

GET MORE OUT OF “LEARNING SEASON”



By Andy Hilts, Director

We've often heard it said that “you learn something new every day.” During PGA Show week I must have learned something new every five or 10 minutes. There was a PGA Global Youth & Family Summit, a Junior Golf Development Forum, plus more than 20 hours of education in Proponent Group's famed room W109B. Added to that was the vast array of seminars

that make up the PGA Education Conference. If you got to town early or stayed afterward you could take advantage of multiple certification programs, each one adding another notch to your credentials belt.

Thinking back on all that I notice a challenge that emerges. We have to take what we were exposed to and work it into everyday business life. For many of us that means transferring all the excitement, energy, and education to your staff.

I got a first-hand example of this at ChampionsGate, the Orlando facility where instructors on the David Leadbetter Academy staff gather each year at the start of Show Week. There was even some Proponent Group input, in the form of Lorin presenting his “10 Current Trends in Golf Instruction.” (That's a good one to grab from our video archives, if you haven't seen it.) Each year Leadbetter brings his entire staff to Orlando for a few days of education, celebration and planning for the year ahead. Seeing his entire team on hand, building stronger bonds and all trying to improve as coaches, was inspiring.

All professions seem to be more keen on training and professional growth—not just golf instruction. I've witnessed team meetings recently at the offices of my chiropractor and

my dentist, as well. There are early-morning pow-wows that start each office's workday. Even though the various practitioners are working on their own patients, they still have a common mission to achieve—providing great experiences to the client base while supporting individual health and wellness. I noticed that during those brief huddles the staff members discuss which patients they will see over the coming day. They set daily goals and work to develop the right mindset for the day, as a group.

I got curious and asked what other training sessions or meetings these offices engage in. Turns out both of them head off-site at least once a year for in-depth sessions. One of them does a destination trip as a team over a long weekend. In addition to these annual planning events they each provide in-house professional-development sessions, where they close the office for a half-day or full day, every few months.

Whether it is quarterly, weekly or even daily quick-hitting catch-ups, these various techniques will help to keep your team well-informed and all in agreement on performance expectations. Ideally you would utilize a blend of all of the above, depending on what outcome you are trying to achieve. If you have a post-PGA Show meeting, it should likely be more than just a quick-hitter, given that staff members will have gathered so many new ideas and be in such a good position to build an implementation plan together.

In cases like this, make sure you prepare a written agenda for the group the day before your meeting, so attendees get time to prepare for any topics. Over time you may even have a staff member who needs more management experience develop the agenda and run the meeting. Get your new-season meeting on the calendar ASAP so you can pass along the energy of the “learning season” and get the team focused for a successful 2018. **PG**

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