
• **REDUCING RESIGNATIONS** •

A member resignation often makes club executives cringe. Losing a member, for whatever reason, has a negative impact on the club's financials and places an additional burden on the club to replace that member. Creative Golf Marketing urges its club clients to establish a resignation policy which requires a written request for resignation to be received from members a minimum of three months in advance.

“Allowing members to just resign at the drop of a hat was acceptable when club rosters and waiting lists were full. But today that’s rarely the case and clubs deserve a reasonable amount of notice by the resigning member,” explained Steve Graves of Creative Golf Marketing. He suggests resigning members across all categories be obligated to a minimum three month resignation period. That gives the club the forewarning to recruit and replace that member and provides a cooling off period where the club has the opportunity to determine and rectify any issues or concerns the resigning member may have.

Graves believes resignations should be irrevocable after the 90 day period and if the member desires to return to the club at a later date, another initiation fee would be required. “Resigning from a club should be viewed seriously by both parties and with consequences for the resigning member. By implementing this resignation notice period, you will have fewer members believing they can simply jump out and jump back in to club membership, which is often a common occurrence at private clubs these days,” he concluded.

• **REMOVING THE RENEGADE COMMITTEE MEMBER** •

Do you have a clear policy for removing committee members who are working at cross-purposes with club leaders? The process for appointing committees in a member-owned club usually is specific; selection by the president with approval by the board of directors, for example. The removal procedure may not be that clear, which could be troublesome if a problem committee member is outspoken or controversial.

Clubs might consider adding the following language or an adaptation to the board policy manual or governance manual. It would cover a club's elected administration from beginning to end in its authority over the selection and removal of committees:

The president, (i) subject to approval by the board of directors, shall appoint all members of standing committees, and (ii) may replace committee chairpersons or other members at any time without cause.

Members may still object if you remove someone from a committee, but you can stand firm, assured you have the authority to take action. (Editors' note: The *PCA* thanks attorney Fred L. Somers, Jr., for his counsel on this item.)

• **BEWARE THOSE ANY-WARM-BODY MEMBERSHIP DRIVES** •

Bill McMahon, Sr., is concerned that many clubs, in the scramble for more members, have less regard than in the past whether newcomers are a good fit for the club.

“When new member admissions are just to get any warm body that will pay the price, a private club will self-destruct,” McMahon wrote in *The McMahon Report*, a publication of the facilities planning and research firm McMahon founded. “It (the club) no longer will be a place for friends, but becomes more of a commercial establishment.”

McMahon urged club leaders to hold firm to the club's mission and vision in selecting new members. “Be sure your membership policies protect your club's culture,” McMahon said.