

Best Seasonal Help Can Easily Be Yours

By E. T. Wandtke

Using seasonal, temporary workers lets golf facilities avoid extra costs which come with full-time personnel, and at the same time bring new enthusiasm into the crew.

Why they'll work - The skills and quality of potential seasonal em-

ployees applying for jobs will change in 1995. The applicant will possess more skills, be more performance driven, and may be an overall better potential employee than you have seen in the past.

Generally, these people are looking

for more than just a job; they are seeking the opportunity to learn more skills and a way to apply their knowledge. In the past, the seasonal employee has typically not been motivated. But the current economic conditions make this a buyer's market. Look for a way to meet the challenge good seasonal workers will present to your company, rather than someone to just "fill in."

How many? - A key factor influencing the local job market is obviously the unemployment rate.

Need for some kind of financial restitution will lead many over-qualified individuals to your doorstep if the unemployment rate is very high. Be careful in hiring these job-shifters. If an individual has been highly compensated in the past and your job opening does not pay that well, expect them to leave you as soon as a job close to their previous pay level opens.

Where are they? - Seasonal workers are found among farm hands, people laid-off from other businesses, new immigrants, retired people and those seeking to supplement their family income with a second job.

A big mistake made by personnel managers and owners is failing to properly advise a prospective employee about the physical and environmental stress involved in the job. Many newcomers to the green industry leave in the first two to four weeks.

It is extremely important when hiring seasonal help to properly advise them:

- the job is physically demanding
- they will be expected to work in almost all weather conditions and
- the hours are sometimes longer than usual.

When to recruit? - Establish how many extra people you need two months before you advertise. Let current employees know of your needs, and perhaps they can recruit for you.

Post notices at local churches. The quality of those applicants, their integrity and highly dedicated work ethic often has resulted in higher-than-expected performance from all of the employees they come in contact with.

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Seasonal Help —

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Consider hiring retired people. They may not be capable of performing all of the jobs, but they may surprise you. In addition, their dedication is unbelievable.

I often hear how they provide companies with a new view on how to do the work. Seasonal recruitment is an ongoing process; employees will quit

at some of the busiest times. A ready reserve of pre-qualified candidates gives you the power to react whenever turnover hits.

If you recruit seasonals at the start of the season, you will be forced to make decisions on the hiring of individuals based on immediate needs. As a result, you will not be choosing the individuals who can satisfy both your short-term and long-term needs. These last-minute hiring decisions often result in more turnover, or in

choosing someone who doesn't work out. Avoid this by making the seasonal employee interviewing process a year-round activity.

What skills? - Have a job description for each position in the company. This makes assigning both seasonal and fulltimers easier. It is important to let seasonal workers make decisions and assume authority and responsibility.

These opportunities will help the employee become an integral part of the workforce.

Allowing permanent employees to make decisions will encourage the seasonal employees to speak out and know they will be listened to.

Evaluating the performance of your seasonal employees as well as your full-time employees will encourage everyone not to be concerned with job titles.

Personality matches - Choosing the individual who will work best in your company requires you to know your company's "personality." You must know this before you hire, or you may wind up with quality people who don't fit in.

For most green industry companies, the characteristics I have most observed are competitiveness, team attitude, aggressiveness and personable nature.

Adaptability is important. Flexibility, cooperation and teamwork are the key characteristics which an individual needs to bring to the job in order to contribute to the overall profitability and effectiveness of your company.

—The author is a principal in Wandtke & Associates, a management and marketing consulting firm in Columbus, Ohio.

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