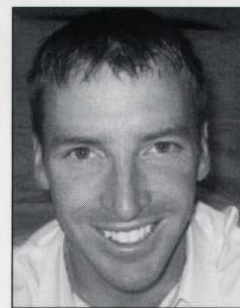


# Where Do You See Yourself In 10 Years?

By Nate Uselding

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The GCSAA and Toro have teamed up for the 7th annual Toro Championship Tournament Training Program. Two assistant superintendent and one GCSAA student member will be selected for an all expense paid trip to either the 2005 U.S. Open or the PGA championship. Winners will experience first hand what it takes to prepare a course for tournament play. Think of what great exposure this would bring to you as an assistant and what a career building experience this would add to your resume.

I read about this last year and thought about writing an article, but I procrastinated and never got it done. After the fact, I read in GCM, less than 100 assistants applied and thought my odds of winning would be great. There are over 100 assistants alone in the metro area and to think this is a national search, I said to myself, "I will submit one next year." Before I saw it posted this year, my boss printed me off a copy and handed it to me. He said, "Here, you should try this. This would be a great opportunity for you." Not only do I have pressure from myself to write this, I now have pressure from my boss. I will surely write in this year!

The topic is on where you see yourself in 10 years professionally and what do you wish to accomplish in that time? What an easy topic...until you get started. The essay needs to be five hundred words and I could easily sum it up in less than ten, but it is important to think outside the box. Think about how you will get to the year 2015 and your ups and downs in that time. You can't just flick a switch and be 10 years in the future unless you're Marty McFly. So how do you get there? Are you still involved in the business? Are you still in Minnesota? And then the doubt sets in about what if I don't get a head job somewhere, what if I fail and I am on a second try? What if I lose the passion for what I do? And the what ifs come easily in the winter when things are slow at the course, but when you hit a 50

degree day in February everything comes back into perspective, and ah yes, I love my job.

Five hundred words and I begin with, I see myself in ten years... NO! This will get you to the wastebasket faster than you can blink an eye. I will tell a story of my dreams and aspirations that are realistic to achieve. Anything can happen, heck I could win the lottery and be retired. But in all seriousness, start by looking at yourself 1-2 years from now. What do you want to accomplish and where will you be? If you haven't thought this far in advance, it's time to start if your goal is to one day be a superintendent. Break it down, look at 3-5 years down the road. What position will you be in, where are you working, and finally are you happy? Do you see something big happening within five years and what will you do with it 6-8 years from now? Are you making the correct decisions? Are you learning from your mistakes? What have you brought with you from other courses? Finally, in 9-10 years are you settling down somewhere new or have you settled into your big job? Are you happy with where you are or are you looking elsewhere? What are you doing to make yourself better at your job? Are you keeping up with all the new technology that is available to us? There are so many different questions to ask yourself. These are just a few to get the ball rolling and get us thinking about our future.

It is tough enough for me to think two years in advance let alone ten years, but it is important to have a plan and remind yourself of your goals. It is great to think in ten years I will have a superintendent job, but more importantly how will I get there? How can I develop myself in the next ten years to acquire the necessary tools and resources to be successful in that head role? Even though you have a plan it always changes. You will probably have to revise your plan many times throughout your career, but at least you

have something you are working toward. I remember going through interviews for an assistant position and the gentleman asked me where I see myself in five years. WOW! Who knew, but now that I have a plan and attainable goals, I do!

Each assistant's career path will look a little different. Some will be on the fast track and have a head job very quickly, some will make it a gradual process and others may not want the responsibility of being a superintendent. Nobody can tell us what we want, we need to decide what is best for ourselves. In terms of my career path, this is a brief overview of what I would like to accomplish in the next ten years.

I would like to be on the fast track to becoming a superintendent but I am cautious with the fear of failure. Each day I learn a new lesson by asking questions and learning from my mistakes. No matter what position I am in, I am never too old to learn something new. As an assistant, I want to maximize my personal production and minimize my mistakes by learning everything possible. I will fine tune my skills as a manager and strive to set-up our team for success. Within two years, I will be ready and I will begin applying for superintendent positions so within five years I am settled in as a superintendent. Now the fun begins because one of my career goals is complete, becoming a superintendent. As a superintendent, I want to give back to others and one way is by having an internship program. Every year I would like to teach and train an aspiring superintendent the ropes of the trade. This will keep me on my toes as a superintendent and ensure I pass on our great profession. Throughout these ten years there will be bumps in the road but I am a positive person and the glass is half full. I am going to be successful because I work hard and I am happy with what I do.