

## **CAREER NOTES**

**By Dick Bradow, PGA Employment Services Consultant**

I recently read an article in a golf publication about “burnout” among General Managers and how difficult it can be to achieve balance between your professional and personal life. The article talked about how the nature of a service oriented hospitality business (such as golf) can create the belief among managers that they have to be there all the time to be successful. As a result, some managers are on a perpetual “merry-go-round” trying to make sure nothing ever goes wrong and every customer is satisfied. Eventually it wears the individual down, and both job performance and family life can suffer.

The article echoed many of the same comments I hear from PGA Professionals who love their jobs but feel similar pressure in their role of managing a golf operation. Long hours, 24/7 access by cell phone or e-mail, guilt about leaving early, and the need to be “visible” all present challenges to creating a balanced lifestyle. If you have ever agonized about leaving work for your child’s ballgame, a school function, a golf tournament, or a family vacation, you know the feeling.

Unfortunately this feeling can be reinforced when a club member or owner tells you they “haven’t seen you around much lately,” even though they may have missed you when you left 30 minutes before dark at the end of another 14 hour day. The resulting guilt from “not being there” only perpetuates your need to spend more time at the facility to make sure everyone sees you, even though you have plenty of staff to handle things and there is no reason for you to be present.

Naturally, some PGA Professionals are truly understaffed and have no choice but to spend most of every day at the facility. If you are in this situation, work with your employer and develop a plan to enhance your staffing, at least at peak times. Also, try to find segments of time every week when you can get away, even for an hour or two.

However, if you have adequate staffing but still feel the need to be there all the time – what can you do to prevent burnout and keep yourself fresh? Here are some suggestions:

- Maintain regular communication with your employer about your activities – if they know what you are working on, they may be less likely to worry if they don’t see you.
- Establish a regular schedule of weekly work hours, days off, leaving early, etc. – and stick to it.
- Plan and schedule activities with your family – and don’t be embarrassed to tell people what you are doing.
- Learn to delegate effectively and develop “lieutenants” who can run the operation “in your image” when you are gone.
- Take a legitimate lunch break daily, preferably in an area away from the golf shop where you can relax – and make sure your staff does the same.
- Learn the habit of driving out of your facility and “turning off” the job for the rest of the day.
- Find activities or passions outside of work that you can pursue in your leisure time.
- Learn to turn off your cell phone or Blackberry at appropriate times.
- Incorporate some type of physical activity into your daily routine – an early morning walk or jog, stretching, exercising, and hitting a few golf shots are all good for the body, as well as the mind.
- And most importantly – put that guilt in your back pocket!

Avoid burning yourself out by working more effectively and productively, enjoying and spending time with your family, and pursuing your passions. By balancing your lifestyle, you can achieve a higher level of job satisfaction for your future.

***Dick Bradow is a PGA Member and Employment Services Consultant for the PGA of America. He can be contacted at (502) 458-2002 or by e-mail at [dbradow@pgahq.com](mailto:dbradow@pgahq.com)***