

Six Things to Avoid When Talking to Reporters

Avoiding these behaviors will increase your chances of getting your main points into a news story:

1. Using cliches when making your key points. They're boring and not quotable. A cliché weakens your main points so much that they may never make their way into the story.

2. Exaggeration. Instead, create images, use metaphors, sparkle, emote. Stick to what you know and use colorful language, but do not stretch the truth.

3. Slandering anyone. If you say something that is not true and it hurts or injures someone, you are legally responsible. And that legal responsibility can bring with it a hefty financial impact.

4. Reading from a paper when responding to a reporter's question, especially if you are being interviewed live on radio or television. Such behavior sends a message to the audience that you don't know what you're talking about. Instead, know your material and speak from your heart.

There are times, especially during a crisis, when it is appropriate to read a prepared opening statement. Such a

time is at the beginning of a news conference. However, if at all possible, a quick memorization of the opening statement, or paraphrasing of the key points, is better than actually reading the statement, word for word. 5. Asking to preview a story before it's printed or aired. Such a request is insulting to a reporter's professionalism. Instead, you can let the reporter know how to reach you during off-hours, in case there is a last-minute question or a need for clarification or amplification. Make sure you're available and listen closely.

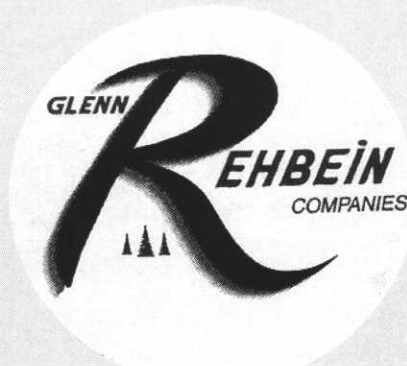
6. Using the phrases "No comment" and "I will neither confirm, nor deny." There are better ways to not comment on something than using a boring cliché: "If I knew the answer to that question, I wouldn't be working this job, but I am and the key point here is (this is where you insert one of your key points)...." or "That's not something I can comment on, but I can comment on (insert a key point here)...." or "I'd have to want to lose my job to answer that question and I like my job. But what I can tell you is (insert your main point here).

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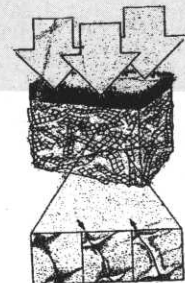
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Labor Shortages—

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things to get much accomplished. Your volunteers must enjoy whom they are working with or they may never come back.

+ Provide plenty of free food and beverage

Provide them with a good meal during normal meal times, and make sure they have plenty to drink. They may not be willing to return if you do not keep them comfortable while they are there.

+ Make sure they have the tools they need to do the job

Go to the local rental outlet, if necessary, to equip the volunteers with modern power tools. They will not be interested in helping you if they know there is a better way to do the job.

+ Take great interest in all of their ideas and suggestions

They need to be treated as a valuable resource that you appreciate. There is usually more than one way to accomplish a task. Do not let your ego prevent you from listening to the alternatives.

+ Insure General Liability coverage where Workman's Compensation will not apply

Another very valuable resource for accomplishing major

projects may already be at your disposal. I would also like to take this opportunity to stress the importance of recognizing the talents that you have on your existing staff. If you are using retired personnel to accomplish some of your mowing, you have many years of life experience on your staff. We are very fortunate to have a very talented welder and steel worker on our mowing staff, who has been responsible for the replacement of three of our golf cart bridges that each span 80 feet across the Beaver River. Most of the steel beams that were welded together to construct the bridge superstructure were donated from the North Shore Mining Co. While most courses will not be that fortunate, you never know until you start researching your options. Excluding labor (much of it was volunteer), we have approximately \$2,000 invested in each of the three bridges we replaced. Compare this to the cost bids we received that were in excess of \$50,000 each! Never underestimate the value of the resources you already have.

The ideas presented in this writing may not generate much interest from those that have larger budgets to work with, or those courses that do not have a membership from which to generate these resources. I personally believe, however, that as golf course maintenance costs continue to

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6' - 7' - 8' - 10' wide

30% inclines are possible

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Life Balance And Bottom-Line Impact

Why should your golf facility care about life balance? The answer is simple: you need to retain your skilled workers.

Importance: In today's work environment, workers are hard to find and harder to retain and by 2006, that will become even more significant. Every year U.S. companies are paying more than \$140 billion in recruiting, training and administrative costs to replace employees who leave.

Employers are learning more ways to help them seek and retain the best workers. Benefits have increased, perks have gotten more interesting and life balance is being recognized as a major contributor to an employee's happiness.

Signs of Life-Work Imbalance

- + Employees are leaving for other jobs.
- + Productivity is declining.
- + Little initiative is shown and new projects aren't proposed.
- + There is little or no interest in professional development.
- + Employees have low energy.
- + People are constantly complaining.

Remember, It Is Within Employers And Manager's Power To:

- + Increase productivity.
- + Provide interesting and challenging work.
- + Provide training and development opportunities for workers.
- + Heighten awareness and commitment.
- + Lower stress levels.

Labor Shortages—

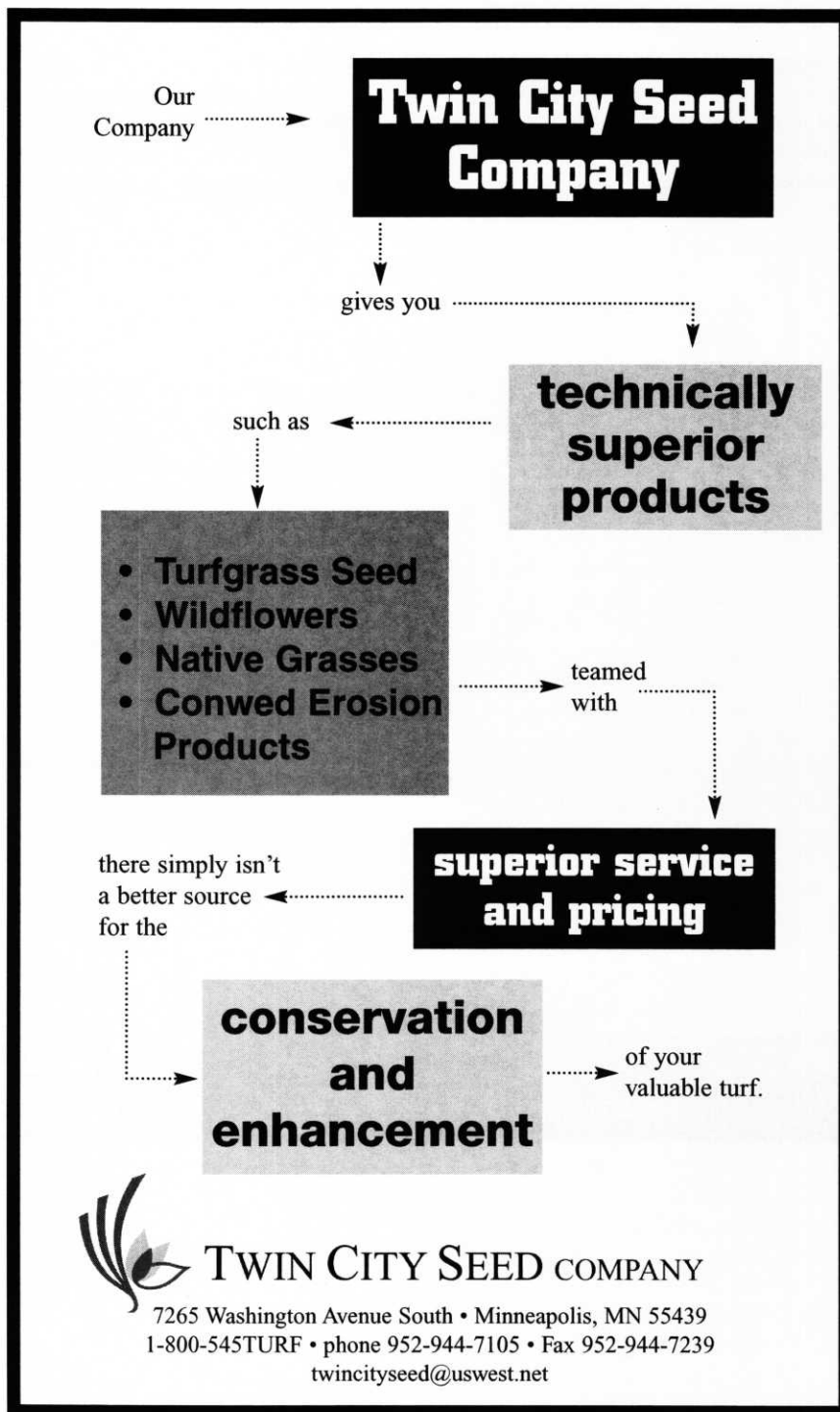
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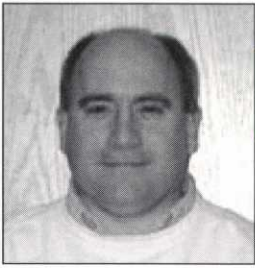
provide the playing conditions that are demanded, without the unlimited budget that many have come accustomed to.

We are very proud of the things that have been accomplished through our membership at the Silver Bay Country Club. The members that have participated in these projects have become "good friends" of the maintenance. These members never complain when we aerate or topdress greens, nor do they complain when the NO CARTS

sign is up after a heavy rain. They take great pride in their golf course because they have played such a large role in improving the conditions of it.

A good Golf Course Superintendent will recognize that he or she is working for the golfers, and these are the people who will dictate whether or not they are doing a satisfactory job. Imagine the unique relationship that is established when you change the structure somewhat, so that your bosses are now working for you.





Editor's Corner

By Richard Traver, Jr., CGCS
Monticello Country Club

It's Almost Over - Really

Well, for those of you who read my column last month and are still looking at snow, I apologize for my optimism. I guess when you have a couple of warm springs in a row you start to believe the "global warming" people and assume the new norm is that the snow will be gone in early March. However, one must remember when talking about the average temperatures - that to arrive at an average you need highs and lows.

Mini-Seminar

For any of you whom aren't aware, James Bade, with help from his committee members, is the person in charge of arranging your educational seminars. He deserves a pat on the back for the excellent job of putting together a great Mini Seminar, as well as arranging for two great topics from the GCSAA. I personally attended all three and found them to be very interesting.

I found the information we received from Dr. Danneberger was informative, however it seemed to open the door for more questions than it answered. One issue that seems to be resurfacing with some regularity is the resistant strains of pathogens, particularly for Dollar Spot. I have attended seminars from three very prominent professors in the turf field over the last several years and found that all their opinions on the subject are slightly different. Luckily I don't spray enough fungicides on my course at the present time to really have a pressing concern about resistance. However, from the conversations in the Turfgrass Ecology seminar it sounded like many of you have run into some interesting case studies. May be a great topic for an article in the Hole Notes.

If you have had any issues with staff or if you are responsible for your Green Committee meetings, the seminar from Dr. Bree Hayes was excellent. Finally, while it was disappointing that Geoffrey Cornish could not make the seminar due to bad weather out east, Bob Graves did an excellent job of bringing out all the budding golf course architects in our association.

National Tree Vote

The National Arbor Day Foundation is looking for help to name a national tree. If you would like to cast a vote send a postcard with your choice and your name and address to: National Tree, National Arbor Day Foundation, 100 Arbor Ave., Nebraska City, NE 68410. Or for the more computer savvy, vote on line at arborday.org. All votes must be cast by April 27 (Arbor Day). If anyone is interested I voted for the white pine.

Membership Dues

Dues statements have been mailed out to all members. If

you didn't notice, the due day has been moved up to May 1. In previous years dues were due June 1, however with late arrivals etc. it was impossible to print our membership directory, and have it in the memberships hands until late in the season. By moving the date up and solidifying the cut-off date, the hope is we will be able to get a current directory out to the membership in a more timely fashion. Also there will be a little less personal information in the directory saving printing costs.

Recuperating

Tim Berquam, Bergerson-Caswell, Inc., is recuperating from cervical laminoplasty surgery near his neck and spine. Surgery went well but will keep Tim around the house for another month. Our best goes out to Tim for a speedy recovery.

Hasta Luego

In keeping with Dr. Bree Hayes #1 rule, start on time - end on time, I'll finish. I hope as the snow melts, you find that your turf didn't and that everyone has a great start to the season.

--Richard Traver, Jr., CGCS
Editor

2001 Annual Bluebird Conference

Saturday - April 21

Monticello Middle School

800 East Broadway, Monticello, MN 55362

Registration: 8 - 9 A.M. Program: 9 A.M. - 4 P.M.

Program Highlights:

News from the Non-Game Wildlife Program.....Carrol Henderson
How to be ticked off on the Bluebird Trail.....Tom Nicholls
Wildlife at the Monticello Nuclear Power Plant.....Dave Winsted
Nesting Habits of Swallows.....Bruce Wollmering
Weather Effects on some Cavity Nesters.....Richard Hjort
Comparative uses of Various Nest Boxes.....Kevin Berner
On the Bluebird Trail.....Keith Radel

Morning and Afternoon Coffee Breaks with Bluebird Cookies.

Sales Items -- Displays -- Silent Auction

Special Conference Tour:

Field Trip to the Monticello Nuclear Power Plant
with Barry Schmitt and Larry Nolan

Lunch by Granny D's Catering:

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Pasta Salad, Home-made Pie, Beverage - \$7.75/ person
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