

Greens Committee Recommendation for Hiring a Golf Professional

The question is: Do we need a good qualified manager for our golf operations? Answering “No” would be just as ridiculous as saying a superintendent isn’t needed because ANYONE can mow grass! A golf Pro is as valuable as their contributions to the membership, their influence on the golfers or members that use the facility and revenue generating components they can influence. Golf course owners and managers are not hiring golf professionals, they are hiring managers who may be members of the PGA. Our facility doesn’t need a PGA pro just to run the business, but a golf Pro understands the history and tradition of the game and the club culture we are trying to create, and is the main reason our course should consider hiring a PGA professional. Knowledge of the game is invaluable - how to play it, teach it, market it, understanding its traditions, values, culture – that makes them valuable. Any owner that doesn’t feel they need a person that can teach the game, properly fit golf clubs, officiate events and outings, and contagiously spread good will to the customers is not going to build new players and will possibly lose many they already have.

Job Description: Pro, Manager, teacher... Not necessarily in that order. Our pro will be expected to ALSO work the Pro desk... Maybe even serve a beer or a hot dog to boot. Hands on management. ...a pro/manager who can shoot around par or better, understands the golf swing, teaches golf in a way all students can easily understand, sells golf, and markets our golf business. Having a Professional would add value to the current membership base and additional value to new members. **PGA Pro or not, we must clearly define the responsibilities, authority, and skill set for the job we are looking to fill and hire accordingly.** Just as important, we must continue to supervise, follow-up, and mentor that hire. On average, PGA members are very well qualified to handle most of these requirements, but if they are not supervised, supported, or given the tools they need to do their jobs, it doesn’t matter what credentials they have. Everyone loses.

If our course was full, attracting customers at rack rate, then it would be hard to argue that there was a need for anybody but a clerk to collect the money, but our course is not. Ask our great counter help if they know how to manage an inventory, manage our labor budget, strategize how to drive more rounds to the course (not just lowering the price), teach AND play the game as an expert, handle the endless interpersonal issues concerning handicapping and other conflicts, drive enthusiasm to the players, increase participation in events, raise charitable funds, be a community leader, be a motivator for the staff as well as players, coordinate and conduct competitive events, coordinate with the other departments within the club for successful events that keep them coming back, all of which help drive additional rounds or membership and of course make sure all standards are kept up. Anyone might be able to do this but the PGA Member is an individual who has been trained and experienced in all these areas and typically finds balance in all this as a Professional. We have an outstanding crew, but they lack experience.

In order to increase revenues associated with Golf operations, a PGA Professional would be an integral member of the facilities leadership team, working closely with our Golf Course Superintendent, our Greens Committee, our existing crew, our CAM, and our Board, to drive LLCC forward towards achieving financial independence, or at least less subsidized, on the Golf component of our community.

Finding the proper Professional for our needs is as essential as having a Golf Professional on staff...

The Greens Committee 2/7/2020