

# PGA of America

## Career Fitness Manual

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### **Introduction**

Today's golf industry is prompting an evolution of roles and responsibilities for PGA Professionals. With this come new challenges and opportunities that PGA Professionals must be prepared for. Now, more than ever, PGA Professionals are being asked to play major leadership roles in the golf industry.

Your role as a PGA Professional is to understand how the industry has evolved, embrace these changes, and pursue the subsequent opportunities that fit your interests and skills. The "PGA Career Fitness Manual" is a tool developed to help PGA Professionals move forward in the industry and help them prepare for new and better opportunities in their careers.

### **How to Use this Manual**

This manual is divided into sections, with each section pertaining to different areas that can help you in your career development and planning. Please refer to the table of contents and choose the material that is best suited for your particular career situation.

### **Career Services Mission and Strategic Objectives**

The PGA Career Services mission is to advance PGA Professional careers, assist employers, help foster successful employment relationships, and promote the employment of PGA Professionals.

Here are a few of the PGA Career Services strategies:

- Advance PGA Professionals into greater, higher level, employment opportunities
- Expand the PGA job market by identifying new opportunities for PGA Professionals
- Inform qualified PGA Professionals of golf industry job opportunities
- Promote the hiring of qualified PGA Professionals
- Assist PGA Professionals through counseling on career development
- Foster successful and long term employment relationships with employers
- Help develop competitive compensation packages
- Assist employers with the hiring process
- Provide resources and tools to help PGA Professionals improve their performance and provide value to their employer.

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### SECTION A Tips for Succeeding in Your Job

**Insist on a Job Description** – You must understand your roles and responsibilities. Make sure that your responsibilities and performance measures are clearly documented in your written job description. This helps in understanding your employer’s expectations for you in your role.

**Understand Your Employer’s Needs** – In addition to understanding your overall responsibilities, it’s also important to know your employer’s objectives and key priorities. By knowing this, you can focus your time and efforts on the areas that are most critical to your success and can help you better meet your employer’s needs.

**Insist on a Performance Evaluation** – Make sure that you have the opportunity to have your performance measures reviewed annually or more often if possible. Knowledge of how well you are meeting your employer’s expectations is critical in your success.

#### **Utilize the 4 “V’s” To Highlight and Demonstrate Your Value**

- **Be Visible** – Make sure you are seen by and interact with your customers, staff, department managers, and facility leaders. Spend more time than ever finding out what your members / customers need and want from your facility. Find out what it will take to have them use the facility more and bring others with them. Take those suggestions and develop targeted business plans to enhance revenue.
- **Be Valuable** – Facilities and organizations know that the key to weathering competitive markets and tough economic times is to identify, nurture, and reward their “Most Valuable Players.” PGA Professionals who continually demonstrate value to their employer will not only secure their own position, but will successfully aid their facility in overcoming the down cycles.
- **Be Vigilant** – Always be cognizant of the challenges facing your facility and your role in the success of your facility. Be determined to be a part of the solution and not part of any problems. This will ensure you will be viewed as a valuable asset to your facility, always determined to move forward in a positive manner, leading others at the same time. Being vigilant and relentless in this area may be the most important thing any professional can do to ensure long-term success.
- **Be Vibrant** – During times when facilities are facing challenging economic realities, morale tends to wane and a facility can lose its vibrancy. PGA Professionals who are willing to fight that trend and embrace a positive mental attitude in the face of staff cuts, budget cuts, and other economic necessities are able to weather the storms better and are better positioned to take advantage when times improve.

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**Keep a Good Attitude** – Attitude is everything! On the way to work every day, you have a choice of what your attitude will be:

- **Glass half empty** – bemoaning that things are not as good as they used to be, having to do more work with fewer people and for less money, etc.
- **Glass half full** – appreciating that you work at a golf course and not an office building, remembering that the PGA Professional has the opportunity to take the lead in setting the tone, atmosphere, and energy level at their facility. Endeavor to make each day a better day at your facility.

**Stay Current and Stay Educated** – Stay on the cutting edge through continuing education, including PGA and Non-PGA certification programs, PGA Section and National education, allied association programs, online education, and local college classes, as well as industry publications and expositions. And also remember to stay abreast of current technology and effectively utilize the many tools available including social media.

**Hire the Best** – Hire the best people for your staff, provide them with proper training, and instill in them your vision and expectations of the experience you want customers to have at your facility.

**Pay Attention to the Little Things** – Don't overlook or take for granted the things that matter to employers, i.e.; being a team player, being reliable, being on time, being positive and upbeat, etc.

**Develop an Effective Business Plan** – Develop and implement a business plan that sets measurable objectives and goals that can be reviewed during your performance evaluation. An effective business plan can also promote teamwork, provides a road map for improving operations, and allows you to take a leadership role.

**Keep Track of Your Accomplishments** – Develop an “ACCOMPLISHMENTS” file folder and every time you accomplish something noteworthy, make a note of it and place it in the folder. This can be helpful in performance reviews and for updating and improving your resume at year's end.

**Maintain Good Communication** – Keep your key players informed and up-to-date on your activities and on what you are doing to improve operations, enhance services, develop new programs, etc. This can include your supervisor, other department heads, your staff, and your customers.

**Adapt and Be Flexible** – Stay flexible and adaptable, especially important as the golf industry evolves to meet the challenges of a changing environment.

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**Be Consistent** – Be consistent with policies, rules enforcement, pricing, etc. – don’t fall into the “VIP Trap.”

**Build Horizontal and Vertical Alliances** – Make sure you communicate with peer management, as well as those above you, below you, and your customers.

### **Embrace Growing the Game and the Business of Golf**

One of the most important initiatives undertaken to make golf more relevant, more welcoming and convert millions of individuals interested in golf into regular players is Player Development. This initiative will result in a more vibrant, sustainable golf industry resulting in better employment opportunities for PGA Professionals.

With Player Development, a set of strategies designed to grow participation and increase revenues will enhance the PGA Professional’s value in the industry. Embracing this plan and developing skills to bring more customers to the game and to our facilities is essential.

### **Three Strategies of Player Development**

- **Retain/Strengthen the Core** – Knowing and nurturing current customers is key to guiding them to be our most loyal customers. Delivering different experiences to each segment and best practice customer service will protect this group from further erosion and give us time to grow new customers. Use of customer service techniques and affinity marketing will ensure these “power customers” drive the majority of our facility revenue.
- **Engage “Lapsed” Golfers** – Market studies show 90 million Americans describe themselves as “lapsed” golfers, with nearly 70% aspiring to play again. Welcoming these former customers back is key, so PGA Professionals must understand how to engage various market segments including women, seniors and the entire family unit. Utilization of technology-driven, interactive experiences will provide non-traditional gateways into the game for many of today’s younger generations.
- **Drive New Players** – Understanding how to reach the 84% of American households who do not play golf is essential. This represents the “building blocks” of our future striving to show how golf can be enjoyed by everyone, everywhere using tactics successfully used by soccer and other team sports. Engaging the nation’s growing minority population in the game represents a unique opportunity and challenge. It will require a concerted effort employing refined marketing strategies to be successful. A PGA Professionals understanding of how to accommodate these new players will be vital to growing beyond the current 16% of U.S. households playing golf.

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To help ensure the vitality of golf and to make golf relevant in America for future generations, golf courses and PGA Professionals will need to adapt and evolve to changed consumer behavior brought on by the recession and other influencing factors in our country. The PGA is committed to providing PGA Professionals with the tools needed to succeed in Player Development. Changes in PGA education programs will correspond with the opportunities Player Development will provide for PGA Professionals, who will be encouraged to use the tools and education provided to learn the why, what and how of developing new players and new business. All this will lead to success for you and your facility.

### **Eight Basic Principals to Stay on Top in Business**

**Tom Peters, “In Search of Excellence”**

1. **A bias for action** -- A preference for doing something, anything; rather than sending a question through cycles and cycles of analyses and committee reports.
2. **Staying close to the customer** -- Learning their preferences and catering to them.
3. **Fostering autonomy and entrepreneurial efforts** -- Encouraging independent and competitive thinking.
4. **Productivity through people** -- Creating in all employees the awareness that their best efforts are essential, and that they will share in the rewards of the company's success.
5. **Big picture focus** -- Hands-on, value driven-insisting that executives keep in touch with the company's essential business. Watch the bottom line!
6. **Stick to the knitting** -- Remaining with the business that the company knows best.
7. **Simple form, lean staff** -- Few administrative layers, few people at the upper levels.
8. **Simultaneous loose and tight properties** -- Fostering a climate where there is a dedication to the central values of the company combined with tolerance for all employees who accept those values.



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### SECTION B

#### Understanding and Demonstrating Your Value

It's an old adage in our business that PGA Head Professionals, Directors of Golf and General Managers get hired for having one set of skills and replaced for not having another. One example might be a professional who is hired based on their excellent customer service reputation and later they are admonished for less than stellar budget prowess. The underlying message is that the "grading system" changed and either no one told the professional or the professional was unable or unwilling to adjust. What is often heard from employers is; "Our business model has completely changed in the past two years but our PGA Professional has not kept pace."

It is human nature to focus on historic successes. Unfortunately, in any unpredictable business climate, emphasis is necessarily placed on the here and now. There are many factors, much like fitting together the pieces of a jigsaw puzzle, to remaining relevant and valuable in the eyes of your employer. The key element that many professionals overlook is identifying and solving the 3-4 "puzzle pieces" that the employer feels are absolutely critical. Just as every PGA professional is unique, every facility is unique with its own strengths, challenges and current priorities. Therefore, each will weigh the "puzzle pieces" uniquely. Below is an illustration of some fundamental components that employers may use to differing degrees in assessing their PGA Professional:



**Team Player** – As staffs shrink, the importance of each member understanding not only the facility's goals and challenges but also their role on the team becomes more critical. While individualism can be a valuable trait, it is wise to be seen as someone who has the organization's interests at the forefront and is a cooperative and contributing team member.

**Financial Acumen** – In the past, private equity clubs may have left the budget in the hands of the controller or general manager. Now many have joined the ranks of for-profit facilities and hold each department head financially accountable.

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Employers expect that not only will the PGA Professional develop the budget and understand the financial statement, but also provide analysis and recommend remedial actions on the fly.

**Work Ethic** – In many instances the previous generation of PGA Professionals set a work schedule that may be difficult to live up to today. Some would make the case that the modern work environment is more stressful and there are fewer opportunities such as playing to unwind. Still, if you look at your supervisor, owner and customers, most of them are probably also working harder and longer with less support staff than they would like.

**Leader/Motivator** – It would be hard to overemphasize the value employers place on leadership. The PGA Professional is the gold standard of the golf operation. We have the education and experience and we are expected to use those to the benefit of the facility. Thanks to PGA education and the commitment of our members, good managers are not rare. However, as in any industry, people who can lead and motivate are a sought after and valuable commodity.

**Visible** – It is a symptom of the many responsibilities of today's Head Professional or Director of Golf that interacting with the golfers is one of the first things that may be sacrificed on a busy day. Yet, that is one of the things that employers most often list as a needed area of improvement for their PGA Professional. The best among us make time to do what they like – greet the golfers and provide them a welcoming environment.

**Adaptability** – A trap that PGA Professionals need to be aware of is being stuck and committed to comfortable habits. Supervisors we talk to many times note that while they have been happy with the past, they meet resistance from the professional when they suggest new ideas or procedures. It can mark a professional as inflexible or un-coachable and perhaps replaceable.

**Communicator** – It is possible for a person to be a leader, be visible and adaptable and yet not succeed in communicating his or her vision. A key facet of the success puzzle is conveying goals to team members, supervisors and customers. In a world when everyone has both too much information available and not enough of the right information, it is imperative that PGA Professionals communicate with their employers effectively. Some have taken to producing weekly or monthly "Executive Summaries" for their supervisor providing a brief update and highlighting accomplishments and challenges. Another valuable resource is the PGA Professional Report template available at PGA.org. It guides the PGA Professional through the process of itemizing their accomplishments since the last performance appraisal.

**Rainmaker** – The PGA Professional who is able to drive revenue either through new member sales, increased rounds by existing golfers or promoting and serving outside groups will stand out and be sought after in this economy.

**Energy/Creativity** – While adaptability is being willing to try new things that are suggested, energy and creativity comes from within. We in the golf business have the privilege and joy to live and work in a setting that many of our customers envy. It is obvious when a person genuinely enjoys their work. A lack of motivation or energy may strike those people as petty and self-indulgent.



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Many of us feel we lack creativity, the ability to develop original ideas or programs. But there are ways we can tap into the creativity of fellow members. Two that come to mind are to reach out to your fellow PGA Professionals to find out what is working for them and be sure to visit the Best Practices site at PGA.org.

It is more critical than ever that PGA Professionals truly are “the experts in the game and business of golf.” In addition to the above traits, most employers are also looking for growth in the following areas, based on their needs and priorities, along with **evidence of quantifiable accomplishments:**

- **Time Management** – As long as there are 24 hours in a day, we will all probably end the day having not accomplished everything we hoped. Prioritization then is essential. It is much better to leave at the end of the day, knowing that you were able to accomplish what was most critical.
- **Customer Service** – While technical skills are important, customer service and interpersonal relationships are absolutely fundamental to a PGA Professional’s success. For PGA managers, this includes indoctrinating your golf staff from outside services to assistants with a “service-first” philosophy.
- **Staff Management** – Increasingly, PGA managers are evaluated on their ability to recruit, hire, train, manage, develop, motivate, evaluate and mentor those they supervise. The service levels and competency of the staff will be a reflection and extension of the managing professional.
- **Interpersonal Skills** – Different from customer service, or staff management, these skills refer to the ability to successfully interact with a broad constituency. This includes people such as, supervisors, other department heads and vendors.
- **Technology** – Virtually every facility values the ability to use golf operations and POS applications, Word, Excel, e-mail, database and contact management, website development and social networking sites. Current employees, who disdain technology or refuse to utilize it, do so at their peril.
- **Marketing / Player Development** – At almost all facility types, developing and implementing programs and activities to increase rounds, participation, memberships, customer base and create new players is high priority for employers.
- **Teaching / Playing** – Fortunately, providing instruction programs to all skill levels, coordinating junior golf programs, playing golf with members/customers, playing competitively and Pro-Am participation is still viewed as an asset only the PGA Professional provides. Don’t allow your teaching and playing ability to deteriorate and become a negative to your career as well as your enjoyment of it.

Finally, remember the best job security is to prove that you are more valuable to your employer and your facility today than you were yesterday. Make sure that you have done everything possible to set yourself up for success.

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### SECTION C Continuing Education

Are you looking to advance in your career? Are you wondering how to achieve better employment opportunities or achieve a certain distinction that will set you apart from other PGA Professionals? Improving your skills and knowledge through continuing education can help you do a better job and provide more value to your current employer, as well as enhancing your credentials and making you a more qualified candidate for future job opportunities.

#### **PGA Certified Professional Program 2.0**

#### **PGA Advanced Education - Overview of Program**

This substantial training effort will also return to a “blended learning” and more personalized model in order to engage the generational differences within the PGA membership to include both online learning and Instructor-led training at the Section level. The course load is being re-designed to both reflect meaningful workplace issues and scenarios that can be fulfilled with required courses and self-directed electives. PGA Member Advanced Education programs include the PGA Certified Professional Program 2.0 and PGA Master Professional Program 2.0.

The mix of Best Practices and face-to-face interchange will cover key competencies to assist the customer journey and reconnect in ways that strengthen relationships and loyalty thereby keeping PGA Professionals competitive, increasing their value to the golf facility, and better able to increase the golf facility’s income. Key competencies include:

1. **Leadership/Team Building Skills:** Motivate and inspire your team to achieve business objectives. Effectively set objective and manage your team’s performance. Build an effective teaming culture that increases the business’ overall agility and responsiveness. This includes crafting the vision and mission for the team and aligning the group’s objectives and performance accordingly.

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2. **Interpersonal Skills:** Build effective relationships with key clients/members, the community, and the broader network of golf professionals.
3. **Sales and Marketing/Customer Profiling:** Implement innovative marketing strategies that promote services, attract new players, and ultimately drive incremental revenues of the various elements of the broader facility. Understand and track the competition, and implement strategies to respond to competitive pressures.
4. **Business Management:** Ensure a financially viable operation through prudent expense management and pricing strategies. Manage the legal risk of the various facets of the operation. Read and understand common financial statements and operational metrics
5. **Customer Service:** Create an operation that consistently meets or exceeds customer expectations, while creating a superior golf experience.
6. **Strategic Thinking:** Evaluate operations in a strategic light by identifying external opportunities that capitalize on the strengths/opportunities of the operation as well as the weaknesses of the competition.
7. **Information Identification:** Evaluate information sources for potential value to decision making.
8. **Decision Making:** Make sound business decisions that are supported by data and forward-looking projections of the business.
9. **Use of Technology/Social Media:** Effectively use technology to understand and profile your customer, collect and analyze data/trends, and leverage relevant technologies (social, Internet, mobile, etc.) to drive clever and innovative marketing campaigns that result in incremental business to the club.
10. **Golf Operations/Retail:** Effectively oversee the day-to-day administration and operation of the facility. This includes the delivery of instruction, player development programming, equipment, carts, tournaments, the retail and merchandising pro shop, and course maintenance. This also includes a thorough understanding of the facility's layout and features, as well a process for documenting these items.
11. **Functional Operations:** Oversee the day-to-day operations that support the core golfing experience, such as food, beverage, aquatics, as well as administrative and membership operations.

Revisions in all PGA Education began with the Professional Golf Management Program 2.0 launched January 2010 and are extending to the Advanced Member Education programs. The impetus of PGA Education 2.0 is that the coursework must *immediately* transfer and apply to the PGA Professional's business. As a result, the programs' look takes the best of the digital world and integrates it with human interaction, mentoring and coaching.

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To coordinate the effectiveness and efficiencies of learning & development programs key systems needed to be implemented that include:

1. **Learning Management System:** PGA Knowledge Center (PKC) creates a “one stop shop” for PGA Members to access an Advanced Education plan of courses which manages progress and reports on training of all types, including formal and informal learning, live events either in person or via the web, web-based courses, hands-on labs, assessments, reference material, and more. PKC provides the tools necessary to combine diverse training offerings into learning plans, and deliver these plans to the individuals and groups that need them. Administrators also have the ability to configure the site to meet their organization's unique training requirements to include:
  - a. Custom welcome messages and completion certificates
  - b. Unique course and assessment completion rules
  - c. Approval workflows
  - d. Organization-specific user profiles
2. **Metrics that Matter:** a talent development reporting and analytic system to measure learning effectiveness in informal and social learning environments resulting in improved financial performance.
3. **Online Community:** use social media tools for effective collaboration through the creation of online communities which align with business goals and strategies of PGA Professionals.

With these systems in place the revised curricula can become interactive and directly applicable to the workplace with metrics reporting to ensure the viability of knowledge gained. Case in point is the revisions to the PGA Certified Professional Program 2.0 which include:

1. **Consolidated Certifications:** CPP 2.0 will provide three (3) certifications to include General Management (to add Ownership/Leasing and Executive Management), Golf Operations (to add Retail), and Instruction
2. **Certification Courses:** reduced from 42 courses to 20 courses of which 6 courses will be self-directed electives
3. **Online Library:** fee-based 365-day access to 1,500 courses vs. 240 in the original CPP 1.0 library providing a vast range of knowledge to further PGA Professionals’ business requirements beyond preparing for CPP 2.0 assessment. It is estimated that between 100 – 150 hours is required to prepare for Assessment

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4. **Work Experience:** measures to determine knowledge effectiveness for application to Best Practices will be established in a required Capstone Report for each course. Element of the report to include:
  - a. Operations – revenue per employee, cycle time of events/programs
  - b. Productivity – number of sales calls, lessons, equipment fittings
  - c. Management – employee training, employee satisfaction, budget goals met
  - d. Financial – sales per employee, operating income growth, inventory turnover
  - e. Customer – customer acquisition, customer satisfaction, customer transfer to client
  - f. Employees – efficiency, productivity, problem resolution
  - g. Innovation and Creativity – program launch success, suggestions for improvement
  - h. Marketing and Sales – revenue per employee, market share, improved delivery
5. **Assessment:** PGA Professionals will have the option of choosing either a computer-based test or a special project that is presented and graded by peer-review to confirm knowledge gain and Best Practices preparedness

*\* Please Note: To obtain current up-to-date information at any time, please click on the following link: [PGA Certified Professional Program](#)*

### **Additional Continuing Education Opportunities:**

- Education programs at PGA Merchandise Show and PGA Demo and Fashion Experience
- PGA Section and Chapter education programs
- Local college and university programs
- Online education programs
- Allied association and pre-approved provider programs (see the following list)

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The following organizations do not require pre-approval for PGA members to receive MSR credit:

- American Management Association (AMA)
- American Society of Association Executives (ASAE)
- The Association of Golf Clubfitting Professionals
- Association of Golf Merchandisers (AGM)
- Bill Madonna Golf Academy
- Club Managers Association of America (CMAA)
- Dale Carnegie Training
- Flexor Sports Training
- Franklin Covey
- Frankly Academies LLC
  
- Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA)
- Hank Haney Golf
- Ladies Professional Golfers Association (LPGA)
- Mitchell Golf Equipment Company
- National Golf Foundation (NGF)
- PING
- Ralph Maltby Golf Club Repair and Fitting
- Dr. Rick Jensen's Performance Center
- Titleist
- Titleist Performance Institute
- United States Golf Association (USGA)
- Accredited university/college business education courses



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### SECTION D Career Opportunities in Golf

In today's golf industry there are many exciting career opportunities available to PGA Professionals in addition to traditional golf operations positions. Below is an overview of some of the more frequently requested jobs that are available through the PGA's Career Services.

**GENERAL MANAGER / COO.** Many of the most prominent opportunities available for PGA Professionals are for general manager positions. Many clubs and facilities are looking for PGA Professionals to serve as the Chief Operating Officer. The PGA Professional who serves as a General Manager / COO is normally removed from the management of day-to-day golf activities and becomes more involved with the big picture. General Managers are typically accountable for all areas of the facility, ensuring synergy in all departments and activities.

General Managers work with owners or the Board of Directors to implement and carry out facility missions, long-term objectives, and policies. The general manager oversees all aspects of the operation and fosters relationships between the facility, board, ownership, members, guests, employees, community, government and industry. One of the main responsibilities is to keep ownership or board informed on the facility's performance and report significant issues.

Successful general managers are leaders who can build a team by hiring, training, supervising, and coaching staff members. They are accountable for all departmental budgets and can analyze, interpret and recommend or make corrective measures when necessary.

A general manager needs to know the principles and operational objectives of all the facility's departments including the food and beverage and course maintenance operations. If there are issues, the general manager notifies the department manager of the need for corrective action.

A general manager's compensation can be some of the highest in the industry, ranging from \$72,000 to \$225,000+ based on responsibilities, facility type and fee structure, clientele, departments, services and budget.

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**Manufacturer's Sales Representative** -- Representatives can work as an employee of one company or as an independent representative for many manufacturers' lines. The skill and experience focus is on sales, interpersonal skills, merchandising and product knowledge, and organizational skills. Compensation ranges from \$45,000 to \$135,000 depending on the company and qualifications.

**Golf Learning and Player Development Centers** -- The newest golf ranges and practice facilities are Golf Learning and Player Development Centers. Learning and Player Development Centers are upscale learning and practice facilities that may include better and more extensive practice areas, golf schools, custom club making, club fitting, swing analysis, and even a few practice holes to play. Skill and experience requirements focus on excellent individual and group instruction programs, high-level customer service, swing analysis, club fitting and club repair. Compensation ranges from \$30,000 to \$65,000 based on experience and the business.

**Golf Retail Store Management** -- Many retail sporting goods and golf specialty stores are looking for PGA Professionals to manage their golf retailing business. Departmental management positions require experience and knowledge in golf retail operations, sales, merchandising, instruction, swing analysis and club fitting, club repair, golf product knowledge and sales trends. Compensation ranges from \$35,000 to \$72,000 based on responsibilities, experience and the company.

**Association Management** -- There are opportunities to work at golf associations such as PGA Sections, State Golf Associations, National Golf Associations, etc. Desired skills and experience include good business management, project management, interpersonal and customer service, fiscal management, personnel management, computer applications, marketing and promotion and overall knowledge of the golf business. Compensation ranges from \$45,000 to \$175,000 based on experience and the position.

**Rules Official** -- There are opportunities for PGA Professionals who are experienced as rules officials and are USGA/PGA Rules Certified (92+ on rules exam). Golf Tours, Golf Associations, and PGA Sections are always in the market for good rules officials and tournament managers. The job requires excellent rules knowledge, usually requires rules certification, and experience administrating rules during competition. The position may require extensive travel. Compensation ranges from \$45,000 to \$90,000 depending on the level of Rules expertise, experience and the level of competition.

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**Tournament Director** -- If you are experienced in tournament administration, enjoy managing large events, and are proficient in the Rules of Golf, this may be the job for you. There are PGA Sections, Golf Associations, Golf Tours, charitable and corporate entities, and other organizations that are interested in good Tournament Directors. Competencies for this position may include extensive tournament management experience, marketing and promotion skills, tournament software knowledge, excellent knowledge of the Rules of Golf, calligraphy, good interpersonal skills, and good project management skills. This position may require extensive travel. Compensation ranges from \$30,000 to \$90,000.

**Marketing and Promotions Director** -- Golf facilities and management companies are now pursuing individuals who have marketing and promotional skills to develop and coordinate marketing and promotional strategies for their facilities. This position usually requires extensive experience in marketing and sales, membership recruitment, database and contact management, and strong interpersonal and communication skills. Compensation ranges from \$30,000 to \$65,000.

**Consulting** -- Golf course managers, owners, and prospective owners are looking for experienced PGA Professionals who can provide information and expertise on operations, marketing and long range planning. Additional consulting opportunities are available for feasibility studies, pro-forma and project development and start up. Desired skills and experience may include course ownership experience, operation consulting experience, extensive operations management expertise, and facility start-up experience. Compensation is based on the scope of work.

**Club Repair / Fitting Specialist / Sales** -- Manufacturers are actively seeking PGA Professionals who have strong club fitting and club repair experience for positions in product demonstrations, demo days, club fitting, club repair and adjustment, and product sales. Desired skills and experience include swing dynamics, club repair, club building, sales, sound teaching skills, and extensive club fitting, sales, and interpersonal skills. The position could require extensive travel. Compensation ranges from \$30,000 to \$90,000.

**College Golf Coach** -- Many colleges and universities at all levels are looking to PGA Professionals to fill positions as golf coaches. Desired skills and experience include good organizational abilities, strong teaching background, knowledge of NCAA rules and recruiting regulations, plus the ability to motivate and mentor team members. Compensation varies depending on the position, school, division, etc.

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### **How to get started**

If you are considering a non-traditional career path, talk to established individuals in your areas of interest and ask them the following questions:

- What is the job like?
- What are the pros and cons?
- What are the short and long term job prospects?
- What level of compensation can I expect?
- What experience, skills, and education will I need?
- What is the best plan to get started?
- Who are the best people to contact?
- How should I structure my job search?

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### **SECTION E** **What Employers Look For**

For a PGA Professional to be successful as an employee, you must meet your employer's needs and expectations. Understanding the expectations of today's golf industry employers is essential, especially as you recognize the changes that the industry has undergone.

The PGA Professional Golf Management Program and other PGA education programs reflect the changing demands of today's employers. Successful PGA Professionals will be aware of these expectations and develop skills accordingly.

#### **Every Employer Wants...**

- Strong interpersonal skills
- Customer service skills
- Verbal and written communication skills
- Leadership and decision making skills
- Computer and technology competencies
- Professional appearance and image
- Overall knowledge of the golf business

#### **Traditional Golf Skills...assumed because we are PGA Professionals**

- Golf operations management
- Teaching
- Playing ability
- Tournament management
- Merchandising
- Rules of golf knowledge
- Club fitting and repair

#### **New "Market Valued" skills...desired by many employers**

- Ability to find creative ways to increase rounds, revenues, activities, profits, etc.
- Marketing and customer/membership recruitment skills
- Budget and financial management including expense management and reducing operating costs
- New program development and implementation
- Team building and personnel development including HR functions and FLSA/Wage and Hour Guidelines
- Food and beverage management (for applicable positions)

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PGA Professionals must be aware that the specific skills, expertise, and requirements of employers can vary based on several factors:

- Position Type – Head Professional, Director of Golf, General Manager, etc.
- Facility Type – Private, Public, Resort, etc.
- Ownership Type – Member-owned, For-profit, Municipal, Management Company, etc.

Never assume anything about your employer's expectations...knowing and meeting those expectations is the key to your success. Developing skill sets to meet the variety of needs of today's employers is more critical than ever. Never overlook the traditional golf skills that distinguish PGA Professionals from other professional managers but understand that those skills are only part of what employers are seeking.

Regular meetings, communication and feedback throughout the season plus formal performance evaluations are essential in understanding what is most important to your employer and how well you are meeting their expectations. Development, presentation and discussion of a business plan with your employer can be invaluable in a full understanding of their goals and objectives.

Employer communication is paramount to success for your job now and for future positions. The PGA Employer Communication Plan and Revenue Scorecard can assist you with timely, informative and necessary communication reports to your employer. See the Employer Communication Plan [HERE](#) and the Revenue Scorecard [HERE](#), both reside on PGA.org.

### **Strategies to Succeed:**

- Strengthen your traditional "core" skills – be the golf expert
- Build new "market valued" skills that drive rounds, revenues, memberships and profits
- Seek and assume more management responsibility
- Stay abreast with industry trends, technology and best practices
- Communicate effectively with your employer to know if you are meeting expectations
- Concentrate on jobs that fit your skills, experience and that further your career track
- Position yourself as part of the revenue stream, not part of the cost center

### ***ULTIMATELY...***

Do your best to understand your employer's wants and needs since they are ever changing, THEN prepare and position yourself to be a solution to your employer's management challenge.

***REMEMBER...Success is "when preparation meets opportunity!"***



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### SECTION F Career Evaluation and Planning

Whether you are at the beginning of your career or are evaluating your career path to date, taking steps to make sure you have selected a path that matches your passions, interests, values and skills is important. The following questions are provided to help you accomplish that goal. You should also make an appointment with your PGA Career Consultant to assist you with your career planning, goals and objectives.

#### **What Is The Difference Between A Job And a Career?**

**Job** – Getting paid for work performed

**Career** – A chosen profession; a life work; success in one’s profession

1. A. Is your current employment a job or a career?

Job \_\_\_\_\_ Career \_\_\_\_\_

B. If you answered it is a job, what is your desired career path?

\_\_\_\_\_

C. If you answered a career, are you fully satisfied with your current career path?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

2. A. Of all the jobs you have held, which one did you like the most?

\_\_\_\_\_

B. What was it about this job that you enjoyed most?

\_\_\_\_\_

3. What three major career goals do you want to accomplish?

A. \_\_\_\_\_

B. \_\_\_\_\_

C. \_\_\_\_\_

4. What three major life goals do you want to accomplish?

A. \_\_\_\_\_

B. \_\_\_\_\_

C. \_\_\_\_\_

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5. What kind of work would you like to be doing in one year?

\_\_\_\_\_

In three years? \_\_\_\_\_

In five years? \_\_\_\_\_

6. A. What areas are you most experienced and skilled in?

\_\_\_\_\_

B. What are your unique talents and interests?

\_\_\_\_\_

C. How do these interests relate to your work?

\_\_\_\_\_

7. Are you stuck on a plateau, or in a job that has no further advancement possibilities? Or, has your job become so routine that you are bored? If so, you may have to change aspects of your current position or change positions. If you could do any type of work at all -- with money, education, training, being no object -- what would you really like to do?

\_\_\_\_\_

8. Are you burned out, or dissatisfied with work?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

9. How would you describe your attitude regarding your career at this time?

- Angry \_\_\_\_\_
- Frustrated \_\_\_\_\_
- Don't Care \_\_\_\_\_
- Intolerant \_\_\_\_\_
- Thankful \_\_\_\_\_
- Sad \_\_\_\_\_
- Shocked \_\_\_\_\_
- Happy \_\_\_\_\_
- Satisfied \_\_\_\_\_
- Cynical \_\_\_\_\_
- Content \_\_\_\_\_
- Energized \_\_\_\_\_

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10. Are you seeking an unrealistic career myth for “the perfect job?”

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

11. Are you constantly telling yourself that “your job is awful?”

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Sometimes \_\_\_\_\_

12. Have you considered going back to school?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ N/A \_\_\_\_\_

13. What things make you feel good or give you a real sense of satisfaction in your work?

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14. Other than compensation, what things about your current job would make it better if you could change them?

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15. What do you value most in a job? \_\_\_\_\_

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16. What three golf industry positions are the most appealing to you at this time?

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17. Paint a picture of the perfect job for you in the box below.

### DESCRIBE YOUR IDEAL FUTURE POSITION

Position	Responsibilities	Working Conditions/ Environment	Earnings/ Benefits	Opportunities / Goals	Location / Duration

18. A. Could you assume additional responsibilities in your current position?  
Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

B. If yes, list some additional responsibilities that you could assume.

---



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19. Do you want to assume these additional responsibilities?  
Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

20. Would you ever consider a step down in responsibilities or status for enhanced quality of life? (i.e.; more time off to spend with your family, etc.)  
Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

21. A. Have you considered a similar position at another facility or another company?  
Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

B. If yes, what position? \_\_\_\_\_

C. In a different location? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

D. If yes, what location? \_\_\_\_\_

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22. Have you considered owning your own business?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Describe the business you would like to own and why.

---

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23. What do you see as your next most logical career move, if any?

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24. What types of information gathering are you conducting in career areas that interest you?

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25. A. Define one career specific goal to be accomplished by the end of the year?

---

B. What steps will you need to take to get there?

---

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26. What specifically do you have to offer an employer?

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27. A. Describe your professional appearance and image?

Poor \_\_\_\_\_ Fair \_\_\_\_\_ Good \_\_\_\_\_ Excellent \_\_\_\_\_

B. What steps will you undertake to improve your professional image?

- i. \_\_\_\_\_
- ii. \_\_\_\_\_
- iii. \_\_\_\_\_

28. How would you rate your public speaking skills?

Poor \_\_\_ Fair \_\_\_ Good \_\_\_ Excellent \_\_\_

29. How would you describe your time management skills?

Poor \_\_\_ Fair \_\_\_ Good \_\_\_ Excellent \_\_\_

30. How would you describe your project management skills?

Poor \_\_\_\_\_ Fair \_\_\_\_\_ Good \_\_\_\_\_ Excellent \_\_\_\_\_

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31. A. How good are you at recruiting candidates, screening candidates, interviewing, hiring, training, coaching, developing, leading, motivating, correcting, terminating?

Poor \_\_\_\_\_ Fair \_\_\_\_\_ Good \_\_\_\_\_ Excellent \_\_\_\_\_

B. Which of these areas needs improvement?

---

32. Which of your other skill areas need tuning or improving?

---

33. A. Have you built a solid network and professional reputation in your area, Section, and Association?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

B. If not, how do you plan to broaden your network?

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34. A. How knowledgeable are you of the current state of the golf industry including current trends and initiatives?

Poor \_\_\_\_\_ Fair \_\_\_\_\_ Good \_\_\_\_\_ Excellent \_\_\_\_\_

B. What industry publications do you subscribe to or read on a regular basis?

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C. How frequently do you visit [PGA.org](http://PGA.org)?

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D. Which industry web sites do you visit on a regular basis?

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35. What new skills, experience and certifications will you acquire in the next year?

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36. A. Have you planned out your professional education calendar and professional development for this year?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

B. If yes, what education programs or activities do you plan on attending?

---

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37. A. How would you rank your computer literacy?

Poor \_\_\_ Fair \_\_\_ Good \_\_\_ Excellent \_\_\_

B. What software and computer applications are you able to use:

- \_\_\_ Word Processing
- \_\_\_ Spreadsheets
- \_\_\_ Accounting
- \_\_\_ Tournament Software
- \_\_\_ Handicap Software
- \_\_\_ Tee Time Software
- \_\_\_ Database
- \_\_\_ Point of Sale (POS)
- \_\_\_ Contact Management
- \_\_\_ E-mail
- \_\_\_ Social media and networking

C. What services and information do you use online?

---

38. In what professional groups, organizations, associations are you a member?

---

39. What is the last self-improvement book you read to enhance or expand your skill sets?

---

40. A. Will you commit yourself to conducting one action every day that will move you toward your future career?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

B. If yes, list the top three action steps you will take.

- i. \_\_\_\_\_
- ii. \_\_\_\_\_
- iii. \_\_\_\_\_

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### SECTION G Utilizing PGA Career Services

PGA Career Services offers tools and resources to assist PGA Professionals with their career development. You can find your PGA Career Consultant contact information on PGA.org.

1. A. Are you aware of the career resources and tools available to you?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

B. Do you use them to benefit you?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

2. The PGA offers two different resources for PGA Professionals to find out about new job opportunities. They are CareerLinks and PGA JobFinder. Do you know the difference between the two resources?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

What is the difference? \_\_\_\_\_

3. What other ways can you get information on new job opportunities?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. Is your CareerLinks ProFile accurate and up to date?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

5. Have you gone on PGA.org to review your ProFile?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Date Updated \_\_\_\_\_

6. Who is your Regional PGA Career Services Consultant?

\_\_\_\_\_

7. Have you contacted your Regional PGA Career Services Consultant to discuss your career goals?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Last Contact \_\_\_\_\_

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8. Do you have an updated and current résumé?  
Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Date Updated \_\_\_\_\_
9. Have you reviewed the resume tips and samples on PGA.org?  
Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

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### SECTION H Job Exit Strategies

Part of a comprehensive career plan will include some thoughts regarding how to transition from a position in the most professional manner possible. Regardless of the circumstances, a PGA Professional can have a positive influence when leaving the position and, hopefully, make it a better position for the successor.

Some of the primary reasons one leaves a job include the following:

- Better opportunity
- Geographic relocation for personal reasons
- Loss of job
- Retirement

Regardless of the reason for leaving a position, consider the following:

- **Financial Considerations.** If retiring, make sure you know when you are able to collect from pension plans, IRA's, 401K's etc. Early Social Security benefits may be available at age 62. If leaving involuntarily, inquire about severance pay including payment of unused vacation time or sick leave. One to two weeks per year of service is a good starting point for negotiations depending on position level with senior executive positions warranting up to a month's pay per year of service. You also may also be eligible for your State's Unemployment Compensation.
- **Benefits Coverage.** Continuation of your medical benefits is a primary consideration. If you are an employee of the facility (with 12 employees or more) and the facility provides medical benefits, you could be eligible for the continuation of these benefits under the COBRA laws. COBRA requires employers to offer to employees (and their eligible dependents) the continuation of coverage, at the employee's expense, for 18 months. In certain cases it can be for 36 months. Remember that Medicare coverage usually does not begin until age 65.
- **Concession Ownership.** If you own any concessions, you should be eligible to receive income up to your date of termination. If you own the golf merchandise concession, check your contract to see what obligations are included in a "buy-out clause" if applicable. When setting up your contract, attempt to negotiate with the employer to buy out merchandise at your actual costs, along with any additional fixtures and equipment that may stay with the operation. At a minimum, ask the facility to purchase all logoed merchandise. You should also be prepared if the facility wants to include depreciation in determining equitable buy-out costs.

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- **Notification and Timing.** Basic business protocol would be to provide a minimum of two weeks' notice, although some contracts may require 30 days' notice or more. While each situation is unique, try to give your employer as much advance notification as possible. If possible, schedule your departure at a time when it will cause the least disruption. This will enable a smooth transition that is in the best interests of the next PGA Professional, as well as the facility's customers and your staff. It also positions you to be a key player in the transition process.
- **Succession Planning.** Most employers need help in understanding the avenues available to them to find an appropriate replacement. Make sure your employer is aware of the complimentary career services offered by the PGA and encourage them to contact the PGA Career Consultant who serves the local PGA Section. If there are any current or former assistant professionals from the facility who would be an appropriate candidate for the position, provide those names to the employer. Also, to assist your employer and the PGA in filling your position, provide any appropriate information and data about the operation.
- **Your Staff.** You probably hired most of your staff and they made a personal decision to work for you. Take the time to meet with each of them individually to explain what is going on, to understand their concerns, and to communicate their concerns to the employer if appropriate. If they are leaving as well, try to network to find new opportunities for them and/or write appropriate letters of recommendation.

Your credibility as a PGA Professional is enhanced if you take the time to execute a well thought out exit strategy.

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