

Getting Along With People

Close to the top in any list of business assets is the ability to get along with people. It is paramount in the success of a business man, essential in the successful employer and important in the employee. Not infrequently is a cheerful, willing worker of limited talents rated higher in value by his employer than a genius whose temperament causes friction with those about him. *EMOTION* is a disturbing element; it interferes with accuracy, and it retards production. *IRRITATION* impedes the organization just as sand in the gearbox slows down a machine.

The successful businessman is one who promotes courteous and friendly relations with customers and public. Employees not only add to their own enjoyment of the work they do, but also enhance their own value to their organization by similar effort to promote good relations with customers and fellow workers. Large corporations recognize this fact, and in the *Westinghouse News* recently appeared the following rules for getting along with people:

1. Keep skid chains on your tongue. Always say less than you think.
2. Make promises sparingly and keep them faithfully, no matter what it costs you.
3. Never let an opportunity pass to say a kind and encouraging word to or about somebody. Praise good work, regardless of who did it.
4. Be interested in others, in their pursuits, their welfare, their homes and families. Let everyone you

meet, however humble, feel that you regard him as one of importance.

5. Keep the corners of your mouth turned up.
6. Keep an open mind on all debatable questions. Discuss, but do not argue.
7. If you have virtues, let them speak for themselves. Refuse to talk of another's vices.
8. Be careful of another's feelings.
9. Pay no attention to ill-natured remarks about yourself. So live that nobody will believe them.
10. Do your work, be patient, keep your disposition even, forget self and you will be rewarded.

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A Japanese Greenkipa: A Scenario

Toru Matsumoto was hired by Nippon Kyogo Golf Club ten years ago after graduating from a two-year technical school course in agronomy and working for Surumi CC for two years as a crew member. He is now 35 and has a wife and two children. His uncle introduced him to the club manager, who was his high school classmate, (the best connection in Japan). Toru started as the assistant to Mr. Wasada, who was nearing retirement age (60). Five years ago Mr. Wasada was 'retired' to a desk job in the clubhouse and Toru became the greenkeeper, (the actual title used in Japan—"greenkipa"). He inherited a crew of ten men and twenty women, (all friends or indirect acquaintances of Mr. Wasada, who cannot be discharged), of various ages, (over 40), and skills.

Toru's salary is now \$700/mo., (\$8500/yr.), plus a biannual bonus equal to three or four times his monthly salary and the benefits that generally go with employment by larger businesses, (health insurance, a long-term, no-interest loan on his house and car, use of a vacation house one week a year, gas for his car at \$1.45/gal., and *guaranteed life-time employment*). He and his family have no club privileges other than an occasional round of golf, which he plays very poorly (hdcp. 21).

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Japanese Greenkipsa

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Mr. Matsumoto was an honor student in his agronomy classes, but it's very difficult to put his knowledge to use because of the complex relations in Japanese society. For example, he would like to correct the poor drainage on the seventh green, but that green was rebuilt by Mr. Wasada just before he retired and to change it while he is still alive would be considered an insult. Also, he would like to use a slow release fertilizer, but since his uncle got him the job he is obligated to continue the club policy, (started by the club manager's classmate relationship to his uncle), of dealing only with the fertilizer company represented by his uncle. Unfortunately, due to their complex business relations they cannot distribute slow release fertilizers. This list of obligations is long and grows everyday.

Most of the clubs in Japan are semi-private i.e., the members pay a large fee to buy a negotiable membership, (\$5000 to more than \$100,000), but visitors, usually accompanied by a member, are welcome.

The members have very little or no control of the club. There are no green committees or chairmen. The owner has sole control, which he usually delegates to the club manager, who is over the greenkeeper. Machines are bought and other purchases made with only minimal consultation with the greenkeeper, (due to obligations). All hiring and firing must be approved and handled by the front office. The budget is prepared in the clubhouse administration section. This year Mr. Matsumoto's budget is over \$200,000, about 60% of which goes for labor. Labor is cheap in Japan, but when you have thirty laborers for 18 holes . . .

There are three other courses in the area, but Mr. Matsumoto has no relationship with the greenkeepers, who are considered rivals, (when the green fee is \$30-\$40 for a visitor I guess this rivalry is real). The only advice he gets is from the 'old hands,' the regional green research section, (they seem more interested in research than practical application), and the 'Golf Digest' Magazine, which often seems to be written for the owner or club manager with an occasional article from 'The Golf Superintendent.' All problems are justified with the excuse like "with so many players everyday, (250+rp/18 holes), and in all weather, (courses only close for heavy snow and on New Year's Eve), such a condition cannot be helped.

With virtual life-time employment, everyone is secure and it is a rare *individual*, (not an admirable trait in the Orient), who tries to be innovative. For all the problems, on the few perfect days every year when the weather is fair and the zoysia grass is growing, you cannot find a better place to be in Japan than on a golf course. They are islands of natural beauty and serenity to which one can escape from the polluted rush of the city for a day of fun and the most relaxing hot bath you can imagine!

George Reid, Far Eastern Correspondent
Sanyo Seaside Golf Club
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