

Texas Golf Course Superintendent Expert Opinion about Non-agronomic Competencies Essential to Career Success

David Chalmers, dchalmers@ag.tamu.edu
 Gary Wingenbach, g-wingenbach@tamu.edu



Valid responses were collected from an expert panel of 20 Texas Golf Course Superintendents (GCS), representing five Texas GCS Associations (Table 1). A majority of the respondents were members of the GCSAA and held CGCS status at the time of this study.

Table 1
Frequencies for the Texas Golf Course Superintendent Experts (N = 20)

Questions	Response Types	<i>f</i>	%
What is your Texas GCS Association affiliation?	North Texas GCSA	11	55
	South Texas GCSA	4	20
	West Texas GCSA	2	10
	Texas Gulf Coast GCSA	2	10
	Central Texas GCSA	1	5
Are you a member of GCSAA?	Yes	19	95
Do you have CGCS status?	Yes	11	55
	No	9	45
If you do not have CGCS status, are you working toward it?	Yes	6	66
	No	3	33
What facility type do you serve as GCS?	Private	11	55
	Public daily fee, municipality owned	5	25
	Semi-private	2	10
	Public daily fee, privately owned	1	5
	Resort	1	5

Note. Frequencies may not total 20 because of missing data.

Texas GCS experts averaged 14 years as a GCS (minimum of 5 years was required to be on the panel of experts), and had slightly more than 7 years of service at their current facilities (Table 2). Respondents' ages ranged from 32 to 58 years, averaging 43.5.

Table 2
Descriptive Statistics for the Texas Golf Course Superintendent Experts (N = 20)

Questions	Min	Max	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
How many years have you worked as a GCS?	5	34	14.05	8.45
How many years of service do you have at your current facility?	1	22	7.30	5.91
How many facilities have you been employed as a GCS?	1	10	3.20	2.24
What is your age?	32	58	43.55	8.14
How many holes are at your facility?	9	63	26.40	13.82

Table 3 shows the results of Texas experts' ratings for the competencies essential to career success as a Golf Course Superintendent. To remain in the final list, two-thirds of the experts had to agree or strongly agree with each competency listed.

Table 3

Percentages of Texas Golf Course Superintendent Experts who Agreed or Strongly Agreed with Competencies Essential to Career Success as a Golf Course Superintendent (N = 20)

Competencies	%
Be able to delegate tasks	100.0
Be able to solve problems	100.0
Budget your time effectively	100.0
Budget your time efficiently	100.0
Communication (verbal)	100.0
Creative problem solving	100.0
Have a real desire to succeed with the resources available	100.0
Hire the right people	100.0
Let employees know what you expect of them	100.0
Personal development (balance work with family/friends; seek activities/hobbies outside of the job)	100.0
Proactive versus reactive	100.0
Recognize personal weaknesses	100.0
Self motivation	100.0
Skill in professionalism	100.0
Time/schedule management	100.0
Writing/composition skills	100.0
Ability to effectively prioritize	94.4
Achieve your facility's goals	94.4
Achieve your goals	94.4
Apply correct mathematical calculations	94.4
Back your decisions with documentation	94.4
Basic computer efficiency with operating irrigation programs	94.4
Basic computer efficiency with programs such as Word	94.4
Be able to delegate responsibilities	94.4
Be able to manage a budget	94.4
Be goal oriented in your present position	94.4
Believe in yourself	94.4
Develop a cohesive team	94.4
Financial skills for budgeting	94.4
Know your facility's expectations	94.4
Know your facility's goals	94.4
Love what you do	94.4
Maintain a productive work environment	94.4
Make sure employees follow through with their day-to-day operations	94.4
Must have good people skills	94.4
Organizational skills	94.4
Patience	94.4
Perform under pressure	94.4
Planning	94.4
Problem solving	94.4
Proper grammar, punctuation in written work	94.4
Resourceful at finding solution to problems	94.4

Competencies	%
Seeking player input and feedback	94.4
Set goals for your facility	94.4
Set goals for yourself	94.4
Share your employer's expectations with your staff	94.4
Spend more time hiring the right individual	94.4
Strong work ethic	94.4
Take pictures of projects before and after completion	94.4
Think before reacting to situations	94.4
Training (show employees how to do something, then hold them responsible)	94.4
Trust your employees	94.4
Understand financial statements	94.4
Understand how financial statements impact the facility	94.4
Understand your employer's expectations	94.4
Understand your business	94.1
Ability to address issues on a golf level	88.9
Ability to deal with member relations	88.9
Ability to teach employees	88.9
Ability to train employees	88.9
Apply correct mathematical principles	88.9
Appreciating the need for a quality playing area	88.9
Appreciating the need for a well maintained playing area	88.9
Be a great listener	88.9
Be a smart manager-use a schedule board so everyone is on the same page	88.9
Be prepared to develop capital projects	88.9
Be seen on the golf course	88.9
Become involved with local chapters as well as with GCSAA	88.9
Believe in your decisions	88.9
Business management	88.9
Conflict resolution	88.9
Continuing education efforts	88.9
Develop good organizational skills	88.9
Have safety practices in place	88.9
Listening skills for employees	88.9
Listening skills for member relations	88.9
Network-learn from other superintendents' mistakes and successes	88.9
People management skills-employers, members, regulatory officers	88.9
People skills	88.9
Personnel management/human relations	88.9
Professional development (visit with peers at monthly meetings; get involved with committees and task groups)	88.9
Recognize personal strengths	88.9
Record keeping	88.9
Skill in etiquette	88.9
Take direction from management	88.9
Understand the game of golf	88.9
Understand your competition (be prepared to shop them; ask questions)	88.9
Understand your market	88.9
Work well with other department heads	88.9
Work with other departments to meet company goals	88.9
Communication with management	88.2
Job safety (OSHA, workman's comp, insurance, accident reporting and investigating)	88.2

Competencies	%
A positive attitude will get you through burnout, tough problems, and things out of your control	83.3
Ability to communicate on the level of players	83.3
Ability to deal with customer relations	83.3
Ability to say no	83.3
Appreciating attention to detail	83.3
Basic computer efficiency with spreadsheet programs	83.3
Be prepared to bid capital equipment	83.3
Communication (non-verbal)	83.3
Communication with members	83.3
Communication-learn to enjoy communication with everyone (not everyone will understand your vision or direction; sometimes repeated presentations are required)	83.3
Critical thinking	83.3
Document your employees' successes	83.3
Environmental/conservation issues	83.3
Financial skills for purchasing	83.3
Interdepartmental communication	83.3
Knowledge of the game	83.3
Motivational skills	83.3
Network-get involved with other superintendents in your area	83.3
Politics-community relations, department staff interactions, upper management	83.3
Project management	83.3
Public speaking to a group or an individual	83.3
Be able to make decisions	77.8
Be goal oriented in your career (direct your goals accordingly-location, money, and prestige)	77.8
Be kind, courteous	77.8
EPA regulation	77.8
Equipment knowledge, i.e., selection for quality to protect investment	77.8
Leadership	77.8
Be involved in growing the game at your facility	72.2
Knowledge of human resource laws, policies, insurance, liabilities	72.2
Memo writing skills	72.2
Personal appearance (dress appropriately; keep a sharp appearance)	72.2
Presentation skills	72.2
Pump station selection and maintenance	72.2
Seeing the course from the players' perspective	72.2
Years of experience	72.2
Ability to predict solutions	66.7
Document your employees' mistakes	66.7
Equipment knowledge, i.e., repairs, maintenance	66.7

Acknowledgements:

Ms. Sarah Clopton, Sr. Manager, Curriculum - GCSAA

Dr. Richard White, Texas A&M University

Mr. Bryan Brown, Royal Oaks Country Club

