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Is Your Locker Room Manager an Asset or a Liability?

Private golf and country club locker rooms are known for the best service and amenities.

However, this is not always the case. If most of the members are complaining about the state of the locker room, then it is already determined that your locker room manager is a liability.

However, if you are unsure, consider the locker room manager's attitude and first impression and the overall condition of the shoeshine room. Other factors are the number of street and golf shoes done daily and whether the locker room manager is visible on the floor. Another consideration is the type of services provided. There must be a variety of quality amenities, neatly presented and topped off. Lastly, what is the relationship between the locker room manager and the attendants?

Attitude and first impression: All it takes is how locker room managers look at you. One can see it in their eyes if they are not happy at work, do not want to be bothered and prefer you not to be there. Job dissatisfaction and overwork can cause it, along with laziness. The opposite is the majority of locker room managers who use your name, always make you feel special and do all they can to make you glad you joined the club.

Condition of the shoeshine room: If the shoeshine room is messy, unorganized and dirty, this can indicate the work ethic of the locker room manager. The room should be an impressive part of the locker room setup rather than an afterthought. A lack of concern for how it looks and functions is a bad start to the day's activities of meeting, greeting and servicing.

Shoes done daily: "Oh, about a dozen pairs." The answer stunned me, making me wonder why so few. Offering shoeshine service to every person must be the norm. The locker room manager and staff must be proactive rather than reactive. They are to get the shoes or at least offer. If the member or guest prefers to drop them off and pick them up, that is OK. Doing the opposite would be poor service.

Visible on the floor: During one visit, I walked throughout the entire locker room without seeing the locker room

manager. In fairness, part of the reason was the work area in the shoeshine room hid him from sight. A simple fix is an open greeting counter. However, one must be out on the floor whenever possible.

Services provided: Shoe cleaning and polishing, dry cleaning and laundry, shoe repair and vehicle detailing are offered. Golf course food and drink deliveries, doing off-site errands and accommodating special requests are others. Guest locker name tags, welcome gifts and loaner golf shoes and shirts in new condition anticipate needs. Text messaging plus business cards makes it easier to communicate, as does voicemail. The business center room with internet, computer, printer and fax at Butler National (Illinois) shows the difference in the details. The Greenbrier (West Virginia) provides warm shoes on cold days by using a walk-in heated shoe closet. Bob O'Link (Illinois), Kenwood (Ohio) and Calusa Pines (Florida) have a Cres Cor Sport QuikDry countertop unit that exceeds expectations. Butler National also features a clothes steamer.

Quality amenities stocked and arranged: Million-dollar locker rooms should not have dollar store amenities. Quality products make the locker fee worthwhile. Arrange the products neatly throughout the day. Stock and prepare for tomorrow the night before.

Staff relationships: Fairness or lack of it will make or break locker room staff relationships. Everyone needs to do their fair share of work. When tipping is allowed, split it equitably. Honesty, respect, trust and teamwork make for a smooth operation.

An asset or a liability? It also depends upon how much authority the locker room manager has to make decisions and changes. A small budget and inadequate staffing have a negative impact. Sadly, is "manager" just a nice-sounding title or a respected team member who attends department and board meetings? Before being quick to judge, another question to ask: "Are you an asset or a liability for the locker room manager?" **BR**