

UNITED STATES GOLF ASSOCIATION

GREEN SECTION

WESTERN OFFICE



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Garden Grove, California



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A R E Y O U A G O O D B O S S ?

From 60% to 70% of your operational budget is spent on labor. It is an inseparable part of maintaining the golf course. And it is your job, as Superintendent, to develop and hold a contented, loyal and efficient work force. Human relationships are involved. Good supervisors are constantly striving to improve their skills and techniques in handling people successfully. ----- Are you getting the most out of your labor dollar?

American industry has found that good labor management pays off. Large companies continually train and retrain their supervisors in this important field. The following thoughts and facts are time tested and have been used by successful employers for years. They have been abstracted from a Cornell Extension Bulletin "Are You A Good Boss?" by C. G. Bradt.

YOUR WORKERS REFLECT YOU:

Nowhere is there a force of wholly satisfactory workers. Each individual has certain abilities and shortcomings. Inexperienced handlers of labor, when confronted with an employee problem, may first think of "firing" the worker. This is the easy way, but usually the wrong way, to handle the situation. It costs money to hire and train new workers. "Firing" does not always help you do a better job. In general, the employer who has an excessive number of terminations is at fault, rather than the employees.

Set a good example since everyone tends to imitate others. Your employees are influenced constantly by your example. Many times they are not conscious of this, but it is true just the same. What you are, your workers will become. Set a good example for them at all times.

ACQUIRE THE ABILITY TO HANDLE PEOPLE:

Some employers are much more skilled than others in gaining cooperation and enthusiasm from their workers. Such skill is not a mysterious gift, but is the direct result of knowledge and training. First, however, you must have a sincere desire to be a good boss.

Look ahead and be prepared to answer your employee's questions. Be ready to interpret and explain your orders, rules and policies. Don't just say "there are the rules". Tell them why they are the rules. This may take a little more time, but to explain them pays dividends in better job relations.

EMPLOYEES WANT TO KNOW:

One of the main reasons why an employee's thinking often gets twisted is because he does not have all of the facts and comes to the wrong conclusion, wrong impression and wrong attitude. The less you hold back from your workers, the better you can defend your orders and policies. Tell why if possible. Get him to accept the change. ----- Always tell employees in advance of changes that may affect them; an important rule not to be overlooked.

Impress each worker with the importance of his job and that he is a vital part in the proper function of the entire maintenance operation. An employee whose work is unnoticed comes to feel that his job is unimportant, and quickly his efficiency drops. If it is unimportant to the boss, it is certainly unimportant to the worker. Wise superintendents, no matter how busy, find time to show an interest in their workers, even on the most minor jobs.

GIVE PRAISE WHEN DUE:

Don't be afraid to give praise. You pay cash wages in weekly or monthly checks. You pay mental wages by expressing appreciation for a job well done. Mental wages pay dividends. A word of encouragement is needed now and then just as one needs food. Employees will work just as hard for mental wages as for cash wages. Cash wages provide physical needs, but mental wages provide mental needs.

When possible, praise in the presence of others. This impresses the employee receiving the praise with your sincerity and encourages others to merit your approval.

Don't give your praise too freely. Save it for the unusual job. Adjust praise to the individual. A few egotistic individuals may "be carried away", but an occasional pat on the back is all that is needed by most workers. An indirect and effective method of praise is to ask an employee for his ideas. This gives him a sense of importance and helps sustain his ego. You may learn something, too.

HANDLE GRIEVANCES WITH SYMPATHY:

When a worker comes to you with what may seem a small complaint or grievance, listen attentively to the entire story. Remember it is important to him. Don't cut him short. Sometimes just listening to the grievance may be all that is needed. If you fail to handle complaints and grievances, you may be heading for trouble. Remember, it's the little things that count.

BE A SQUARE SHOOTER:

You cannot keep the respect of your employees unless you play fair and shoot square. Don't favor those whom you like. Let no man say that you have "friends" among your workers. Don't chisel in any way and give employees the benefit of the doubt. Be sure to treat everybody alike. Make a conscientious effort to understand and like those who "get on your nerves".

BE A GOOD INSTRUCTOR:

Haven't you heard many people say: "I've told that fellow a dozen times how to do that job, and still he doesn't know how". This shows that somebody has done a poor job of training. "Telling" is not instructing.

Instructing is telling, plus showing, plus tryout performance and follow up. Let the worker do the job. You ask him questions. Let him ask you questions. Before putting him on his own, make sure you know that he knows.

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