

CAREER NOTES

By Dick Bradow, PGA Career Consultant

Are you a mentor? The unique mentoring relationship between PGA Members and their Apprentices has always been one of the cornerstones of our business. One of the traditional roles of a Head Professional has been to train and develop their Apprentices and to help them achieve their career goals.

In addition to helping your Apprentice, effective mentoring has many benefits for you as well:

- It helps you build a strong team and promotes loyalty and longevity among your staff
- An apprentice who is properly trained and mentored is more productive and motivated
- Professionals with reputations for effective apprenticeship programs can attract better employees
- Good mentors develop a reputation in the industry as a source for qualified personnel
- A proven record of hiring and training quality staff enhances the value you provide to your employer

Mentoring can take on several meanings – teacher, coach, counselor, cheerleader, drill sergeant, disciplinarian, promoter, role model, and more. You can have a profound impact (either positive or negative) on shaping the future of your Apprentice – here are some ways you can be a good mentor:

- **Use a thorough hiring process**

It's much easier being a mentor to someone who is eager to learn, possesses good work habits and interpersonal skills, and is dedicated to a successful career as a PGA Professional. Use diligence in your hiring process and make sure your Apprentice truly fits your needs and shares your commitment to excellence.

- **Develop a successful employment relationship**

Employees can become discouraged if they don't know what you want them to do, don't receive training on how you want things done, and don't get feedback on how they are doing. Give your Apprentice clearly defined responsibilities and expectations, provide ongoing training and guidance, and keep the lines of communication open with timely feedback and regular performance evaluations.

- **Understand the PGA Professional Golf Management program**

Become knowledgeable about the PGM program and help your Apprentice create a plan to get started. Assist with good time management, incorporate PGM work experience activities into the daily routine, monitor PGM deadlines, and communicate weekly on your Apprentice's progress. To help offset PGM expenses, work with your employer to provide financial assistance for your Apprentice.

- **Promote personal and career development**

Show your Apprentice that you care by taking a sincere interest in their career development. Help build their skills and knowledge, allow them to be involved in managing the business, educate them on PGA programs available to them, and counsel them on their career goals and direction. When they are ready to begin the job search process, help them with networking strategies, resume preparation, and interviewing skills, and be their #1 promoter.

- **Intangibles**

Lead by example and with a positive attitude. Create an enjoyable and stimulating work environment, empower your Apprentice with meaningful responsibilities, encourage creativity and initiative, and challenge them to develop new ideas. Initiate staff activities outside the workplace and develop a schedule that allows them time for family, golf, leisure, etc.

Always keep in mind that your Apprentice is likely to adopt much of what they see in you as their role model – your values and beliefs, your professional image, how you manage your business, your attention to detail, how you interact with people and handle situations, and how you conduct yourself at work and away. It can be a challenge juggling the multiple relationships you may develop with your Apprentice – employer/employee, teacher/student, friend/friend, etc. However, seeing your Apprentice climb the ladder of success as a PGA Professional makes it all worthwhile.

Keep in the CareerLinks Loop

Don't forget to complete the 2007 PGA Membership Survey on PGALinks.com prior to March 15. Completing the Survey will update your CareerLinks ProFile and is required to stay active in CareerLinks.

The Survey will give you the opportunity to review and update your work history, skills, and future preferences, and new questions have been added to better assist CareerLinks in notifying you about jobs that match your qualifications. PGA members and apprentices in good standing are eligible to participate in CareerLinks. PGA members who complete the Survey by March 15 will earn 1 MSR hour.

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