

down these people and issue a personal invitation to attend, via letter or phone. To skip some people because of a poor record-keeping system will cause the volunteer program to fall apart as quickly as having no recognition system.

Volunteers who are pleased with the program will spread the word to other people with similar interests and abilities. This word-of-mouth "advertising" is the best outreach effort for any program.

Find ways to communicate with the public about the facility, its programs, and its need for (and thanks to) volunteers. Get this message out via the local newspaper, your facility's newsletter, and/or PSA (public service announcements) on local radio or television. Provide thorough information with consistent timing and placement. The public should know where and when it can find such information.

Preparation—Train volunteers properly. Tell people what they need to know, what will be expected of them, and how to accomplish it. Develop specific training programs. Monitor training and fine-tune it as necessary.

Develop a system to document each

volunteer's participation in the training programs, including a form signed by the instructor and the volunteer confirming that each training step has been completed. Add these forms to the volunteer's file.

Provide the proper supplies and tools. Volunteers may not expect the best, but don't expect them to work with anything less than what you'd supply for your own crews.

Provide adequate supervision. A thoroughly trained volunteer who is highly competent in operating a certain piece of power equipment may require only that a supervisor be in the immediate area, available to offer assistance if needed. A trainee and relatively inexperienced operator will need direct supervision.

Protection—Follow all laws and ordinances, from the federal to the local level. Here are other ways to protect your department and facility:

- Work with top management and your attorney to establish liability policies, and follow those policies precisely (for example, restricting the operation of power equipment to 18-year-olds or older).

- Check with the attorney on the

advisability of having volunteers sign a liability waiver. Though such forms may not be legally binding, they can sometimes be useful to show that the volunteer indeed had knowledge that some level of expertise was needed.

- Conduct background checks if an individual will be placed in a position of trust, such as interacting directly with children. Follow through with the background check even if the person moving into a position of trust has been a long-time volunteer in another segment of your program. All information obtained through a background check must be kept confidential—in a separate file accessible only to the specified personnel who have final approval of the volunteers selected for such positions.

- Make sure insurance coverage is adequate, not only to protect the volunteers, but to protect the facility and its personnel from possible legal action.

—Mike Calhoon is a park technician for the Fort Collins (Colo.) Park Department and an active member of the Colorado Chapter of the Sports Turf Managers Association.

10 strategies you can use to make time more valuable, productive and rewarding

Veteran Chicagoland superintendent Bruce Williams gives pointers on getting more out of the 168 hours in a week.

■ Time must be used. It can't be put in a bank and later withdrawn. Since it must be spent, spend it productively, says certified golf course superintendent Bruce Williams.

Williams, a super since 1979, gives colleagues pointers on how to squeeze extra minutes and hours from each day.

He conducts time management seminars on behalf of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA). This past December he shared suggestions with about 300 fellow superintendents and assistants at the North Central Turfgrass Expo near Chicago.

Williams: write down goals and objectives.



Successful time management, he says, is absolutely vital to becoming a successful superintendent.

Williams, at first glance, has less time than most. He's superintendent at Bob O'Link Golf Club, Highland Park, Ill., with a staff of 18. For the past four years, he's also been a board member with the GCSAA. Before that he served on the board and was president of, first, the

Chicagoland Superintendents Association and, then, the Midwest Association of Golf Course Superintendents.

He says GCSAA business takes about two hours of his time daily.

He maintains that if he hadn't developed strategies (which he admits are still far from perfect) to manage time, he couldn't fulfill his responsibilities to his course nor to the GCSAA board, and still find sufficient time for his family and himself.

Williams says that everybody has exactly the same amount of time each week—168 hours. The difference comes in how individuals use their 168 hours.

Here are 10 strategies that superintendents can use to make their time more productive and rewarding:

1) Plan, and plan regularly, maybe even a few minutes each morning.

2) Write down goals and objectives, then prioritize them. Make an "A-B-C" list. The A list contains tasks that must be done, the B list things that should be done, and the C list jobs that it would be nice to do. Do the A list first.

3) Focus on objectives rather than activities. "It's not how busy we are that determines success, it's meeting our objectives," says Williams.

4) Take items in order of importance

relative to the people you work for or report to.

5) Complete what you start. Do it right the first time.

6) Delegate, delegate, delegate. "If you've hired good quality people, then you can delegate," he says.

7) Make people accountable. "We're all hired to do a job. If people have a right to make you accountable, then you have a right to make the people who work for you accountable," he says.

8) Conquer procrastination. If a vital task needs to be done, do it *now*.

9) Make time for yourself. Keep your job in perspective. You also need time to dream, relax, and to do some of the things you like to do.

10) Spend your time more carefully than you spend your money.

—Ron Hall

Staking, filling trees: keys to transplanting

As a general rule, most trees with a diameter greater than three inches don't require staking.

■ Current research shows that a shallow planting area should surround the transplant hole.

To make a planting area, the ground around the hole should be shovel-dug or rototilled to at least a 10- to 12-inch depth. This depth is appropriate because the tree's roots that absorb water and nutrients are located within an 18-inch depth of the soil surface.

The planting area should be three to five times the width of the root ball, or, the soil should be loosened or tilled well past the current-year drip line so roots can spread horizontally into the native soil. Roots spreading out in this manner create a stronger base for the tree, especially in times of drought.

Digging the hole—A planting hole should be dug near the center of the planting area after the area has been rototilled. The hole should be deep enough so that the tree's base is at or slightly higher than ground level. The root ball should not sit on the fill soil, but on the bottom of the

hole, to prevent the root ball from sitting too low in the ground.

"No plant should be planted deeper than it was at its original planting site," says Richard Rathjens, a technical advisor with the Davey Tree Expert Company, Kent, Ohio. "Err on the side of planting too high, as opposed to too deep."

The size of the planting hole should be at least two times the root system (for bare-root plantings) or root-ball diameter. The hole should be larger when possible and dug with sloping sides at about a 45-degree angle from the ground surface. The slanting sides direct roots to spread horizontally, not downward.

If a hole is dug deeper than necessary, some fill soil should be added to the bottom of the hole. Stone, rocks or cement chips should not be added to the bottom of a hole dug too deep.

Backfill composition—Use the soil removed to dig the hole as backfill. Organic matter can be added to the backfill for sandy or heavy soils. No more than 10 to 20 percent of the volume should be

Turning 'time wasters' into 'time savers'

■ "We don't lose time in 20-hour segments. Or in two-day segments," says Bruce Williams. "We lose it five minutes at a time, 10 minutes at a time, 15 minutes at a time."

These lost minutes can leave a superintendent, at day's end, trying to squeeze "five pounds of tasks into a three-pound bag."

Workday time wasters, and suggestions for picking up precious minutes, include:

✓ **Drop-in visitors.** What's wrong with saying upfront, "I've only got five minutes; let's get right to business?" But use discretion. For instance, there's always time for the greens chairman or the president of the club, right?

✓ **Telephone interruptions.** Instead of running to the phone, use an answering machine. Return calls when *you* have time. Again, try to limit the duration of conversations. (A telephone can be a "time gainer" too. In some cases, you can use it rather than writing a letter.)

✓ **Meetings.** If you call the meeting, you're in control. Clearly define the meeting's purpose. Start on time, stay on time, end on time. Several meetings in the same day? Schedule them back to back. If your presence isn't necessary, delegate the meeting to another capable person on your staff.

✓ **Not having a daily written plan.** Keep things simple. Don't try to "script" your day.

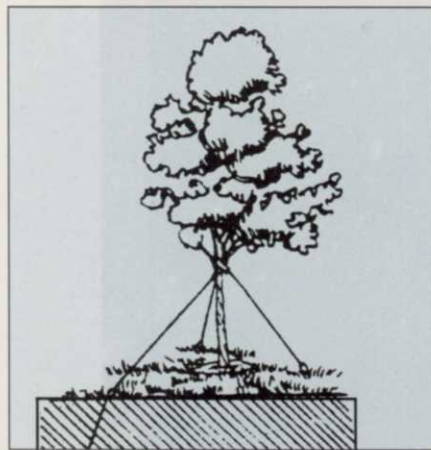
✓ **Junk mail.** Take care of it, return phone calls, and do routine reading during periods of the day when your energy levels are lower. For most people this is mid-afternoon.

✓ **Correspondence.** Don't handle it and other paper more than once. If it's important, act on it or file it. If it's not, pitch it, says Williams.

✓ **Giving directions.** Provide clear, easy-to-understand directions to co-workers and colleagues.

How important is the loss of 10 minutes here, another 10 there? Williams points out that the loss of just 30 minutes a working day adds up, by year's end, to the loss of 22 eight-hour production days.

—R.H.



Trees with a diameter of 3 inches or more don't need staking.

added because as the organic matter decomposes, the backfill settles in the hole, which causes the root ball to fall below ground level.

If the backfill is more than 20 percent organic matter, it changes the backfill's physical characteristics. Backfilling with