

to obtain job applicants by running an ad in a local newspaper. Obtaining a high percentage of good workers from this source, however, is not always possible. Instead, try to develop a personal working relationship with some individual at each employment source. For example, rather than phoning or sending a rather anonymous announcement to a local high school or college placement office, visit the office yourself and cultivate a friendship with someone there who will then be more interested in your business and more willing to help. Better yet, get to know some of the instructors at the schools. Having worked directly with the students, they will be better able to supply the names of workers with greater than average potential. If these contacts can be made with instructors at colleges with turf-grass management programs, so much the better.

Regardless of the source you are working with, be it a college, a local high school or an employment agency, establishing personal contacts with people who can help is a key to the long-term success of a recruitment plan. Realize that it takes time, and perhaps a little politicking, to develop trusted contacts. As they get to know you better, they become more sympathetic to your cause and more willing to help. If it is a college professor you are hoping to seek assistance from, get to know him as well as you can. Call him on the phone, invite him for lunch, visit with him at meetings, offer to help with his programs if you can. The better he knows you, the better your chances of obtaining good referrals.

Many employers have recruited friends or relatives of present employees on the presumption that they will be similarly motivated. This approach may work very well or turn out to be a disaster, but it is an option that superintendents might consider if the situation is right.

The Interview

As inquiries begin to come in, prospective employees should be asked to fill out an application form. The form should include the standard questions, along with others related to what the job entails on the golf course, such as mechanical ability and equipment operation. You might also ask whether or not the person plays golf. Request references and *check them*.

The face-to-face interview is the most widely accepted and most commonly used method of evaluating potential employees. After applications have been reviewed and references checked, invite



... Can make a big difference!

the several leading candidates for an interview.

The key to the success of any interview is knowing what you're looking for. This is determined by the specific requirements of the job itself, and by considering a less-tangible set of five characteristics which all good workers possess to some degree. They are: 1) a positive attitude, 2) a strong drive, 3) a steady persistence, 4) maturity, and 5) an aptitude for getting along with others. During the course of the interview, try to question the candidate in such a way as to get him to reveal how he measures up to these characteristics.

There are a number of topics that should be discussed during an interview. For example, ask the candidate why he is applying for the job. Discuss his work history, and inquire about the types of experience he has gained from previous

employment. Ask about the specifics of his formal education and training, and investigate his other qualifications. By asking leading questions and being a good listener, you should be able to learn of the candidate's character and potential.

Another objective of the interview is to be sure the applicant understands all that is involved with the job. Let him know the bad points as well as the good. Tell him about the bad weather, sand raking and rotary work, and weekend requirements. Providing an assessment of the negative aspects of the job will help ensure that only the hale and hearty remain for final consideration.

Give the applicant a full rundown of club policy and your own shop rules. Tell him that all new employees serve a probationary period, and that you reserve the right to terminate employment at any time during that period if you feel that things will not work out. Establishing the ground rules during the interview will provide a smoother transition and minimize problems after the person is hired.

After recruiting candidates for the job, reviewing their applications, checking references, and conducting well-planned interviews, you will be in a good position to hire the person who will contribute most to your program. The new employee is then likely to become an asset and contribute to your professional image and club operations.

Lead, Follow or Get Out of the Way

by DONALD E. HEARN

CGCS, Weston Golf Club, Massachusetts

ITHINK WE CAN compare golf course superintendents to the story of Paul Revere. After Paul Revere finished his ride through Lexington and Concord to warn of the approach of the British, everybody said what a great job he had done. But no one mentioned his horse. I'm sure you can imagine how that horse felt; if he could have talked, you can bet the horse would have told Revere just how important that unsung hero was.

So many times, just like Revere's horse, we feel that our efforts aren't appreciated. Most times they aren't. One of the reasons why is because people don't know what it is they're supposed to appreciate. How are people to appreciate something they don't know anything about?

Let them know what it is you do and what your responsibilities are. Tell them about your background and experience in agronomy, horticulture, entomology,



Donald E. Hearn

agrostology, plant pathology, soil science, landscape architecture, construction engineering, business management, public relations, arboriculture, labor relations, and irrigation and equipment management. Give them an idea of your commitment.

Tell them about your responsibilities associated with tennis courts, bowling alleys, squash courts, skeet ranges, ice skating rinks, paddle tennis courts, golf cars, power generating systems, and water supplies.

Let them know when you've represented them before various town or city officials, regulatory bodies and legislative assemblies, and of your efforts to stay abreast of what's happening in your field. Tell them about the educational meetings you've attended. Invite the person to whom you're responsible to come and see what you are all about. Some people on your governing boards think that all you do is water, fertilize, and mow grass. I'll guarantee that some club members think you go South for the winter, after the first snow arrives.

I believe this perception is gradually changing, but it is not changing by osmosis or by accident. It's changing because some superintendents are letting people know about some of the things they do. A lot of us just sit back and complain and hope someone else will carry the ball for us. Don't forget that ultimately you're the one who is responsible for you! Just as an idea has no value unless somebody does something about it, your thoughts and ideas will have no value if you don't do something about them.

LET ME SUGGEST one way of doing something about it. All of us are faced with the reality of constantly changing board members. In some cases new board members are elected for their particular experience in finance or law; in other cases they're elected because their uncle owns a restaurant, or their brother is a chef, or they have won the club championship a number of times, or they represent the senior members, the younger members, the women, etc. We've all heard many different reasons for placing people in policy-making positions. One thing I've noticed, though, is that very few, if any, know what the golf course superintendent really does. Their election to the board gives you an opportunity to educate and help them understand what you're all about.

Prepare a resume and send it to the new board members as they are elected every year. Make a list of your responsibilities. List also your involvement in areas not directly associated with your

day-to-day responsibilities of turfgrass maintenance. Add a brief biography of your key employees. Include their length of service, their hobbies, their involvement and achievements in other fields, such as politics, sports, and volunteer work. This goes a long way toward creating an appreciation of the talent your staff members possess.

Sell yourself! Be innovative! Don't sit back and watch things happen. Take the initiative and make things happen.

I know what I've said today isn't revolutionary. Some of you know it already. There are a lot of different ways to sell yourself, and I have listed only a few, but if only one of those ideas sets a spark, helps you in some way in your position as a golf course superintendent, then I've done my job.

I'm not an expert in personal promotion. Neither do I have anywhere near most of the answers. But I do suggest that, if you will lead by word and deed, others will follow, and those who choose to do neither will get out of the way.

Monitoring the Operations

by **WILLIAM G. BUCHANAN**

Director, Mid-Atlantic Region, USGA Green Section



William G. Buchanan

THE DICTIONARY DEFINES monitoring as "the act of watching, observing, or checking for a special purpose; or, keeping track of, regulating, or being in control of an operation or process." That sounds simple enough. We can all watch, observe, and check different operations. The important thing is for us to benefit from monitoring the operations, implementing what we learn from the monitoring process.

Maintenance of a golf course is a multifaceted operation. To properly monitor the operation, it is essential that the monitor be present. This is the key ingredient. The physical presence of the supervisor will help ensure efficiency in the maintenance operation.

All operations must be observed. How does a crew member get from point A to point B? Is it a circumvental route or a direct one? Is he walking or riding? The efficiency of golf course maintenance