

# Building a Professional Management Team

## *A Superintendent's Approach*

By Rob Panuska  
Waseca Lakeside Club

The idea to put together a discussion about management relations specific to our industry started when Al McMurchie, the General Manager/PGA Pro from Inver Wood Golf Course contacted the Minnesota Golf Course Superintendents' Association last fall about speaking at a PGA cracker barrel session in January. The ideas that Fred Taylor and I put together were born from our own experiences and seminars we have attended. The response we received from the Pros and Assistants was great.

This led to our being asked to give our talk again at the Midwest Public Golf Managers Association's spring meeting and Bruce Anderson, PGA professional, speaking to the golf course superintendents' spring mini-seminar in March. The feeling of our groups is that better communication will lead to better understanding and working relations. This is the first of several parts of the discussion that Fred and I have presented.

### **Focus on Team Collaboration (Democratic vs. Autocratic)**

The basis of this section is the fundamental approach to management by the "TEAM" at your club as it relates to the leaders, i.e. club manager, golf pro and superintendent. Collaboration vs. cooperation??? How many times have you heard "just COOPERATE with me and we'll get along fine." It sounds great, doesn't it. Well, if you're talking to the new seasonal person on the staff, that may be the approach you need to get the job done BUT what you really just said was "do this my way or there's the doorway." In a nutshell collaboration means everybody has input and the decision making is shared by each team member on an equal basis, purely a democratic approach.

With that attitude in place you can move on the goals and objectives of the club and how each person influences the outcome of the decisions. Without a clear understanding of the goals, you will each go a different way in your respective positions. This communication that takes place also pays big dividends when it comes to mutual understanding of each other's jobs. This leads to mutual respect. At this level you will not always agree with each other but you will be able to understand the decisions and show unity and avoid "territorial conflict."

## *A Golf Professional's Approach*

By Bruce Anderson  
River Oaks Golf Course

After visiting with the Minnesota Golf Course Superintendents' Association on March 13, I felt positive that there is a solid communication line between the golf course superintendent and the golf professional. Al McMurchie posed the first question to the superintendents, "By a show of hands, who in the audience has a good working relationship with the golf professional at your facility?" I counted only seven superintendents who did NOT raise their hands in a total audience of 140 superintendents. Through a joint collaboration between the Golf Course Superintendents' Association, and the PGA, we hope to increase those hands to 140 out of 140 in the future.

The "TEAM CONCEPT" compared to the "WORK GROUP" or "PERSONAL AGENDA" was our topic of conversation. I believe in "SYNERGY" which is defined as "the action of two or more people to achieve an effect of which each is individually incapable." Or simply put "THE TEAM CONCEPT."

With the Team Concept in place your organization can move forward towards a common goal, or the Mission Statement of your facility. Without the team concept, your organization will be influenced by many factors, such as internal competition, dull or uninteresting employees, non-risk takers, leaders who rule by their own absolute right. With all of these factors comes a stagnant environment.

I would like to thank Fred Taylor and Rob Panuska of the Minnesota Golf Course Superintendents' Association who spoke at the PGA's January Education Seminar on the superintendent's point of view at the golf facility. Also a thank you to Al McMurchie of Inver Wood Golf Course for his contributions. Working together we all can become a great TEAM!

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