

## **CAREER NOTES**

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

With the beginning of a new golf season, you will likely have some new staff members taking care of the needs of your customers – a new Assistant Professional, new golf shop staff, new outside service staff, etc. Don't automatically assume they know how to handle the basic things such as greeting customers, answering the phone, taking messages, etc. It's a good time make sure both new and established employees are up to speed with your basic golf shop procedures and know how to handle the various situations that can arise in a typical day. Here are some examples:

- Discuss your customer service standards and philosophy with your staff, so they understand the overall experience you want your customers to have at your facility.
- Train your staff on how to greet customers and thank them after transactions, and make sure that everyone who is behind the counter can handle basic procedures such as reserving tee times, ringing up sales, dealing with returns and refunds, checking on special orders, taking tournament entries, etc.
- Provide your staff with clear telephone procedures – what to say when they answer the phone, how to take messages, how long to keep a caller on hold, how to deal with a caller when there are customers waiting in line at the counter, etc.
- Make sure your outside service staff knows how to greet customers, handle bags and carts, direct people to different areas of the facility, handle tipping, etc. They are often the first “moment of truth” for your customers and can have a great impact on the initial impression of your operation.
- Keep your key staff members abreast of upcoming events and activities, changes in facility policies and procedures, new products, sales and promotions, etc. so they can knowledgeably answer questions in your absence.
- Instruct your staff on how to handle difficult situations, such as customer complaints, defective merchandise, violations of facility policy, pace of play problems, Rules of Golf enforcement, etc.
- Instruct your staff on how to respond to calls when you are out of the shop or unavailable. Having an employee tell the caller “He's not here,” “He's out playing,” or “He's gone for the day” may not be what you want them to say. Give them some standard responses such as “He's not available at the moment, how may I help you?” or “He's not available at the moment, I'll be happy to take a message and have him call you.”

Everything your employees do reflects on you as their leader, and nothing makes a better impression than a friendly, well-trained, and knowledgeable staff. This year, make it a priority to convey your expectations to your employees and provide them with the training they need – it will pay great dividends in increased customer service and satisfaction.

### **Important Reminder**

If you have not already done so, please go to [PGALinks.com](http://PGALinks.com) and complete the [2008 PGA Compensation Survey](#). This biennial survey has become the most comprehensive source of compensation information in the industry, and your participation will help provide you and your fellow Kentucky PGA Professionals with accurate statistics for negotiations, job searches, budgeting, and hiring. In addition, it will provide valuable information for the KPGA and for those of us who work on your behalf to upgrade compensation for all PGA positions.

To keep you armed with the most complete data, the KPGA needs all PGA Professionals, from Apprentices to our most experienced Members, to support the survey. All individual responses are completely confidential – your personal information simply becomes a part of the overall statistical database, so please don't let concerns about confidentiality be a deterrent to participating in the survey. PGA Members earn 1 MSR hour by completing the survey by March 31.

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