

How Well Have You Developed Your Network

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Golf Course Superintendents Association of Southern California

I received a call from a former employee a few weeks ago. I had not heard from him in over 20 years. He had relocated to Ohio and had been a golf course superintendent for 15 years at a nice private country club. Unfortunately, he was told that he was fired and did not know where to turn. That is why he called me with hopes that I could help him find a job.

I asked this fellow a few questions and it went something like this. "Are you a member of your local chapter?" He said "no." "Are you a member of GCSAA and are you familiar with the Employment Referral Service?" He said "no". "Do you utilize the USGA and their agronomists?" He said "no". "How about your local university....do you have any contacts there." He said "no".

This poor fellow was a hard-working guy that kept to himself and never developed a network of people that could help him. While I was happy to hear from him after all those years, I really was not in a

position to help him. He had painted himself into a corner. While this is an extreme case, I know that there are a number of our peers that aren't far away from that same situation.

I challenge each person that reads this to sit down and make a list of people that can help you find a job. If you run out of names in a minute or two, then you probably need to work harder at networking. There is no better way to network than to get involved and attend monthly chapter meetings.

As some of you may know, I moved to California in 1997. The North Course was in a grow-in phase and construction was ready to begin on the South Course. That first year was a very busy time. With a change in climate, a multiple course facility, and many new challenges it was important for me to gain as much local knowledge as possible.

There was no better way than to join the local chapter and take advantage of

the opportunities that the chapter had to offer. Joining is good but participating is better. I tried to attend most meetings. I met many superintendents and a lot of commercial members. I always tried to play golf with three new people each month. It provided me with a quicker learning curve for so many people in the industry.

I would like to encourage everyone to take advantage of what your chapter has to offer. It is a wonderful way to network. Meeting people, building relationships, solving mutual problems, etc. will help you throughout your career. You never know when you may need assistance at your job or in a finding a new one. Learn from the example that I have cited and develop your network today and throughout your career. Don't wait until it is too late!

(Editor's Note: This article was reprinted with permission from the GCSA of Southern California. See related article on Page 34.)

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