

Following is a list of things that are important to labor in the order that a recent survey shows them, number one being the most important and number ten the least important.

1. Full appreciation of work done.
2. Feeling "in" on things.
3. Sympathetic help on personal problems.
4. Job security.
5. Good wages.
6. Work that keeps you interested.
7. Promotion.
8. Loyalty.
9. Good working conditions.
10. Tactful disciplining.

You can see from the list that wages are not the most important item. True, they are important but a few of the little things that we fail to do in many cases are more important.

Budgets are going up and up. Can we

continue to justify it by blaming it on higher costs, hard to get labor, etc.? Maybe we should take another look at management. The more demands put on us by the golfer to do a better job, the better managers we must become or our budgets will skyrocket out of reach for the average golf course.

Any neglect of supervisory education in management is to be condemned. Such education is greatly needed because few, if any, superintendents learn anything about the management phases of their jobs before they become superintendents. We step into our managerial responsibilities with practically no knowledge of what is expected of us or how our obligations are to be performed.

Let's take another look at our new tools and use them to our advantage. Perhaps we can use fewer men and do the same job better for less money if we improve management.

Streamlining the Operation

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Streamlining an object usually makes it move along more smoothly and swiftly. To do this, you knock off the rough edges and make the driving force more efficient. By streamlining our golf course maintenance operation we can most certainly make the most of our labor, money, time, and any other resource available to us.

A golf course could not thrive without an adequate budget to produce good turf, just as a bank could not stay in business if all it did was deposit money in a vault. Banks use their resources, and although most of their activity is regulated by law, some banks grow and others just manage to stay in business. The difference is usually found in their ability to attract customers by providing for customer needs and utilizing the resources provided by their customers. If you think the golf course business is any different, you may be in for a rude awakening.

As I see it, the key factors in a successful golf course operation are progressive improvement and efficiency. Both go together. Improvement seeks to obtain the ultimate. Efficiency seeks to make every dollar spent on improvement worth more than it costs.

It behooves every golf course superintendent to examine his operation and find out where costs may be reduced and quality maintained or improved upon. In the case of the

triplex greensmower, current models may have their faults, but any superintendent who overlooks the possibilities of a machine that will pay for itself in labor saving in a year or less and do a job acceptable to his members had better re-examine his values.

If your greens do not lend themselves to triplex mowing, or if members prefer the smaller units, then you should at least be thinking of how to realize maximum efficiency from your smaller mowers. Does the man doing the mowing plod along behind the mower from green to green, or does he mow a green and deposit all the clippings in a vehicle which transports the man, mower, and excess baggage from site to site in a minimum of time?

Further streamlining the operation, automation may be able to improve an already mechanized program. Automation offers greater efficiency with the least amount of personnel, and also allows higher paid and more knowledgeable individuals to utilize their skills over a larger area. Automation has saved the day in many instances where labor was unavailable at any price. Except in irrigation, automation on the golf course is a relatively unexplored field, but it has great possibilities.

A few years ago, many of you were "greenkeepers." Now you are "superintendents" and some would like to change that to "managers." Titles change with the times and it

is not beyond the realm of possibility that in the future one "agronomic engineer" may be all that is needed to maintain a golf course or a golf course complex by pushing buttons.

So far we have covered automation and mechanization as a means of streamlining the operation. Perhaps this could be summed up by saying, "Use the proper tool for the job to be done." Since chemicals are also tools of our trade, we are justified in bringing them into the discussion.

The list of herbicides, fungicides, nematocides, and insecticides is extensive and growing rapidly. A whole modern chemical arsenal is at your disposal if you will only become familiar with their uses.

Because of the current concern over pollution, we might be wise to change the term "pesticides" to "environmental protectants," as suggested by many of our university research people. Pollution is a major problem in our world today, but, please, let's not confuse the necessary and/or judicious use of chemicals to protect our environment with the indiscriminate pollution of our air and natural resources.

Pesticides are an absolute necessity for mankind, and, when properly used, they are a valuable tool in good golf course maintenance. This is not to say that we do not need to eliminate the use of certain chemicals on the golf course, especially when there are acceptable alternatives. Nor should we be indiscriminate with their use. However, I would suggest that their proper use not only can enhance our environment, but also save money. The small amount of so-called pollutants used on the golf course and in agriculture are used to insure the

preservation of the very plants which make our life possible and more enjoyable.

As for the practical side of chemical management, figure the cost of trimming against chemical growth retardation or soil sterilization where practical. Possibly chemical clearing of roughs and waste places would be more economical than your present method. Compare the cost of selectivity of chemical weed control against mechanical means. Compare the cost of replacing turf against the cost of disease and insect eradication and prevention.

May we also pursue this further by assuming we are allowed to use the chemicals we choose. Are we knowledgeable about synergistic actions which make certain mixtures more effective at lighter rates? Are our applications timed so that the wind, weather, and the season of the year are to our advantage? Do we compare the price per unit for effective control, and do we always use the lightest rate with which it is possible to achieve effective control? If you answered any of these questions negatively, then I hope you will do some homework.

Probably everyone feels he could do an outstanding job if he just had enough money in the budget. Rather than spend the time in wishful thinking, try to develop methods of making what you have go further. By proving you can get a dollar's value from every dollar spent, you may find money more easily available for the course budget.

Three areas you should definitely spend some time thinking about are planning, organization, and education. Without planning, you

Asphalt or other permanent surfaces in special places can reduce trim time, be more attractive, and help streamline the operation.





Well maintained working and storage facilities provide good working conditions and improve efficiency.

don't know what you are doing or when to do it. Without organization you can't find anything to do the job with. Without education you won't know how to do the job even if everything you need is available.

The simplest example I can think of to illustrate the need for planning, organization and education is the man assigned to rake bunkers. He heads for the other side of the course with his lunch basket and no rake. It is difficult to rake bunkers without tools, so he heads back to the maintenance area and spends about an hour looking for the rakes. They're not in the usual place. Having arrived at the destination a second time, rake in hand and ready to work, he rakes all the sand off the bunker face and into the center because nobody ever bothered to tell him how it should be done.

A rather oversimplified example, true. But do we not often plan hastily and inefficiently?

Do we not accept disorganization because it takes discipline to be well organized? Do we not become complacent about our way of doing things rather than seeking improved methods?

Planning, organization and education are never-ending jobs. They cannot be neglected without waste in any operation. They help us to use better the ideas of mechanization, automation, mobilization, communication, centralization and chemicals, which can effectively streamline our operation.

In an age when scientists have discovered so many substitutes, TIME is still the one unique, irreplaceable, and universal commodity which cannot be taken for granted. Perhaps nothing else distinguishes an effective manager so much as his efficient use of time.

The saying goes, "time is money." Are you making the most of this resource, which costs nothing unless we waste it?