

Outsourcing May Improve Your Bottom Line

Just like the hired guns of the Old West, golf course superintendents can also take advantage of hired help to complete atypical tasks on the golf course.

Details: Employing an outside contractor can streamline your operation by:

- Reducing labor and equipment costs. Proficient contractors allow golf course personnel to spend their scheduled work hours accomplishing duties — not catching up by working overtime.

- Providing substitutes for temporary laborers. In some regions, contractors can help complete tasks in the early spring or late fall. This allows superintendents to forego hiring seasonal employees until early summer and/or rely on them less during the fall when they need to return to other activities.

- Decreasing the potential for personal injuries. Experienced contractors can complete certain non-routine tasks with a lower potential for injury because their workers are familiar with the machinery and procedures.

- Lessening employee training time. The number of training hours to acquaint golf course personnel with non-routine tasks can be lessened.

Note: While a contractor may be a big benefit to your

facility, there are three reasons for not becoming overly dependent on contract services.

Falling behind schedule: An over-booked contractor can mean a missed agronomic window of opportunity on certain maintenance problems.

Preventing key personnel from honing their skills. Eliminating too many learning opportunities for assistant superintendents and college interns can make it more difficult to attract highly motivated employees who seek challenging positions. **Careful:** This may affect daily course conditioning as well.

Ensuring the quality of work. The superintendent is ultimately responsible for contractors' actions. Maybe your superintendent should complete the job in-house rather than taking the risk of an unskilled contractor dropping the "bomb" in his or her lap.

Advice: Always check your contractor's qualifications and references. Never allow contractors to work without close supervision. **Warning:** Don't assume that employing a knowledgeable, experienced superintendent would no longer be necessary. No matter what the circumstances, the superintendent should always have decision-making authority over contractors. — GCSAA Leader Board

Superintendents' Compensation On the Rise

Compensation and benefits are increasing for golf course superintendents.

Statistics: In 1998, the average base salary for all golf course superintendents rose to \$53,205 from \$49,269 in 1995. Half of all superintendents earn more than \$50,000 annually. The median base salary for a certified superintendent at a daily fee facility is \$52,000, and at a private facility it is \$69,743 (not inclusive of benefit compensation).

Recent Findings: The median income of a PGA head professional at a public golf course is \$44,000, and at a private country club it is \$75,000 (inclusive of benefit compensation).

Typical Benefits: Fifty-seven percent of superintendents receive a bonus, up from 51 percent in 1995. Ninety percent receive paid vacation, which averages 17 days plus an additional six paid personal leave days, 10 paid sick leave days and eight paid holidays.

Source: 1998 GCSAA Compensation and Benefits Report; "Out of Bounds," Golf Magazine, June 1998.

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