

TEACHING METHODS

by

Arnold McLean  
Head Professional  
Lorraine Golf & Curling Club Inc.  
60 Bl @ Gaulle Lorraine, Quebec  
J6Z 2W6

THESIS

Presented to the Canadian Professional Golfers'  
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of the Requirements  
for

MASTER PROFESSIONAL

## T A B L E O F C O N T E N T S

### THESIS

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### MASTER PROFESSIONAL EXAMINATION

Potential of Golf

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Role of the Professional next 10 years

In order for a Golf Professional to be truly successful as a teacher, he must have spent a great deal of time listening to and studying the various techniques of his peers. The large portion of this time must be devoted to the basic fundamentals of the various Professionals, always taking their physical configuration, condition and ability into account.

He must of course read and study each and every book or thesis available on the teaching of golf. Many of these publications he may regard as largely a waste of time, but I guarantee that read with interest there are always points that can add to his storehouse of knowledge.

As complete an understanding as possible of the aerodynamics of a golf shot is a must. Golf club and ball construction must be understood in order to be able to advise the pupil on the equipment that can provide the maximum of help to each pupil according to his or her physical ability.

The reading and study of such publications as "How to Win Friends and Influence People" - "The Power of Positive Thinking" - "Psycho Cybernetics" - etc., are all part and parcel of becoming a successful teacher of this most complex of games.

Certainly the amount of knowledge that a Professional has accumulated will have a very great bearing on his ability to teach, but most of all he must search for every means to find a better way to transmit this knowledge to his respective pupils. A study of human psychology is the greatest aid in this respect.

The professional image that a Professional can build around himself is of tremendous importance. If the Professional has responsibly and realistically followed the above advice, he should have no problem transmitting a feeling of confidence and interest to the pupil, which in my opinion

is the basis for all successful instruction.

Having presented a brief outline on what I feel is the required background to successful instruction, I will now proceed to give a resume of how I approach the teaching of a pupil. Through necessity I will at times have to qualify or diversify my technique to fit each and every individual. I must also preface this resume with the fact that I will not give instruction to the person who either casually decides, his foursome did'nt show, so he may as well fill in the time by taking a lesson, neither will I teach the frustrated person who has just completed a most unsuccessful attack on the course. All of my instruction is by appointment only. I feel most strongly that the pupil must be as mentally prepared to receive instruction as the Professional is to give it.

The first period of instruction that I have with any individual regardless of his or her previous experience or ability, is largely an orientation period and must be for a minimum of one hour. I must try to research the pupils mind in an attempt to ascertain his or her outlook on just what it is they are hoping to achieve. At the same time posing a series of questions to give me an insight into their athletic background if any. This period is not too time consuming, in general the information that I require is given quite quickly and freely.

This process achieves two things. First the knowledge that I require, secondly, carried out properly it does a great deal toward conveying to the pupil the fact that I am genuinely going to expend every effort to aid him or her as the case may be.

During this more or less question and answer period I feel that I have a reasonable amount of time to size up the physical make up of the pupil, paying particular attention

to the size of hands and fingers, length of arms, height, weight, configuration and any obvious physical disabilities.

At this point I take a few minutes to assess the equipment that the pupil has been using and to discuss very briefly why and how it was chosen. If the pupil is a new player without equipment I would have available on the lesson tee the equipment that would be suitable for this orientation session.

At this point the type of instruction varies to a very great extent depending on the previous experience and ability of the individual. However in all cases I try to avoid breaking the swing into segments and concentrate instead on the complete movement required for the particular shot that we may be discussing.

#### NEW PLAYER

Particular emphasis of course must be placed on the basic fundamentals, grip, stance and general set-up. In the indoctrination of a new player I find the use of a training grip to be of tremendous help and always have one available for the pupil to borrow until the next session. (Through trial and error I have found that a few days of practice with the training grip can do wonders in speeding up the pupils confidence and familiarity with this very important fundamental).

The training grip is fitted to a "7" iron and this is the club with which we start. My total goal now is to have the pupil achieve success in striking and getting the ball airborne. During this initial session I constantly employ the word "we" to try again to convey the idea that we are working as a team. The session is wound up with a review of what we have covered, with the pupil explaining to me what he has learned to date. A graph check picture is taken of his action and the next session is scheduled within

the next two days.

Session 2 - half hour period. The first few minutes of this session is a quick review of what was covered in the first session with the pupil hitting a few shots with the 7 iron. My comments at this point are always laudatory with the intent of encouraging the pupil regardless of what his or her progress may have been. At this point I take a few moments to explain just what we are trying to learn is a new motor skill which must become a conditioned reflex or response, but, it is impossible to learn a new motor skill physically until you have attained a full mental image or picture of this skill. I try to emphasize the fact that the subconscious mind is in charge of our conscious being in almost everything that we do, therefore it is impossible to try to execute any really successful swing without first having a complete mental image of what it should be.

To this end I commence a word picture with physical illustrations by demonstrating and physically aiding the pupil in attaining both a mental picture and physical feel of what a golf swing looks and feels like. Verbally I run through the 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, chronological order of the back-swing. 1) hands 2) arms 3) shoulders 4) hips 5) legs and feet. Forward swing reversing to 1) feet and legs 2) hips 3) shoulders 4) arms 5) hands, at the same time stressing the idea of set-up, stretch, spring. (While I may not use the same system on a more advanced pupil I have found through trial and error that this system works wonders for the neophyte in imparting a mental picture and physical feel).

At this point I generally place a ball on a tee, give my pupil a light driver fitted with a training grip, physically place him or her in position, stance, grip and set-

up in general trying to achieve a flexed spring position. Allow him or her a couple of practice swings and then instruct the pupil to swing the club head at one of the practice flags, swinging through the ball at the same time. This process is repeated several times with constant encouragement to the pupil trying to correct major problems while ignoring minor faults. You must be very careful at this juncture not to start breaking the swing down into components, trying always to keep the pupil thinking and working in one complete flowing action.

Having achieved (we hope) reasonable success to this point, I very briefly explain the function of the various clubs and the power and pendulum swing.

This pupil is now ready for equipment. We proceed to the Professional Shop, select what we feel is suitable for his or her particular needs. Encourage the pupil to try to fit in at least two 1/2 hour practice sessions, loan him or her the 7 iron with the training grip for home or office familiarization and schedule the next period of instruction within 3 days.

Session 3 - This session begins with a quick review of the fundamentals by having the pupil explain in his or her words exactly what we have covered to date. Correction of any misconception is then made. (By having the pupil constantly explaining to you what he or she has learnt to date seems to stimulate their mental approach, supplies you with the necessary keys to progress and eliminates the possibility that you may be proceeding at a rate that is too fast or too slow for this particular pupil).

The pupil is allowed to swing through 4 or 5 balls with his 7 iron (the training grip is not used at this point unless I feel that it is necessary), 4 or 5 balls with his driver again correcting any major faults and sup-

plying encouragement. We then proceed to the putting green, commencing a brief explanation of putting and chipping and of course the pendulum or control swing. The method of teaching chipping that I employ is spot chipping using the club with the least possible loft that will still allow you to land the ball on the green and the ball to roll to the hole. This shot would be employed from the edge of the green or out to possibly twenty yards away from the green. The number one principle that I stress in chipping is that the club must accelerate through the ball, this is achieved in the same way as in a full stroke, the pupil must again think of swinging through the ball and toward the target. You must complete a mental image of the complete stroke, where the ball will land and the complete picture of the ball rolling toward and stopping close to the hole. (This thought and technique is constantly repeated in every lesson, always attempting to convince the pupil that he must mentally complete every facet of the swing and actual golf shot before attempting to complete it physically).

The set-up for chipping is a little different than for the full shot. The ball in general being placed opposite the left heel, an open stance with hips and shoulders open toward the hole and knees towards target. Width of stance slightly narrower than shoulders, approximately 60% of the weight is placed on the left foot, knees flexed but not relaxed or broken, hands slightly ahead of the ball. The chipping action is accomplished with as little body action as possible but a slight rocking action with the knees should not be resisted. The action is mainly arm and shoulder action on the backswing and the forward swing is started with the hips sliding forward and weight transferring to the left foot with the club head facing the target at the finish. The finish position always being held long



enough to be used as a check point to be able to judge whether we did actually accomplish our goal. In each particular swing, this holding position will at the same time help us to achieve muscle memory. Once our brain has a picture of what we are trying to accomplish, it is much easier to have our muscles comply. (At this point I always take a few minutes to try to implant as indelibly as possible the fact that in making the golf swing the BRAIN MUST PROGRAM THE WHOLE SWING IN ADVANCE. The swing takes place too fast for the brain to successfully do anything else. The brain must transmit all of the necessary information to the muscles before we attempt any movement. Once the swing has started it is close to impossible to break into the system and alter it. This is what getting set-up, concentrating and waiting for the right moment is all about). I vary the pupils chipping distances by having him or her utilize the various pin placements on the putting green. After a few minutes of swinging through the varied chip shots I go over the pendulum swing verbally stressing the position and imploring the pupil to spend a great deal of time in the practice of this very important shot which must be almost manufactured for the many different distances and positions that he will encounter. We run through the triangle-track target. Explaining and demonstrating the upside down triangle formed by the hands and arms and how there should be no conscious wrist break in the swinging of the triangle, that it is a firm movement with the knees being allowed to rock slightly. Track is the path along which the club head must travel to send the ball to the target. The track is of course lengthened or shortened according to the distance that we want the ball to travel. Target being the spot on which you want the ball to land. Whenever we feel that we must swing our hands above the waist we must revert to the power or dis-

tance swing.

Now we walk onto the putting green and briefly discuss the problems of putting, separating this into two different categories, inside of ten feet to try to hole the putt, outside of ten feet trying to lag the putt into a 1' circle. I very briefly touch upon grain, roll and overall contour of the greens, etc.

The pupil is then placed into position. The grip is changed into a reverse over-lap position, stance is square, feet approximately 1' apart, ball placed in line with left heel, left hand slightly ahead of ball, hands high, head over or just slightly behind ball.

As in chipping, particular emphasis is placed upon the fact that the putter head must accelerate through the ball, attempting to finish with the putter blade squarely facing the hole.

We stroke several putts from different directions making any major corrections that are necessary.

This period of instruction is as usual ended with a quick review of what we have covered. Using the same process of having the pupil explain to me in his own words and correcting any misconceptions that may have occurred. I very briefly explain that all of the positions and techniques of chipping and especially putting are quite flexible, feel being of the utmost importance and that this can only be developed by practice, practice and more practice. Our next period is scheduled within 3 days, exhorting the pupil to practice and think as much about golf as possible until that time.

Session 4 - one hour period. We start this session with a discussion of the success and problems that the pupil has encountered so far, both in the instruction and the practice sessions, I will encourage the pupil in every way,

complementing him or her on the outstanding improvement that they have made so far. Once again I most strongly emphasize the mental aspects of the game and the absolute necessity of positively programming the mental computer before attempting any golf swing. At the same time I point out the necessity of devising their own particular system. As an illustration, I use Jack Nicklaus and Billy Casper pointing out the tremendous concentration on the face of Jack Nicklaus as he stands over the ball and the interminable length of time that he takes to prepare to swing, contrasting this to the quickness of Billy Casper. They are certainly different and yet share the same beautiful decisiveness during the actual swing. The golfer must plan and plan very carefully before he enters his backswing, then carry out that plan as positively and decisively as possible.

At this point I demonstrate once again the full set-up procedure, giving a verbal description of my moves as I do so, from the teeing of the ball, the target alignment from behind the ball, starting the set-up position, with the club resting in my right hand as I align the head of the club with the target, I then assume the grip (while I personally use the vardon grip for reasons of hand size, strength, etc., I may have taught this particular pupil to utilize the interlocking or ten finger grip). My feet at this time are just a few inches apart, re-check club face alignment with the target, place my left foot so that the ball is approximately off the instep of my left foot and this foot is opened slightly toward the target which makes it just that much easier to line up and permits a smooth flow of the hips toward the target on the forward swing. The right foot is placed approximately perpendicular to the line of flight and at a ninety degree angle to it, (at this point my heels are approximately the width of my shoulders)



club head alignment is re-checked that it is square to the intended line of flight and on target.

At the completion of the set-up position knees should be slightly flexed and inclined toward the target, weight even on both feet, right knee pulled in and alertly flexed. Left arm is firm and forms a reasonably straight line with the shaft of the club back of left hand parallel with the intended line of flight. Right arm is slightly flexed, elbow drawn in toward left elbow in a K position, palm of right hand parallel to intended line of flight, head cocked slightly behind and looking at back of ball. The completed set-up position should be one of flexed alertness almost like a cat ready to spring.

The backswing is demonstrated and explained as a smooth flow being initiated with a waggle and slight forward press of the hands and legs, club head starts slowly and smoothly on a straight line from the target for as long as possible without being forced into the slightest hint of an upper body sway and then taking a smooth path inside of that line, the right knee must remain flexed, the upper body is wound up like a large spring, with a full 90° turn of the shoulders with the lower body creating a resistance by not allowing the body weight to pass to the outside of the right foot (the body weight at the completion of the backswing being approximately 65° on the inside of the right foot, 35° on the inside of the left foot).

The whole key to the successful completion of this movement being the firm position of the head.

The forward swing is started with a mental feeling of your feet, legs and hips sliding to the left or parallel to the flight path actually the hips will be turning as they slide laterally. The hips entering into a turn almost immediately, but it is of primary importance that mentally

the forward movement is initiated by a forward slide with the head staying back or even feeling a slight movement to the rear. There must be a very definite feeling of the head and shoulders staying well behind the ball while the lower part of your body moves parallel to the intended line of flight, with the club head swinging on and through making a full extension to the target.

The completed position is weight fully transferred to the outside of the left foot, left knee slightly flexed, both left and right knees aiming parallel to intended line of flight, club head still in control of left hand, head and right shoulder still over the spot where the ball lay and with the head turned and looking toward target. This position should be comfortable, graceful and completely on balance. Particular emphasis is placed on the importance of maintaining the follow through position as an excellent checkpoint and picture of possible error in the making of that particular swing. Balance and tempo are very heavily stressed.

The whole pattern is summed up this way: Target/set-up, Target/stretch, Stay behind, Spring.

I conclude with a very strong reminder that the hands play a very passive role in the golf swing, allowing them to unwind quite naturally through the ball. Any attempt to add hand action to the swing will only succeed in destroying all of it and completely destroying the ability of the larger muscles of the legs and the unwinding of the upper body to impart the required strength. The mental impression should always be to delay any hand action for as long as possible. Think Tempo and Balance at all times.

The pupil is then run through a complete drill with all clubs excepting the putter, as usual making corrections to any major faults, while at the same time still being

careful not to break the swing down into segments but always striving toward achieving a complete, smooth, flowing and unhurried action.

At the completion of this session a video tape of the swing is made. This tape is shown to the pupil at regular speed and in slow motion, stopping at various positions to stress and emphasize certain points always speaking in a very positive vein, attempting to tell the pupil at all times what he should be striving for in his swing, not what he should'nt be doing. It is most interesting and encouraging to the pupil to compare the earlier graph-check camera sequence with the video tape and point out the tremendous improvement he or she has made to this point.

Session 5 - Actual Play. (It is not possible to put an actual time limit on this session as so many factors can influence the time required). This session is of necessity scheduled for an off period on the course. In my particular case generally late Sunday afternoon or 7-7:30 p.m. almost any week night. Right from the beginning of this session golf course etiquette and Club regulations are discussed and the reasons for their existence. The session generally starts from the first tee and a plan of how this particular pupil should play it, giving he or she a goal which is generally a triple bogey. We proceed to play the hole and in general the pupil is only allowed to use one ball. (No practice shots being taken). The reason being that this is not a practice session but purely for course orientation. (After completion of the first hole, we proceed to a sand trap for a short period of instruction).

At this point we do not try to play any particularly difficult sand shots. The balls are placed on the sand. The pupil is asked to make several practice swings through

the sand to get the feel of the club contacting and passing on through the sand to a complete follow through. The pupil is then given a set up position with width of feet just a little less than shoulders width, right foot approximately 4" in advance of his or her left. Left foot turned at a 45° angle opening hips towards target. Ball is placed off of left instep, a mark is placed 2" behind ball. The pupil is instructed to focus on the mark in the sand, think target and make a smooth flowing 3/4 swing right through the sand to the target. This is repeated 6 or 7 times with demonstration shots being made if necessary. At no time do I ask the pupil to manipulate the sand wedge in any way, merely cautioning the pupil to make sure the club face is not closed, prepare mentally for the resistance of the sand, to focus 2" behind the ball not on the ball, swing smoothly. The sand trap is then raked properly, an explanation is given of the danger of spike marks on the green, a ball mark is found on the green and an explanation of why and how to repair it is made. The pupil is cautioned about taking his hand or motor driven cart within ten yards of the putting surface and to always place it in line with the next tee before going onto the green.

We then proceed to the next tee where the honour system is briefly explained. Once again, a plan is given to the pupil on how to play the hole with particular emphasis being placed upon the fact that each shot made must be planned in such a way as to make the succeeding stroke that much easier. Generally 3 or 4 holes are sufficient to reasonably orient the pupil with the do's and dont's of a golf course and to give him or her a grasp of the strategy, pleasure and difficulty of the golf game. We return to the club house for a drink during which time I take a pad and a score card and proceed to outline a plan of attack for



this particular pupil on each and every hole of our course at the same time giving the pupil a target score for each hole that I feel they should have no difficulty whatsoever in achieving. The pupil is encouraged not to be shy at all in discussing his progress with me or my assistants at the completion of each round and that I will be most disappointed if I do not receive a report of some sort from him or her at the completion of each round, sometimes it is possible to stop a major fault from occurring in a one minute reminder. The pupil is now strongly encouraged to continue to practice and play at every opportunity, cautioning them that if they do not play or practice a minimum of 3 times a week that it is most difficult to improve, muscle memory being the key to success at this point. The pupil is encouraged to proceed with this program and to schedule a check up session within the next two weeks.

As I trust can be clearly seen by the foregoing, my method of teaching the novice player is to impart as much confidence as possible to the student and to convince him or her that they are perfectly capable of achieving a level of play that will allow them to receive the full enjoyment and recreational benefits of this game called golf. If I am able to convince the student that I am genuinely interested in his or her progress and that we are truly working as a team, his or her fear of failure is greatly dissipated. When as a teacher you are willing to accept the challenge of teaching and accept partial responsibility for any failure that the student may encounter it will certainly go a long way toward removing fear as a road block to progress.

I try never to dwell too long on errors that the student may make and always speak positively and with encouragement, tending always to stress the good parts of his or her swing. Trying always to keep the swing concept

as one complete motion and avoiding the pit fall of becoming too technical or too critical of any novice student. The progress made should be extremely swift and most rewarding to both the student and myself. After the completion of the sessions outlined earlier, experience shows close to 100% of my students have a reasonable grasp of the game and the thirst to continue to strive for improvement through their own practice and effort, with the occasional teaching sessions thrown in along the way. (Occasional meaning possibly 4 or 5 during the year).

#### PROBLEM STUDENT

The next student I would like to talk about is the real problem student, generally male, who has played the game his own way for a number of years. This poor misguided person has either blundered on his own or her own, being given instruction by one of his or her friends or is an avid reader of every new book of instruction on the market.

This is the type of player who generally comes in off the course after a disastrous experience, demanding a lesson immediately. This person must be handled very, very carefully in order to avoid any bad feelings and 100% effort made to book him at his earliest convenience. Under no circumstances will I teach a pupil while they are in this state of mind.

Taking for granted that a suitable date has been worked out I will briefly outline my method of coping with the situation.

- 1) Question the pupil as to what he or she feels is the problem, make sure that you listen attentively, generally as the pupil tries to explain the problem you gather an insight into exactly how he or she has been attacking the game and will give you an idea as to how their mind has been working. Be very careful as these students often

have a strong mental aversion to being taught anything.

2) It is absolutely imperative that you are able to assert your control and domination over this student immediately, in order to be able to provide the assistance that they so obviously need. At the same time you must compliment them on their knowledge of the game. Do not destroy them, although this particular student may be over confident, robbing them of confidence will not help the situation. Avoid the temptation to tell the students how completely confused they are in both their mental and physical approach to achieving their full potential and enjoyment of this greatest of games.

3) Without any corrections whatsoever allow the student to swing through two or three golf balls with a 7 iron. If the grip is a major problem utilize the training grip rather than trying physically to change the hand position on the club, (in general the grip is a major fault with this type of pupil). Gently explain that you feel there is a possibility that we should just run through the basic fundamentals as more or less a check up. Run through a demonstration of the complete set-up position as outlined earlier. Compliment the pupil on his strength, intelligence and tremendous potential if only we can learn to harness and utilize it in the proper fashion.

In general this type of student is only conscious of right side strength (reverse of course in a left handed player) and a mental concept of hitting the ball as hard as he or she can with no thought whatsoever for balance, rhythm or tempo. The use of a video tape machine can be of tremendous help with this type of student. When he or she actually see themselves in action, their mental image of themselves as a sweet swinging Gene Littler or Sam Snead is once and for all dissipated and the prospect of being

able to re-build their approach and technique presents itself much more strongly. A series of exercises is always prescribed to try to increase left side strength, swinging only with left side, hand squeezers, etc. In many instances I have found that this type of player once converted becomes a very good student and a very staunch supporter and advocate for utilizing the teaching staff at the club and continue themselves to take instruction.

#### THE ACCOMPLISHED PLAYER

In my opinion this type of player is not taught but coached. Strangely enough experience has proven to me that 9 times of out 10 the problems that this type of player encounters generally start right back from the fundamentals, the problem is often more mental than it is physical. The players have experienced a couple of bad games and have started to experiment on their own or with the aid of a friend or possibly have tried to incorporate some new move that they just read about.

A general check up is required, at the same time stressing the need for just such a check up two or three times during each and every season.

This is the type of pupil you can learn a great deal from in conversation, learn as much as possible about the way he or she thinks about golf, the more you can learn concerning their mental and physical concept and approach to golf the easier it will be to help them, at the same time you will pick up new phraseology and concepts that could be of tremendous help in teaching other pupils.

Discuss the complete set-up position and grip. Almost always you will find that the student's concept of what he or she thinks they are doing is at great variance to what they are actually doing.

Run through a complete review of target, set-up,

stretch, swing, with an explanation of just what will generally result from relatively minor errors in these fundamentals.

When a player has reached this stage of development the smallest of errors can completely disrupt his or her golf game.

You must reach him mentally as well as physically. Mentally you must re-convince him or her of their ability and restore their confidence. Never, never let this type of pupil leave the practice tee without having restored his or her confidence and with a couple of key thoughts. The results that you are able to obtain from this type of student will have a very great bearing on your success or failure as a teacher and motivator at your club. Convince your student that above anything else they must always think positively.

Do not be afraid to discuss health habits and general physical condition and where necessary prescribe any changes that you feel will help this person to achieve and maintain their potential. A video tape of this player is a must and a reference for present and all future instruction. This pupil is an excellent subject for video tape and can be helped tremendously with it's use.

#### GROUP TEACHING

Due to escalating costs, shortages of time, etc, group teaching has been greatly expanded at our club. Experience has shown that the results obtained from this type of instruction are of a very high calibre. The opportunity for a pupil to so vividly see errors and progress in other students seems to allow them to more easily grasp a mental picture of their own problems. Another advantage is that it allows the professional to reach many more members in the same amount of time and generally the remuneration is greater than time spent in individual instruction.

My classes are set up in 3 sections according to handicap, 0-15, 15-30, 30 and up. Three professionals work with each group and the groups are assigned one session per week for 5 weeks consisting of one hour sessions with a 15 minute allowance for overtime. The same format as for individual instruction is reasonably followed with the addition of sand shots.

The students are set out in a semi-circle, the type of shots that we are going to cover in a particular session is briefly discussed, demonstrations and explanations made. The group is then split into three and we work with each student individually while the others are asked to observe and make any pertinent comments. When a pupil has a particular problem the method of correction is explained to the whole group.

We make certain that each instructor handles a different group each session. Our success with this type of instruction has been most gratifying in respect to the female section of the club. The male membership still seeming to prefer individual instruction.

CONCLUSION

I have attempted to outline my personal methods and approach to teaching the game of golf. However, constant change and innovation are necessary, there is something new, different and challenging to be learned about teaching every day.

From the foregoing I hope that you have gathered that I feel that every pupil is a new and unique problem and experience.

I am convinced that you must be able to sell yourself and have confidence that you have acquired the necessary knowledge and possess the ability to pass this knowledge on to your student. Without this your success as a

teacher will be very limited. With my method, the mental aspect if the game definitely takes precedence over the physical. The student must have absolute and complete mental picture of what he or she is trying to accomplish before they have any hope whatsoever of physical success.

Your physical condition and appearance are of primary importance. The only way you can hope to really motivate a student is that you embody as much as possible the aspirations of your students.

Every teaching aid available should be experimented with, if useful they should be incorporated into any successful teaching program. The training grip, graph-check, camera and video tape are all very valuable tools in my teaching program.





POTENTIAL OF GOLF IN THIS COUNTRY  
HOW C.P.G.A AND GOLF PROFESSIONAL  
CAN IMPROVE

The Golf Professional and the C.P.G.A. must always be in the forefront of any new ideas and improvements, the propagation of New Management techniques and the dissemination of same to the public at large.

The Golf Professional must be a motivator at his Club as well as the particular district in which he is located. He must expend every effort to present a completely athletic professional image. Personal habits, appearance, etc., must be given a very high priority.

A very strong Junior Program is a must at every Golf Club, the Professional must do everything possible to instill a love of the game and a respect for all of it's historic traditions. The Junior Golfer is the best insurance of the continued healthy growth of this finest game. The Junior is the hope for improvement of the calibre of Canadian Golf, he or she must be welcomed with open arms.

The Junior must be convinced of the tremendous opportunities that golf can provide. One, as a sport for their health and recreation. Two, as a tool to provide social and business advancement. Three, as a means of livelihood. But above all for the cradle to the grave fellowship and comradeship that only golf can provide.

The Golf Professional and the C.P.G.A. must make every effort to be involved in the life around them. Each and every opportunity that a Golf Professional has to appear or speak publicly on behalf of a civic function or charity, does a great deal to enhance the image of our profession at the same time enhancing the overall image of the Game of Golf

If the C.P.G.A. and every member of our profession

followed these principles seriously, there is no doubt in my mind that golf would continue to flourish and that new golf complexes would be an automatic outgrowth of this program.

There is no doubt that the good life we enjoy in Canada has tended to make our athletes a little lazy and to lack ambition, but I personally see a trend toward a much more competitive state of mind in all our countries athletes. We as Professionals, teachers and motivators must make certain that this change takes place in our Game of Golf.

## RESPONSIBILITIES OF A CLUB PROFESSIONAL

The Club Professional is and always must be the focal point and most noticeable personality at his Club. He should embody everything that a Professional should be.

1. The Professional should be able to play a good game of golf.
2. The Professional must be the motivator and teacher.
3. The Professional must be able to attract and keep the best possible staff available. This staff must include excellent teaching personnel, a good Shop Manager, an excellent Starter, a good electric car man and last but not least a competent supervisor for the Back Shop.
4. The Professional must have the organizational ability to run a top notch Junior Program and to organize group lessons or clinics for adults.
5. The Professional must be able to motivate his staff to provide service of the highest calibre. Stock and display golf equipment and a complete line of allied sportswear, selected and purchased with discrimination, consideration being given to the members esthetic and monetary taste. The Pro Shop Staff should exude an aura of friendly competence.
6. The Professional should attend all meetings of the Match & Handicap Committee, he should be able to provide counsel and advice on everything pertaining to the Game of Golf. The Professional and his Staff must willingly provide all necessary assistance to assure the success for all club tournaments.
7. The Professional should attend all Greens Committee meetings and be able to provide up to date information as to the condition and playability of the course and to make any necessary suggestions for improvement.

8. The Professional should initiate weekly meetings between himself, the Manager and Greens Superintendent to ensure that each department is co-operating with the other and that each department head is aware of all of the upcoming events at the Club. These meetings will go a long way towards ensuring that the membership is receiving value for the money being paid out and that the club functions as they hope it will.
9. The Professional must always keep in mind that he is the Public Relations Officer of the club, with special attention being given to any and all guests of members. In this regard he must always have a few sets of top-line clubs available for the guests who for one reason or another have'nt got their oen equipment.
10. The Professional must always be very aware of his appearance both physically and in mode of dress. The club has every right to expect the Professional to be in reasonable physical condition and to be extremely well groomed. The neat, clean appearance being far more acceptable than the extremely modish. To sum up, the Professional is responsible for the efficient operation of every aspect of the members enjoyment of the golf facilities provided by the club.

STAFF TRAINING PROGRAM

Quite naturally the ideal Staff Training Program is one which will supply to you what you and your members consider to be outstanding staff.

Prior to commencing any Staff Training Program the Professional must have a crystal clear picture of exactly what he hopes to achieve and exactly what skills he requires from each and every employee.

As we are all aware many of our employees are people who have no intention whatsoever of making a career out of the Game of Golf and therefore are quite difficult to motivate.

The initial requirement of any Staff Training Program is to evaluate the knowledge, experience and general character of the people that you are going to employ. Even though an employee may be experienced and quite conversant with his particular responsibilities, his or her training must continue with the goal of achieving even better performance.

Prior to the start of the season or prior to the commencement of employment, a personal discussion must be carried out with each and every employee to be certain that they have complete comprehension of what their goals must be and their goals coincide with your own.

Having achieved this, you should then proceed to a job description, this job description must be as complete as possible covering every aspect of the task. The guideline laid down in Module #5 of the 1976 Management Seminar "The Skills of Employment" are as good a basis to proceed upon as any that I could suggest.

The most important aspect is trying to ensure that all aspects of the employees particular responsibility are fully covered and that they are reviewed and up-dated as frequently as necessary.

One very important aspect of all training programs is to make absolutely certain that the employee feel that if necessary he may come to you for advice and that each and every suggestion made by him or her will be evaluated, thoroughly discussed and if found to have merit implemented if only on an experimental basis to start.

It is absolutely essential that whenever possible that there be day to day contact with all personnel. This day to day contact signifies your complete interest in day to day activities as well as allowing you to nip in the bud any problems that may arise while they are still in their infancy.

A schedule of weekly evaluation meetings must be instituted with as many of your key personnel as possible. These meetings should be free exchange of ideas with the employees being encouraged to speak as freely as possible and to present as many constructive ideas or innovations as possible.

ROLE OF THE GOLF PROFESSIONAL IN NEXT TEN YEARS

I cannot see the role of the Professional changing a great deal, although the type of financial arrangement that a Professional may have with his club could be greatly revised.

My personal opinion is that there is a very great probability of the Professional becoming much more of an employee of the club than he is at the present time.

The position of the Golf Professional will vary greatly from club to club as it does to a degree at the present time. The financial position, size of installation and modus operandi of each club having a bearing on the position.

The Golf Professional at every club must become much more directly involved in the overall operation of the club and must take every possible step to prepare and train himself for this eventuality.

The C.P.G.A. Management Seminars and our new college level program in Professional Golf Management are all aimed in the right direction. The onus falls on the individual Professional to avail himself of these opportunities that have been made available, plus the myriad of others that are readily available by correspondence or adult evening classes.

The whole world is on the move and the Golf Professional must expand every effort to continue to learn new skills and techniques if our profession is going to be able to keep pace and prosper as it should.

With the ever increasing interest and time available for recreation the Professional who is able to make the necessary educational strides should have almost unlimited opportunities.

The role of the Golf Professional although varying as stated earlier, must grow in every respect. My hopes for the future Canadian Golf Professional is that he becomes

the foremost of golf executives, fully conversant and expert on every facet of successfully supervising any golf installation anywhere in the world.

The field of Professional Golf as I see it is one of continuing expansion and opportunity for any young ambitious man who is able to motivate and prepare himself to grasp the opportunities that will present themselves.