

our employees. I couldn't imagine going to work unhappy all the time.

Yoder: It is all about communication in the beginning prior to a hire. We do our best to give them worst case scenario. During the interview we leave out the "fun" parts or desirable aspects of the position. One question we ask is, "Will you clean the toilet?" even though they won't be doing that. It allows us to get a good read if someone thinks they are above certain tasks. We try to be clear on exactly what they will and will not be doing on the field. We then tell them that no matter if they are doing a particular job or not they can observe, ask questions, and see exactly how we perform a certain task which allows them to still learn. We tell them that in the end if they give it their all and come through with what we agreed on that we will go out of our way to give them a good recommendation.

Burgess: I address all expectations to members at the beginning of each season or their employment, and continue to touch on them often during pre-game meetings.

SportsTurf: How do you provide challenges for the crew?

Barry: We are fortunate enough to have a veteran grounds crew here with the Dragons. Most of the crew has been through almost every situation that occurs during the season. This helps to give the new members of the crew different tasks and challenges to gain experience in all areas.

Deacon: I believe in letting people work and make decisions. I do guide people and try and help them make the best decision possible but I believe the best way to challenge them is to let them work and not stand over them. I like to give them some freedom and then we go back and check and make sure things are done properly. I try and make it easy for them to come to me with questions; some employees are just naturally more comfortable going to one of my assistants so we also encourage that, the bottom line is getting the work done to the

best of our ability, and I believe people work better with a little freedom. We also try and rotate the work around to an extent so that all crew members know how to do more than one thing.

Yoder: We make it clear that we expect detailed, consistent results every day. We show them what we want and check on their work daily. The results we expect don't come easy. When we give them a timeline for their tasks to be completed this turns it up a notch for them to come through. The fact that it is an 81-game season is a challenge in itself to maintain quality day in and day out. Not to mention we have more on field events than Padre games.

Burgess: For the entire crew, full time, seasonal, or game day, I like to mix up the job responsibilities so they become skilled in all tasks we normally perform. I've seen this

pay off when we are in a crunch. It makes my job easier when crew members are not restricted to only one or two tasks. They welcome the change of pace with doing something else as most responsibilities can get monotonous in minor league baseball.

Winter: After proper training and a period of acclimation, I try to make an area(s) of the field "their own." This quickly gives new crew members a sense of entitlement and establishes ownership and pride in what they are doing. A communicated goal is to make the field as good as it can be each and every game on the schedule. We literally "compete" (against the weather, the calendar, fatigue) each and every day.

SportsTurf: How do you foster their strengths while managing their weaknesses?

Deacon: I think the first step is recogniz-

FieldSaver.® Save your field from rain and wear.

Full Infield Rain Tarp

18 oz. Vinyl Spot Field Tarps with Grommets or Weighted Edge

Infield Turf and Collar Protector

Also in 6 oz. poly

FieldSaver® rain tarps are best-in-field for any field!

Special offers ONLY at www.CoverSports.com
For price quotes, sizes and fabric specs,
visit www.CoverSports.com
sales@coversports.com • 800-445-6680

COVER SPORTS
Humphrys CoverSports
Industrial and Athletic Fabric Products Since 1874

ing people's strengths and weaknesses; not everyone can do everything. Communicating about weaknesses can be a hard conversation to have but it is necessary. At the major league level it can be difficult for people to improve on their weaknesses because we can't let it affect the finished product. We do our best to let people try new tasks when the team is on the road or during the off-season, the delicate balance is you also don't want someone who is very good at a particular task to feel like they are no longer needed for that task; that is why I am a big proponent of rotating tasks and rotating shifts to an extent.

Yoder: If we find someone who is above average when it comes learning quick and being detailed-oriented we may be more inclined to put them on edge work or mound maintenance. If we get an individual who is mechanically inclined and good with equipment we may use them in that area. When time permits we will take advantage of that to teach and lead by example what we are looking for in order to help offset a weakness.

Burgess: I make sure I compliment their good work and help them find ways to better their weaknesses. We wind up hosting a lot of games and events so they get a chance to work on these weaknesses throughout the season.

Winter: Having raised three sons and coaching various sports at various ages for nearly two decades, I believe I have developed an eye for talent. I hire based on an individual's strengths, and wait for the weaknesses to arise. Once they are evident, I work to "coach" them through it either physically or emotionally.

Barry: Before each game, we have a list of pre/post game duties for the guys working that night. We learn who does what duties best, and who needs work in certain areas. If someone is struggling in certain areas, we put them with someone who excels in it which benefits both individuals.

SportsTurf: What do you find motivates most crew members?

Yoder: The fact that if they want to thrive in this industry a good reference goes a long way and visa versa. They come in here and knock it down for us we will help them find a job. We also let them know that if they are just an average worker and we ever get a call asking about their performance here we give our honest opinion.

Burgess: I take great pride in what I do and the product we put out on the field, and try to motivate by example. I make sure my crew knows they are a part of the product and if you take pride in what you do, you will see it. They develop the eye and the desire to make everything "perfect."

Winter: I think that clear cut expectations, consistency in person-

ality and management techniques, and the competition to have the best field possible, motivates my guys. I also outfit them with the best game day uniforms possible, do all their laundry, and "love on them" as much as possible. If they know they are cared for as a valuable part of a team, they will perform.

Barry: Motivation is easy to find early in the spring when the season is just starting. As the grind of the season wears on, it can be difficult to keep the crew pushing through the heat of summer. Being appreciative to the crew for their work is a major key to success. Compliments on their work, constructive criticism, and a simple thank you for their hard work goes a long way. If they are proud of the work they do, and look forward to improving it, the final product will be better.

Deacon: I think different things motivate different people. We have a union grounds crew so we have some guys that are motivated simply by the paycheck and overtime, and we have guys that are motivated to move into a position like mine. When we hire now that is what we look for—people that are motivated to move forward and move up, they seem to do the best job.

SportsTurf: How do you get everyone to work together?

Burgess: It helps when all the crew knows the process we use to get through a game day, pregame prep, post game prep, sod projects, etc. When the crew understands the processes, they run a lot smoother.

Barry: Success on the field revolves around working together. One of the biggest keys to that is communication. Keeping the crew informed on the daily schedule, what needs to be done, and who is doing it helps things run smoothly. Communication increases efficiency. The more efficient your crew is, the less tensions rise, and the easier it is to work together.

Deacon: We try and make everyone aware of what is going on and what we are trying to accomplish, this includes letting them know what events will be going on besides baseball. I don't think people like surprises, sometimes things come up and we adapt but I think the more everyone knows what is going on the easier it is to work to a common goal.

Yoder: First of all we go out of our way to interview and double check references for all new hires to not only find out if they are going to be a good worker, but just as importantly a good people person that can adapt well and get along well with others. The only option for all crew members is to work well together. We let everybody know that if they don't mold well or fit into our existing operation and the chemistry involved, that they won't last long. I value my crew and the long-term veterans and if they have a problem with someone, then I do too, and either [the problem] gets rectified

pronto or they gone. We simply do not tolerate anybody rocking the boat in anyway.

SportsTurf: What working environment or culture have you found works best to get a great crew?

Winter: Again, consistency is key to the work environment. There are few surprises when they come to work. They know it will be a safe place that is free of drama, bickering, and backstabbing. We communicate honesty and openly, and do it “right now.” A great crew starts with great people. Great people are only found in a thorough, methodical hiring practice. I work to find individuals that fit our mold and motto, which is, “Hard work often times can be a substitute for knowledge, but rarely does knowledge serve as a substitute for hard work.”

Barry: Again, we are blessed with a great crew here in Dayton. Each crew has a different personality, and functions differently as a whole. There is not one proper way to manage every crew; it depends on the personalities of the manager and the crew. We have a pretty laid back environment here. The crew knows what to do, and how to do it properly. Jokes are common, but hard work is as well. I believe this keeps the morale up and the job fun, which helps to create the best product possible for the team and fans.

Deacon: I think you have to be fair, honest and approachable. The job has to be enjoyable, which can be difficult, but you also can't sacrifice the quality of work for a good time. You have to remember the old saying “you can't expect someone to do something you wouldn't do yourself.” I also believe it is important to acknowledge when people do a great job.

Yoder: A ‘lead by example’ operation and also a sense of ownership works best. By assigning crew members a specific area of our operation that they are responsible with their name on it creates a sense of pride and tends to get the extra mile out of an individual. We don't simply tell someone to do a job for the

first time or give them an assignment unless they have seen it demonstrated from someone who has done it 100 times before.

Burgess: All positive. Good or bad, I try to have the crew looking forward and how to better any situation and not dwell on

anything too long. If one person keeps a negative spin on things, it will bring everyone else down. I also try not to keep everything as employer and worker. I want to know about each member personally because as we go through the year, we all become a family. ■

TURFACE ATHLETICS™

NEW

Pro League® Champion Brown™

HOME FIELD ADVANTAGE

The #1 Conditioner for Safe & Playable Fields

Pro League® Red

Pro League® Heritage Red™

Pro League® Champion Brown™

Pro League® Natural

Give your infield the unique, deep brown color of NEW Pro League® Champion Brown,™ or select one of our other custom-engineered colors to enhance your field. Our full line of infield conditioners are designed to provide you with the safest, most playable fields.

BETTER PERFORMANCE. BETTER COLORS.

For a sample, call 800-207-6457.

For more on the Pro League lineup, visit www.turface.com.

Find us on Facebook
[facebook.com/turface](https://www.facebook.com/turface)

HIRING THE RIGHT PERSON

The process for hiring a new employee can be difficult and time consuming, usually takes a lot of preparation and work, and depending on the position it can have major ramifications for your staff. Having a plan and outlining the steps will go a long way toward being successful. I have outlined some steps that will hopefully cause you to think about the hiring process a little differently and provide assistance.



▲ **Bill Griffith**, Walla Walla CC, Walla Walla, WA

DETERMINE WHAT YOU NEED

What are your strengths? How do you spend your time? What are your weaknesses? Try not to duplicate your weaknesses in a new hire. Hire someone that is strong in areas that you are weak. Hire capabilities, not credentials or qualifications. “This guy must be good; he worked at major league ball club and has a master’s degree from Penn State.”

Should you use a job description as part of the hiring process? You are hiring a 3D person, so be careful about using a 2D resource. How im-

portant are the qualifications? How do qualifications, certifications, prior education, etc. fit into the role you are looking for the hire to fulfill?

How important is the attitude? Maybe the key is, “It’s not what you know, but what you are willing to learn.” Be very clear about your expectations. What role are you looking for this person to have on a day-to-day basis? Is hiring Superman really possible? Move from the conceptual to reality. Are you looking for the right person, or a resume? How do character, personality, prior education, etc., rank in importance in a new hire? What do you think the future goals should be of the person you are looking for? Is this a long-term position, transitional or career-building?

Make a list of the capabilities you are looking for. Things

like qualifications, certifications, prior experience, attitude, communication skills and teachability might be some areas to look at. Prioritize those capabilities.

DETERMINE HOW TO INTERVIEW

Select the interviewer(s): In addition to the immediate supervisor, there may be individuals with whom the candidate will interact who should also be part of the interview and selection process.

Identify selection criteria: The interviewer(s) should review the responsibilities of the position and reach agreement on what education and experience requirements are necessary, as well as the required behavioral qualifications (e.g., communication skills, teamwork, customer service).

Review cover letters/resumes/applications: Using the selection criteria, the interviewer(s) should carefully review the application materials to determine which candidates should be interviewed.

Develop appropriate questions: The interviewer(s) should develop job-related questions that will be asked of all applicants to probe their education, level of related experience, and other attributes required for the position. One great strategy is to look at other companies that have top performers and learn what makes them top performers. We network with our peers about other practices, why not hiring? What are the key factors you are trying to discover? Select and prioritize the key things you are looking for in a new hire. What are the key factors you need to disclose? What are the key things about your organization and you that you need to disclose to endure a good fit?

ASKING THE RIGHT QUESTION

Here are some good general questions:

- What do you expect from a manager? What can a manager do to help you stay motivated?
- Tell me about a situation where you were able to have a positive influence on the actions of another person? What did you do?
- How do you motivate yourself to do something you don’t find enjoyable or really don’t want to do?
- What do you do when you make a mistake? How do you handle it?

- Have you ever dealt with a manager's policy you weren't in agreement with? How?
- Share an example of how you were able to motivate employees or co-workers.
- Have you handled a difficult situation with a supervisor? How?

QUESTIONS THAT HELP DETERMINE ATTITUDE

- What kind of people have you found it difficult to work with? Why?
- Describe a situation where you were in the wrong, and others knew it. What did you do?
- Tell me about an instance where you had to work with an angry user. What was the problem? How did you resolve it?
- What has caused the most pressure for you in a work situation? What did you do about it?

QUESTIONS THAT HELP DETERMINE PERSONALITY

- What circumstance brings you here today?
- How would your best friend describe you?
- What would you say are your two greatest weaknesses?
- Sometimes, it doesn't hurt to throw a very abstract question into

the interview to see how the person responds, such as "Why are there interstate highways in Hawaii?"

QUESTIONS THAT HELP DETERMINE LEADERSHIP

- What is the difference between a leader and a manager?
- Describe the best boss you have had. How would you define the qualities of a good manager?
- Tell me about a leadership experience that did not go as planned.
- Describe some of the circumstances under which a leader can fail.

QUESTIONS TO HELP DETERMINE WORK ETHIC

- Who is the most successful person you know in our industry, and why do you think he/she is successful?
- Describe your work ethic.
- How many hours a week do you think you need to get your job done?
- Have you been in a situation where you didn't have enough work to do? What did you do? ■

Bill Griffith is a turf management instructor and advisor at Walla Walla Community College, Walla Walla, WA.



Southern Athletic Fields
DIRT
You Gotta Love it!

- ◆ Infield Mixes (naturally blended/custom blends)
- ◆ Mar Mound and Plate Clay
- ◆ Mulemix Field Conditioners
- ◆ SAF Warning Track
- ◆ SAF Coat Infield Topdressing
- ◆ Field Accessories (rakes, tamps, bases, drags)

Call 800.837.8062
www.safdirt.com
Follow @DIRTGottaLoveIt
Southern Athletic Fields on



MAINTAIN YOUR INFIELD

DIRT DOCTOR JR™ INFIELD DRAG AND GROOMER

- Easy to use all-in-one drag and groomer.
- Quickly and easily adjust height without tools.
- Plow, pulverize, drag and finish in one pass.
- Rugged construction provides years of dependable operation.

NEWLINER™ HD DRY LINE MARKERS

- Heavy duty steel construction provides years of durability.
- Galvanized steel hopper prevents rusting.
- Backed by our 18 month warranty.

NEWSTRIP
INC.
AURORA, CO | 1-800-624-6796 | WWW.NEWSTRIP.COM

acid soil Green-up rake calibration Mowing Dormant Cover trees Resiliency verti
 alkaline Economics Green Cation Leader Rich b
 Drain Aeration Testing Irrigation Fertil
Riviera Water Seeding Football
 Organic matter Recovery Rate Soccer bench setting No. 1
 surfactant Soil Preparation Racks cold tol
 fungus Coated Grooming pH soil performan
 Pre-merger Roller Quick Draina
 rhizome winterkill Level Damage environment Gra
Coverage chlorosis cultivation
 Stolons foliar fertilizers biologic

TURF MANAGEMENT IS COMPLEX.
 RIVIERA SIMPLIFIES IT.



-cutter Germination
 wear & tear planting infiltration
 bermudagrass Dirt Scalp winter kill
 Baseball
 Topdress Broom Planning
 Moisture **Best**
 conditions
 Drought
 Coated
 Nutrients
 nitrification
 health
 Transitional Scalp
 Resistant
 Pesticide
 crew
 Organic
 strip
 Climate
 overseed
 Grooming
 Clay/Sand
 Thatch phytotoxic
 Spreader
 Grain
 Chemical
 overseed
 micronutrient
 Germination
 salt index
 green-up
 microclimate
 cutting height
 fertigation

From pro sports stadiums to Olympic Games venues to hometown fields, Riviera bermudagrass seed is the heart of consistently successful turf programs, worldwide. With super quick grow-in, enviable lush quality, unbeatable resistance to heat, cold, drought and disease – plus super-fast injury recovery – it simply gives you a lot less to worry about. And compared with sod, for a lot less cost. Make it your central strategy, too.



800-375-4613 • www.johnstonseed.com

SELECTING TURF ADHESIVE IS CRITICAL: Q&A WITH NORRIS LEGUE, AKA GURU OF GLUE®

Editor's note: Norris Legue is president of Synthetic Surfaces Inc., which manufactures synthetic turf adhesive products

There is no such thing as a “one size fits all” adhesive because an adhesive that is outstanding for one application might be a disaster for another. There are hundreds of adhesives on the market and some are excellent for one application and unsatisfactory for another. When a person asks, “What’s your best adhesive?” it shows the person has little knowledge of the complexity of adhesives. For example, that’s why the designers of first-aid “band aid” type adhesives do not want the adhesion to be

▼ Stand-up Trowel

so strong that it tears the skin when being removed. Oppositely, instead of stitches, a surgical adhesive that is designed to hold skin together after an operation must not prematurely peel away or break.

Q: Are there many different types of synthetic turf adhesives? If so, what are their differences?

Legue: That narrows it down, but it’s still a very broad subject. For example, there are adhesives for use outdoors vs. indoors; adhesives for recreational surfaces like synthetic turf athletic fields and playgrounds vs. synthetic turf adhesives for aesthetic purposes like landscaping, lawns, highway median strips, roof tops, etc. [Buyers] need to look beyond price as well; higher performing adhesives can withstand athletic activities and weathering and prevent the need for repairs later.

Q: What is your opinion on outdoor synthetic turf adhesives for installing and repairing synthetic turf athletic fields and playground surfaces?

Legue: Weather varies from hour to hour, day to day, with different seasons and different climates. Hence, the adhesive selected should not be a “fair weather only” adhesive because there will be a very limited installation and repair time window. Since time is money, unnecessary delays created by using “fair weather only” adhesives can be very costly.

Furthermore, selecting an outdoor adhesive based on indoor laboratory test results *after* the adhesive has cured is a waste of time.



◀ Left: Airless Spray Center: Glue Box Right: Squeegee

During installation, in very cold or very hot weather, a good outdoor adhesive should prevent the turf from moving due to wind lift, edge curl, creep, wrinkling, buoyancy from unexpected rain, expansion and/or contraction due to surface temperature changes from sunlight, shadows, passing clouds and so on. Furthermore, selecting an outdoor adhesive based on indoor laboratory test results *after* the adhesive has cured is a waste of time. The first important thing is installation in variable weather and after cure, then long-term exterior durability.

Q: What different types of adhesives for synthetic turf are used commercially today?

Legue: They are hot melts, one and two-part liquid solvent-free urethanes; one-part and two-part solvent-based urethanes; two-part epoxy and one-part solvent-free silane/silicone based adhesives.

Q: Of those, which type is most often used for synthetic turf?

Legue: It's one-part urethane adhesives by far, but the word "urethane" is like the word "metal." Just as there is a big difference between gold, zinc, cobalt, lead, iron, uranium, tin, aluminum, etc., there is also a big difference between adhesives that fall under the word "urethane". For synthetic turf, some give disastrous results and others, in our opinion, are far superior to other adhesives.

Q: Can you narrow down the type of urethanes that make it easier to install synthetic turf and those that are the opposite?

Legue: Relatively speaking, one-part liquid urethanes that are both solvent-free and with high isocyanates (NCO) contents above 9% have a host of installation problems ranging from crystallizing (turning solid) at about 50° F and not re-liquefying when warmed; to foaming in high humidity; to slow cure in low humidity; to negligible tack and "grab" to prevent turf movement during installation.

Oppositely, many solvent containing one-part urethanes with low NCO contents, enable turf installations ranging from freezing to hot desert temperatures; they do not crystallize on cold days; do not foam on humid days and do not stop curing in dry desert-like conditions. Installers don't have to "baby sit" them during installation.

Q: How do you find a synthetic turf adhesive that is suitable for an application?

Legue: I suggest contacting adhesive manufacturers and ask for literature and a MSDS sheet. If the information received is weak, ask about some of the points I've made here. Don't accept a verbal sales pitch or buy solely on low price. ■

The Best Dressed Sports Fields Start Out In Our Hands.



Major League Baseball. National Football League. Major college programs. High School teams. America's leading sports fields use America's best field marking paints and custom stencils. When great teams choose to decorate their fields, they turn to World Class.

WORLD CLASS
athleticsurfaces

We Make The Games Look Better • www.worldclasspaints.com • 1-800-748-9649



Rugged. Consistent. Dependable.

The Best Field Chalker in the Business. **Beacon Streamliner.**

Beacon *Streamliners* are simply the best dryline field chalkers you can buy.

Our field testing has proven the *Streamliner* delivers the most consistent, solid line while saving chalk and reducing costs. It uses 30-50% less chalk than other chalkers. Use your smart phone to scan this code and *watch it in action!*



BEACON ATHLETICS



800-747-5985 BeaconAthletics.com

FOR FACILITIES . FIELD MAINTENANCE . GAME-PRACTICE EQUIPMENT

FROM THE GROCERY STORE TO SPORTS FIELDS: HOW AN IDEA CAN MOVE

Do you waste time every day meeting with your crew on what needs to be accomplished each day? Do you text message instructions on who needs to do what and when it needs to be done by? Does your staff always wait on you for things to do? If only there were a way to reduce the times you answer, “Yes!” to these questions? Well, not surprisingly, there’s app for that.

It is funny sometimes where you get ideas, or how a small idea can grow into a completely different application than it was originally intended for. I was at the grocery store one Sunday afternoon to pick up a few things, and like all good husbands, I texted my wife to see if she needed anything else. While pacing several aisles waiting her reply, I ran into my sister-in-law doing her weekly shopping for her family of six. When I told her I was waiting

on her sister to text me back, she laughed and said, “You don’t have an app for that?”

She began to tell me about an app that allows multiple users to access, edit, and check off items a shared list. She said it is the perfect “fix” because her kids can all use the shared list and add the items they need. So I immediately headed home and downloaded an app to my and my wife’s phones so we could begin sharing a list. I soon began to wonder if I could use this digital grocery list as a to-do list at work.

There are several shared to-do list style applications in both the Apple App Store and the Android Google Play market places. These applications allow users to create or upload lists, edit tasks, check off completed items, and even assign task to specific persons. Several of these apps are free to download and have the ability to purchase upgrades, such as Our To-Do List, SimplyUS, Wunderlist, and GTask. If it works for making sure your spouse helps get the grocery list done, why can’t we use it in the turfgrass industry?

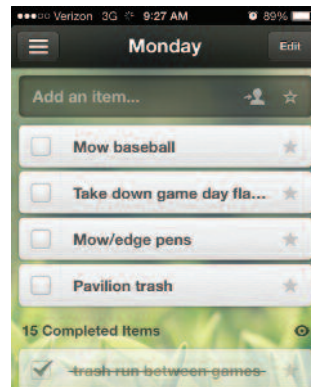
Creating a group and sharing your facilities work list is a simple way to reduce downtime and increase efficiency.

Sports turf managers can create the week’s job list and monitor progress from a mobile device, or with some versions, your PC with ease. My staff no longer sits and waits on my direction for their next task because they can access the list and move on to the next job. This has allowed my staff to be productive and take ownership of their area and jobs with the use of technology. Download one today and see which one works best for you. ■

Brant Williams, CSFM, CPTM, is Manager of Athletic Facilities for Dallas Baptist University.



▶ A screen shot of the Wunderlist app.



WHAT APPS DO YOU USE?

SportsTurf magazine is compiling a list of smart phone or other handheld device or laptop computer apps that turf managers are using today. Email us with a short description of the app and how you use it and we’ll list them in an upcoming issue. Thanks. Email the editor at eschroder@specialtyim.com

Main image © iStockphoto.com/cybrain