolves.

- Real salesmen have their vehicle radios turned to Rush Limbaugh.

- A real salesman remembers his customers at Christmas. A card or calendar is fine.

- A real salesman actually knows how to operate the equipment he sells, and has actually used the materials he offers.

- A real salesman knows that lecture attendance at educational seminars, symposiums and meetings is time well spent. He knows he might learn something.

- The real salesman isn't a sore loser, and always comes back strong. He doesn't take a lost sale personally, and he doesn't hold a grudge.

- Neither does the real salesman take a sale for granted or assume it's automatic. Real superintendents make business decisions and let the chips fall where they may.

- The real salesman gives his best bid (or lowest price) immediately. NOT after he's learned the competition has beat him.

- "Service" is a word the real salesman understands and actually believes in.

Trees & Shrubs —

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Aspen Opening Type

- Balsam poplar (*Populus balsamifera*)
- Quaking aspen (*Populus tremuloides*)
- Scattered Northern bur oak (*Q. macrocarpa*) —var. *olivaeformis*
- Hazelnut (*Corylus americana*)
- Sage willow (*Salix candida*)
- Pussy willow (*Salix discolor*)
- Shrubby cinquefoil (*Potentilla fruticosa*)
- Red-osier dogwood (*Cornus stolonifera*)

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