Business Golf Tool Kit

The Perfect Golf Resource for Business Planners

Individual outings or Tournament planning

by Tom Newton

Author of "Great Games for Golfers"

Welcome

We hope you will find this resource guide valuable when you face the challenge of creating a successful golf related business event for

- Business golf outings
- Meetings with golf included
- Corporate or charity tournaments

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Why Golf?

Golf is good for business.

- A widely popular activity
- Wonderful environment to build relationships
- Enjoyed by people of all skill levels
- Attracts attendance / participation
- Creates memories

"Eighteen holes of golf will teach you more about your foe than 18 years of dealing with them across a desk" ~Grantland Rice

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Where to start

Always start 'with the end in mind.'

- What's your purpose for having the outing and how can you best structure it to achieve desired outcomes?
- Explore your participants objectives for attending and their personal expectations.
- Consider the value of an 'Objectives Memoranda'

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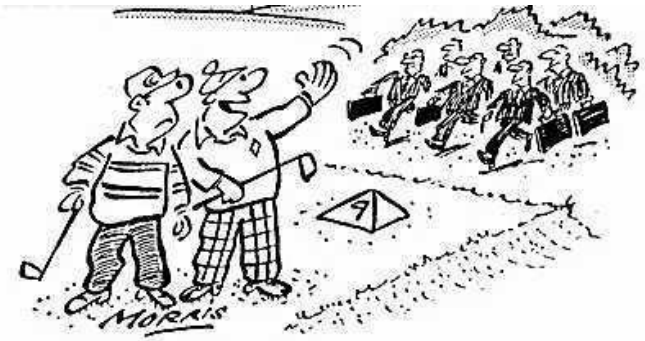
Are we trying to.....

- Build relationships?
- Entertain?
- Reward?
- Team build?
- Make sales?
- Close deals?
- Raise money?
- Thank someone?



"I thought we'd get a merger agreement, so I arranged for our accountant teams to be on hand."

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Know your participants

- **Prioritize -** who to consider most in planning
- **Individual objectives –** desired outcomes
- **Key contacts -** who needs to be informed
- **Relationships –** who should we put together when
- **Conflicts –** who might we need to keep apart

→ **Take the time to outline your participant objectives and action items to achieve them.**

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Golf Etiquette

For host participants and planners….

PLANNING THE OUTING

- ✓ From objectives; consider the right amount of business focus
- ✓ Understand the skill levels of players - manage expectations
- ✓ Educate yourself on the course and know the club rules
- ✓ Know if your guests have any time constraints

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Golf Etiquette

PLANNING THE OUTING cont..

- ✓ Communicate both the arrival time and the tee time
- ✓ Consider providing a golf gift
- ✓ Consider your pairings – match skill level and status
- ✓ Have planning meetings with key people
- ✓ Arrive plenty early and help your guests get acclimated

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Golf Etiquette

BE PREPARED

Your image is affected by how well you organize

✓ Schedule tee times well in advance and confirm the day before and provide the pro shop your participant names

✓ Inform your guests of dress codes and any weather concerns

✓ Share info about the driving range and where to get practice balls

✓ Plan your time – it will take 4 to 5 hours to play 18 holes

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Golf Etiquette

BE PREPARED cont..

✓ Have a back-up plan in case you can't play due to weather or…

✓ More often than not, someone will cancel at the last minute

✓ Confirm with participants the day before - plan for no-shows

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Golf Etiquette

TIMING IS CRITICAL

Realistic time lines are a key to a smooth event….

"Gentlemen, today's meeting will be short, so I'll get right to the point."

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Golf Etiquette

Timing: A Sample Tournament Schedule

9:30 Check-in and breakfast

10:30 Welcome remarks and business meeting

11:30 Clinic

12:30 Box lunches

1:00 Shotgun start

4:30 Cocktails and hors d'oeuvres

5:30 Reception and awards ceremony

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Golf Etiquette

ATTITUDE ON THE COURSE

Guests will remember more about personal conduct and integrity than scores! Train your internal participants to

- ✓ Maintain a positive attitude and sense of humor
- ✓ Be encouraging to guests
- ✓ Avoid foul language and displays of temper
- ✓ Focus on the participants experience, not the golf score
- ✓ Be adaptive to participants *sense of rules* on the course
- ✓ Offer to keep score – but yield to their preferences

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Golf Etiquette

BE AWARE OF GOLF PROWESS

Get to know your participants 'golf abilities' to best manage the experience. Ask "what their handicap is?"

A quick way to identify really serious golfers is to determine if their handicap is less than 10 and/or if they belong to a private club?

A handicap of 11 to 18 is a good average golfer.

Players without a handicap, or one over 20 is someone who typically doesn't play that much.

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Golf Etiquette

AWARENESS:
Skilled golfers will likely

- ✓ Show strong feelings the format and choice of course
- ✓ Have interest in winning the game or the prizes
- ✓ Like to demonstrate their talents
- ✓ Play with others who have similar abilities
- ✓ Prefer to play a traditional game where they can keep their score

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Golf Etiquette

AWARENESS cont…

- ✓ **Customers or clients** will expect to be given special treatment
- ✓ **Players with less skill** will be looking not to make mistakes
- ✓ **Business climbers** will want to play with the most important people
- ✓ **Sales people** will want to play with the big fish customers
- ✓ Etc…

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Golf Etiquette

CONDUCT ON THE COURSE *More suggestions for your in-company participants.*

"You don't have to be a great player to be great to play with!"

- ✓ Stand still and be quiet when your partners are hitting a shot or putting
- ✓ Don't EVER give someone else golf instruction unless asked
- ✓ Understand the basic rules – but don't be the rules enforcer
- ✓ Know where carts are not supposed to be (around tees and greens)
- ✓ Be a good citizen and fix your divots, ball marks and rake traps
- ✓ Beware of casting shadows in other players putting line

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Golf Etiquette

CONDUCT ON THE COURSE cont…..

- ✓ Provide guests beverages and snacks - Limit alcohol consumption
- ✓ Keep your conversations quiet – be aware of golfers on adjacent holes
- ✓ Hosts should count their every stroke and penalty shot of their own
- ✓ Let your quests tell you their score - don't challenge them
- ✓ Play your game … don't lose intentionally
- ✓ Be a gracious winner or loser – keep a smile on your face

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Golf Etiquette

SPEED OF PLAY

- ✓ Be at the first tee on time and ready to go
- ✓ Ask the group if they mind playing "ready" golf (no order to teeing off)
- ✓ Keep it moving. Have a simple pre-shot routine– one practice swing
- ✓ If you've hit more than 7 shots consider picking up
- ✓ Don't take too long hunting for a lost ball – be ready with a spare

➔ ***Those who play regularly will be very tuned into this subject***

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Golf Etiquette

DOING BUSINESS DURNING THE ROUND

Maintain a careful balance of fun-to-business for a great outing
Advice to company participants

- ✓ Listen attentively - let the guest take the lead on business talk
- ✓ Be ready with important and relevant information about your company
- ✓ Ask general business questions to open the conversation
- ✓ Observe behavior traits for clues to business style and adapt
- ✓ Don’t press for commitments on the course – keep it general
- ✓ Think “long term” relationships

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Golf Etiquette

FOLLOW THROUGH AFTER GOLF

Leverage opportunities….

✓ Try to include a casual lunch, refreshments

✓ Watch for an opportunities to get commitments you're seeking

"I would like to follow up with you…, Can we plan on…, Shall we go ahead and…..?"

✓ Schedule a date for the next meeting and agree on objectives

✓ Send a ***thank you*** note within 24 hours

(preferably hand written)

✓ Keep your promises!

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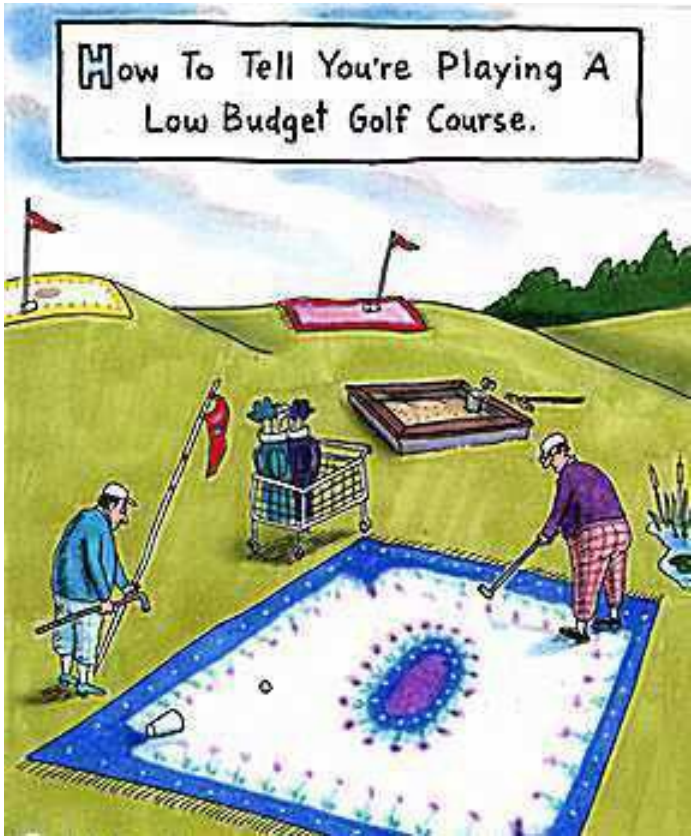
Choosing a Golf Course

PUBLIC / PRIVATE / RESORT

Golf Courses are actually looking for you! Golf / Meeting events and tournaments are a major source of revenue for most courses.

Choosing the one that best fits your needs is the key……



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Choosing a Golf Course

Public Golf Courses

Public courses by definition are open to anyone and are generally able to accept large groups or tournaments. Sometimes these courses are considered of less quality and/or an easier challenge than Resort or Private courses. They may not have the level of food service and meeting support found at more sophisticated venues. The good news is they are usually easier to book and may have fewer restrictions. Consider public courses especially when you have a group of largely inexperienced golfers and wish to play an informal format. Generally best not to choose them if you're trying to impress your audience.

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Choosing a Golf Course

Private Golf Courses

These courses are for members only, but they do accept a limited number of groups or tournaments from outside organizations. The golf course and food service will generally be of high quality. Private clubs can be effective for improving attendance because of their exclusivity – creating a unique experience for players. Most private courses will require an introduction from a current member, or a referral from another private club. You can call on your company executives, board, volunteers or friends to provide you with the proper introduction. Private courses are generally more difficult to play.

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Choosing a Golf Course

Resort Courses

These venues can be the best of both worlds. Like a public course, they are open to the public and generally accessible. Groups and Tournaments are what they do. Like a private club, they have quality food service and usually a well designed and maintained course.

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Criteria for selecting a tournament course

- Budget
- Location
- Transportation
- Facility suitability
- Quality of the course
- Number of participants
- Skill of your players
- Amenities around the course
- Image you wish to create
- Service reputation of club

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Request For Tournament Proposal

For any large group event, use of an RFP will greatly assist in the planning and venue selection process – include the following:

- Complete contact info
- Desired Date and alternates
- Number of players expected
- Preferred start / end time
- Golf carts or Caddies needed Y/N
- Rental Clubs needed? #_____
- Clinic planned Y/N
- On course support needed:
  Signs, Skills Challenge, etc…

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Sample RFP

GOLF TOURNAMENT
REQUEST FOR QUOTE

OUR CONTACT INFO

Business Name -		Contact Name		
Physical Address		City	State	Zip
Mailing Address / ☐ same		City	State	Zip
Business Phone	Fax	Email		

ABOUT OUR TOURNAMENT NEEDS

PREFERRED DATE	OPTIONAL DATE # 1	OPTIONAL DATE # 2	OPTIONAL DATE # 3	PREFERRED TIMES Start_____ End_____
Number of Players	Skill Level of Players ☐ Good ☐ Avg ☐ Low ☐ Mix	Rental Clubs Needed ☐ Yes ☐ No Number:	Golf Carts Needed ☐ Yes ☐ No Number:	Clinic By Pro Requested ☐ Yes ☐ No

Description of group:

Purpose of Tournament:

Sponsors: ☐ No ☐ Yes Describe:

Volunteers on course: ☐ No ☐ Yes Carts Needed for Volunteers:

Signs on course: ☐ No ☐ Yes -- Need to have them made for us ☐ No ☐ Yes Need to have them placed for us? ☐ No ☐ Yes

Skill Challenges planned? ☐ No ☐ Yes -- ☐ Closest to Pin ☐ Long Drive ☐ Straight Drive ☐ Other:

Food Service Requirements: ☐ No ☐ Yes = ☐ Box Lunch ☐ Banquet ☐ Reception ☐ Beverage Cart ☐ Hosted Bar ☐ Non-Hosted Bar

Meeting Room Needs: ☐ No ☐ Yes Describe:

Prizes Needed: ☐ No ☐ Yes Describe:

Please submit your quote / proposal by:

CLUB INFO

Will you have other events or course maintenance day of event?: ☐ No ☐ Yes Describe:		**Billing procedure?:** **Deposit required by?:**	
CLUB Name -		Contact Name	
Physical Address		City	State	Zip
Mailing Address / ☐ same		City	State	Zip
Business Phone	Fax	Email		
Please submit your quote / proposal by:			

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Partnering With The Golf Course

A good relationship with the Club Manager and the Golf Pro is a key to a successful event. They have the power to make your meeting a good one or a bad one. They can also be a great resource – use them!

- Do they have ideas for your event?
- Have they done events like this before? Ask what worked, didn't work?
- Help with branding your event
- Deals they might get with sponsors, prizes, signage, etc…
- Photos, maps, or artwork you could use for communications
- Educate you about club rules and dress codes
- Suggestions for planning and keeping your group organized

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Partnering With The Golf Course

If you had a successful experience, send a ‘thank you’ letter to the club and offer to be a reference.

A good partnership can mean they will be more help the next time you book an event and may give you preferred treatment.

The conclusion of a successful event is a great time to book your next event!

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Negotiating Tournament Fees

Times are tough for everyone right now and the opportunities to negotiate are many. Here are some strategies to use:

- ✓ Lower tier courses will be more likely to negotiate, although this may not be the best way to save money
- ✓ Include the possibility of your future events in discussion
  - Can you get a discount for booking two events?
  - Put a deposit down for a future event?
- ✓ Demonstrate how your participants may provide connections for other bookings
- ✓ Ask how much of a discount you might get for pre-paying
  This might be a win-win for your budget periods and theirs

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Negotiating Tournament Fees

cont…

- ✓ Book your event in slow periods – seasons, or days of the week, or off hours
- ✓ Request discounts on Gift Certificates
- ✓ Ask if they have any dates they are trying to fill and if there are reduced rates for those dates
- ✓ Schedule right before or after another tournament so they can leverage their expenses and pass on some savings to you
- ✓ Ask for use of overstock inventory items for gifts and/or prizes
- ✓ Negotiate tasks you can take on to reduce costs

  i.e. Placement of signs, scoreboard management, set-up or clean-up

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Negotiating Tournament Fees

cont...

- ✓ Ask if they have any discount resources for signage, gifts transportation, etc…
- ✓ Large groups will always face a minimum charge for tying up the course. Be open to allowing others access while you play – in front or back of your group.
- ✓ If you're at a resort, booking a minimum number of rooms may result in discounts

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Negotiating Tournament Fees

cont…

Food & Beverage

- ✓ Try to agree on paying for beverages actually used rather than a flat fee
- ✓ Select box lunches that the facility can easily prepare ahead of time
- ✓ Use a theme for the reception and select Italian or Mexican food for lower cost
- ✓ Be flexible on which rooms your group will use
- ✓ If you know you will want to use the facility in the future, consider signing a 2-3 year contract with fixed costs on golf and food combined.

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Develop a Tournament Budget

There are many costs involved in a golf tournament or large outing. Use a budget worksheet to make sure you don't overlook anything.

GOLF COURSE	Budget	Actual
Course fees	$0.00	$0.00
Labor / Attendants	$0.00	$0.00
Golf Carts	$0.00	$0.00
Tables, Chairs, Tents	$0.00	$0.00
Parking & Restrooms	$0.00	$0.00
Communications	$0.00	$0.00
Security	$0.00	$0.00
Other	$0.00	$0.00
Other	$0.00	$0.00
Totals	**$0.00**	**$0.00**

FOOD & BEVERAGE	Budget	Actual
Food	$0.00	$0.00
Beverage	$0.00	$0.00
Liquor	$0.00	$0.00
Hosting Volunteers	$0.00	$0.00
Guest Benefits	$0.00	$0.00
Celebrities	$0.00	$0.00
Gratuities	$0.00	$0.00
Other	$0.00	$0.00
Other	$0.00	$0.00
Totals	**$0.00**	**$0.00**

PROMOTIONS	Budget	Actual
Graphic design	$0.00	$0.00
Photocopying/printing	$0.00	$0.00
Postage	$0.00	$0.00
Photography/video	$0.00	$0.00
Web Site	$0.00	$0.00
Press releases	$0.00	$0.00
TV	$0.00	$0.00
Radio	$0.00	$0.00
Other	$0.00	$0.00
Totals	**$0.00**	**$0.00**

GIFS & PRIZES	Budget	Actual
Plaques/Trophies	$0.00	$0.00
Pro shop gift certificates	$0.00	$0.00
Great Games for Golf Book	$0.00	$0.00
Tee Prize (Player gift bags)	$4.95 ea	$0.00
Volunteer gifts	$0.00	$0.00
Team Gifts	$0.00	$0.00
Participant Gifts	$0.00	$0.00
Sponsors gifts	$0.00	$0.00
Other	$0.00	$0.00
Totals	**$0.00**	**$0.00**

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Develop a Tournament Budget

FEES & INSURANCE	Budget	Actual
Hole-in-one insurance	$0.00	$0.00
LiquorPermits	$0.00	$0.00
Liquor liability insurance	$0.00	$0.00
Telephone/Internet/Fax	$0.00	$0.00
Taxes, event permits	$0.00	$0.00
Event planner fees	$0.00	$0.00
Credit card fees	$0.00	$0.00
Event Insurance	$0.00	$0.00
Other	$0.00	$0.00
Totals	**$0.00**	**$0.00**

DÉCOR	Budget	Actual
Table Décor	$0.00	$0.00
Room Décor	$0.00	$0.00
Signs / Balloons / Flyers	$0.00	$0.00
Paper supplies, cameras	$0.00	$0.00
Other	$0.00	$0.00
Totals	**$0.00**	**$0.00**

LOGO PROMOTIONAL ITEMS	Budget	Actual
Signs / Banners / Leaderboard	$0.00	$0.00
Golf balls	$0.00	$0.00
Divot Tools / Tees / Markers	$0.00	$0.00
Shirts	$0.00	$0.00
Hats	$0.00	$0.00
Shoes	$0.00	$0.00
Flags	$0.00	$0.00
Other Apparel	$0.00	$0.00
Other	$0.00	$0.00
Totals	**$0.00**	**$0.00**

PROGRAM	Budget	Actual
Entertainers / Celebrities	$0.00	$0.00
Sound System	$0.00	$0.00
Transportation, hotel	$0.00	$0.00
Valet services	$0.00	$0.00
Other	$0.00	$0.00
Totals	**$0.00**	**$0.00**

	Budget	Actual
TOTAL EXPENSES	$0.00	$0.00

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Be Green

Being ‘green’ is all the rage. If environmental issues are priorities for your company or participants, use these ideas to brand your event green:

- Chose an eco-friendly golf course venue
- Use environmentally friendly products – and avoid anything disposable
- Minimize waste and plan for recycling
- If you have a car for a tournament ‘hole-in-one’ prize - make it a hybrid
- Donate some proceeds to a local conservation cause
- Encourage ride sharing
- Buy carbon offsets

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Communications

Over communicating is the rule for successful golf events:

- Save the date notices
- Special invites
- Event or Tournament flyers
- Emails
- Signage at the course
- Rosters

  (so everyone knows who's coming)

- Timing

  (always list a start time that is a half hour earlier than actual)

- Food info
- Transportation info
- Contact info
- Reminder notices

NOTE: Commit to classy, well designed communications – they convey your image.

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Choosing the right format

What kind of game to play? Refer back to your objectives and player profiles..

- **Stroke Play** for serious golfers

  (Each player tries for their best total score)

- **Scramble** for just plain fun

  (The whole group plays the one best shot they create for a team score)

- **Shamble** for something in the middle

  (The group shares the best drive and is then on their own to make their individual score)

- **Night golf** – using glow balls or lighted course for a unique experience

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Which Tees to Play

Avoid controversy by making this determination in advance and publishing it in your communications**.** This will be important to good players.

- For an experienced group of serious golfers play the back tees
- For a mixed group of average golfers play middle tees
- For a less skilled group – move up front

(And you can ask the pro for advice)

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Dealing with skill levels

Varied skill levels and non-golfers always present a challenge to a planner

If your group involves a majority of inexperienced golfers, make sure you chose a simple and fun format like a scramble and consider only planning a 9 hole outing.

If you need to deal with non-golfing participants, or attending significant others, schedule an alternate event like a wine tour, city tour, shopping spree, museums, etc.…

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Teambuilding

Golf has often been called a metaphor for life. Consider designing a golf themed teambuilding event to improve your groups performance.

Use modified rules or elements to mimic work challenges. Here are ***some examples*** of activities we've used for our clients' meeting objectives:

BLIND PUTT

Each player is required to putt blindfolded while teammates help with alignment and coaching. Discussion themes around communication, giving direction to others, and trust.

SWITCH UP

Players are required to hit each other's shots providing a great opportunity to discuss how they rely on each others performance, accept the hand they're dealt, deal with stress, etc.

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Teambuilding

More samples…..

STRATEGY SHOT

Teammates choose players to hit specific shots. This becomes an opportunity to talk about recognizing each others strengths, planning ahead, and supporting the teams objectives.

CHANGE BALL

Players are required to use a tennis ball in place of their golf ball. Discussion follows around how well we deal with change, what happens when we have to adapt to a new environment and how creative we can be when faced with new challenges?

➔ **Use a facilitator to introduce and guide the experiential learning and debrief/discuss after the on-course play**

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Tournament Planning

Keys to a successful tournament:

- Again, know your objectives and have a plan for achieving results
- Recruit volunteers to assist with logistics and registration
- Add some star power – top executives, local celebrities or pro athletes
- Consider a pre tournament clinic
- Great prizes and awards - Make sure everyone gets something, have some big prizes, use gift certificates

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Tournament Planning

- If you have a large tournament and are new to planning of this magnitude, consider asking the course to provide tournament services or hiring a tournament consultant.
- Always have a crisis plan in case of bad weather.

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Fundraising Ideas

Using the golf outing as a fund raiser for a worthy cause can make it a more special event. Try to chose a cause that has meaning to the participants.

Fund raising ideas include:

- Have an auction
- Sell mulligans
- Raffle tickets
- Buy a caddie
- Putting contests
- On course contests

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Use of Sponsors

Recruiting sponsors is a great way to build business relationships and off-set the costs of the event.

Leverage business relationships and develop a message that helps potential sponsors see how their involvement can contribute to their goals.

- Customers
- Vendors
- Consultants
- Suppliers
- Lawyers
- Service providers
- Local businesses
- Associations

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Contests

On course contests and special awards can add to the fun. Be careful to be inclusive – avoid scenarios that favor just a few of best golfers such as a long drive contest.

Contests / Awards to consider:

- Closest to the pin
- Straightest drive
- Best dressed foursome
- Most entertaining foursome
- Who traveled the farthest
- Highest and lowest score
- Longest putt
- Par 3 Poker

➔ **Use these to get people telling stories after the round for entertainment**

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Use of Volunteers

For large group outings or tournaments, recruit employees or other business associates as volunteers. It is a great way to get people involved, make them feel included, and add a special touch to your outing.

If you're including fund raising, let people volunteer as caddies or fore caddies for a fee to be donated.

➔ **Be sure to coordinate with the Club Pro plans for volunteers and need for extra carts.**

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Gifts and Prizes

Quality gifts and prizes can make or break an event. Be creative, participants will remember this more than anything.

Consider giving tournament participants a coupon for purchase from the pro shop, or a 'company' store. Nike, Adidas and Calloway have such programs.

For logo type gifts, try something different and put your participants logo along with yours on personalized merchandise. This will demonstrate your focus on their interests.

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Gifts and Prizes

Extend your prize and gift budget by:

- Asking sponsors or attendees to donate prizes
- Get other interested business partners involved in donating gifts

  (Attorneys, suppliers, consultants, etc)

- Negotiate with the pro shop to donate, or give special pricing on discontinued items, or closeouts

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Speakers

For larger groups, a quality entertaining speaker can really help you bring your event to a close with a flair!

Consider:

Humorists

Golf pros

Motivational speakers

Industry experts

Local celebrities

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Making it special

Use your creativity to leave a lasting impression with your participants

- Structure of competition
- Photo memories
- Awards and trophies
- Special guests
- Commemorative gifts
- Use caddies or fore caddies
- Bring in the bag pipes
- Announcer on the 1st tee
- On course contests
- Include a clinic with the pro

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3 Simple Rules

Ensure your golf event will be a success by always starting with these basic principles:

1) Understanding your participants golf mastery and mindset

2) Paying attention to the details

3) Investing as much as you can justify to make it a special experience

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Thank you!

In addition to this Resource Guide, be sure to see our website for

- **Tournament RFP** form for use when booking golf courses

- **Tournament Budget** template in Excel

And don't forget to order our book **Great Games for Golf** to add to the fun!!

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