

# How to be a World Class Candidate



**KOPPLIN KUEBLER & WALLACE**

THE MOST TRUSTED NAME IN EXECUTIVE SEARCH AND CONSULTING

# Session Objectives

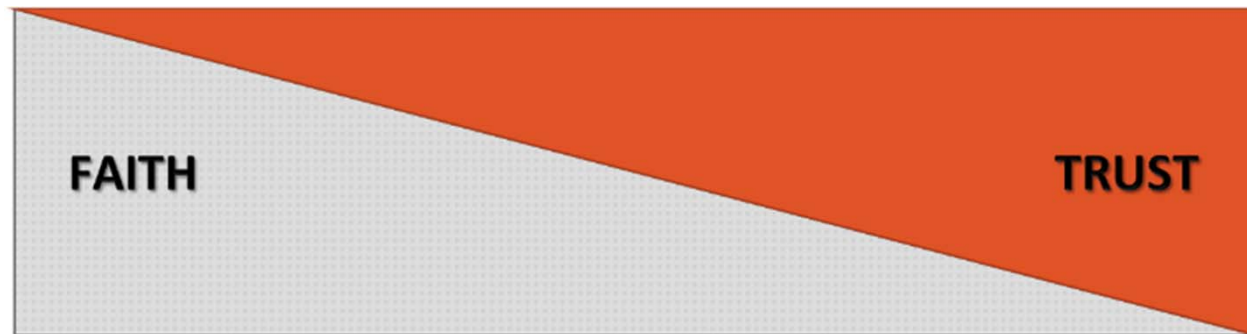
-  Learn what Clubs are looking for in their next Golf Course Superintendent/Director of Golf Course Maintenance.
-  Discover what can separate you from the rest of the field.
-  Develop the skills and competencies that will lead to greater success in your current role and set you up for future opportunities & successes.
-  Understand that the “fit” has to be right. You have to have the right skills and be a great cultural fit with a prospective new club...and they have to be a great fit for you!
-  Prepare for the next great opportunity. Today is a great day to start your career planning.



# What are Clubs Looking for in their Golf Course Superintendent



Clubs have to BELIEVE that you can take them to the promised land!









**DANGER**

**EXPECTATIONS**

# Great golf course conditioning every day... or as close to that as possible

## What we hear:

-  Firmer and faster, but not too much brown
-  Consistent conditioning from day to day
-  Detail work
-  Bunker consistency

## Detail Oriented

- KOPPIN  
KUTLER  
WALLACE Recognizes that developing and following precise procedures, policies and metrics within an organization is essential.
- KOPPIN  
KUTLER  
WALLACE Trains staff to instinctively see everything through the lens of a member or guest.





# **Communication skills- using clear understandable language and the demonstrated ability to work collaboratively with the General Manager and Golf Professional along with the Board, Green Committee and Membership**

**When a member gets surprised about something on the golf course, you didn't do a good job of communicating**

**If the Pro, Assistant Pro or other golf shop team member can't answer a member's question about something on the golf course, you didn't do a good job of communicating**

**Visibility and availability are critical to selling the vision, to selling change**





**Leadership and mentoring of the “Team”  
to focus on the vision**

**Leadership upwards, becoming a “thought  
partner” with your General Manager,  
Board and Committee**

# Employee Relations



- Recognize, respect, and support the contributions of key managers and staff. Ensure that appropriately skilled and competent departmental managers are in place for all key positions and that each of them does the same in their respective areas of responsibility.
- Set standards of performance for all staff and hold them accountable for maintaining these standards within the facility, most especially in customer service areas.
- Maintain an environment and overall atmosphere for management/staff that promotes and values appropriate and responsible contributions to the facilities success. Ensure that all staff are focused on positive, supportive relationships amongst themselves and with the customer base.
- Proven ability to attract, retain, and develop a team that understands what constitutes a world-class member experience and is excited by the challenge of delivering at that level.

**Business skills and the ability to manage the Club's money effectively have become even more important as Clubs invest more money and resources with higher expectations**



# Financial Management








- Must have sound financial management skills including the ability to oversee the preparation and management of annual operating and multi-year capital budgets to support the strategies, initiatives and expectations established with the Leadership of the facility.
- You are ultimately responsible for ensuring that the appropriate safeguards and controls are in place for all of the facility's primary assets (customers, staff, amenities, etc.), whether it is for physical safety purposes or for the protection and long-term financial success of the facility.











**Discover what can separate you from  
the rest of the field.**

# Stay current with agronomics

-  Develop a strong network of peers, educators, consultants
-  Attend educational seminars
-  Golf with other Superintendents to learn about their courses and challenges
-  Don't forget that it's not all science
-  Use all of your resources, your goal is success, don't let pride get in the way
-  When your peers or consultants visit your course, show them your most challenging issues and areas first...everyone has good areas
-  Remember that everything old isn't bad and that everything new isn't good-  
Be cautious with the latest greatest chemicals, test them in small areas and let Club officials know what you're testing and why

# More Education?

-  Look at becoming certified
-  Consider an MBA
-  Consider programs to improve your public speaking and writing skills
-  Develop greater HR skills
-  Club education- cross training or maybe cross exposure of departments, so that you and your assistants learn about other departments and they learn more about golf course maintenance
-  Project management skills are a plus for any club starting a project

# Social Media








KOPPIN  
KUEBLER  
WALLACE If you aren't doing it yet, start

KOPPIN  
KUEBLER  
WALLACE The younger emerging member demographic lives on their phones and computers

KOPPIN  
KUEBLER  
WALLACE Clubs looking to hire a new Superintendent are cruising the internet and they will find you...good and bad; it may lead to your next opportunity...or not




# Mentorship and Education of your Team


-  Create an environment of learning and open discourse
-  A wrap up session at the end of the day with interns, assistants, and other key team members with a discussion of the day and what was accomplished and what the next day's, week's direction will be
-  Always ask the least senior team member for their opinions first
-  Create a formal mentorship plan and program for interns
-  Create a mentorship plan for the assistants that includes time spent with the GM and Pro and attending/presenting at Committee meetings
-  Engage the assistants in the budget forecasting, having them create a zero based budget
-  Give all of your team 3 golf lessons on the clock and then have them play a few holes...your nongolfing team members need to know why their jobs matter



**Develop the skills and competencies that will lead to greater success in your current role and set you up for future opportunities & successes**



Leadership begins when  
you set the standards  
(establish the culture)



**“If you don’t set the standards, and  
develop the mores and the resulting culture  
in your organization –  
someone else will.”**



**The best thing about being the leader  
is that you set the standards**



**Standards reflect a person's  
values = they are synonymous**



**Micro-management is often a result of no standards or poor standards**

# Establish the culture

Highly Functional

Unique

Consistent

Fun



**“The way we  
do things  
around here!”**



larity



ommunication

Collaboration



ollegiality



ultivation



hallenge



**Manage = Process**

**Lead = People**



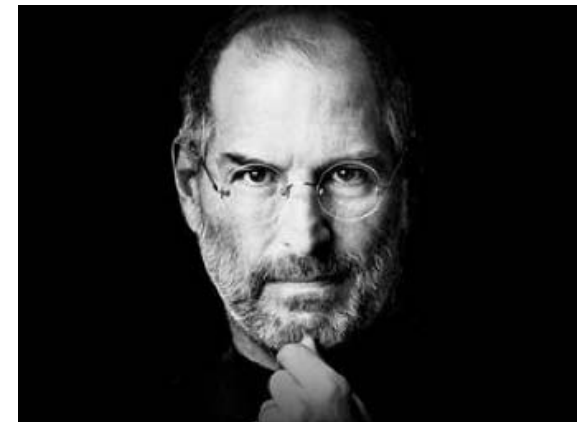
**HERO**

**LEVERAGED**



## Be a Visionary

- Must be a courageous thought partner for the Leadership, recognizing the importance of keeping the facility on the cutting edge of excellence by having a keen understanding of current and future trends, demographics, legislative, economic, and social issues.
- S/he should be decisive and set aggressive goals and objectives to ensure the facilities current and future success.
- Must couple being current with also maintaining the facilities history and values.



# Customer Interaction

- As one of the faces of the facilities, Leaders must embrace the community values and environment. In and out of your facilities, activities and relationships must be clearly linked.
- Sincerely interact and “engage” with all constituencies at the facility. It is critically important. Recognize the benefits of direct communication, approachability and thoughtful collaboration with customers is a critical success factor for leaders.
- Must be an integral and proactive part of developing relationships that lead to customers interest and usage of the facility.
- The ability and desire to engage proactively with customers in a manner that drives high levels of engagement, excitement, and enthusiasm.



# Strategic Planning

- The Director of Grounds is in a partnership with facility leadership. Take an active role in the development of a strategic plan/business road map for the current and future success of the facility..
- Must be able to identify issues, needs, goals, and objectives to help ensure the perpetuation and continued viability of the facility.



# Member, Board and Committee Relations

- Comfort around Volunteer Leadership: can deal and interact with members; can present to members without undue tension and nervousness; understands how members think, work and present ambiguities; can determine the best way to get things done with them by talking their language and responding to their needs; can craft approaches seen as appropriate and positive.
- Ensure that member satisfaction is always the first priority. Provide sincere and visibly engaged leadership and interaction with all facets of the membership and their guests. Be a consistent and positive force behind the creation and continuous enhancement of all aspects of the Club. Must be visible and available to his/her membership. Recognize that the *Member Experience* and meeting the expectations of The Club members is of critical importance to your long term success.
- Active participant at Board and Club Committee meetings to set policies and strategies to achieve the Club's goals and objectives.



# Communication

- Will be a primary *two-way* conduit for information exchange, and must be consistent, positive, and able to *engage* in this process. You must be a true listener who places great importance on personal interactions with all constituencies of the facility.
- Experience in developing a communication platform using contemporary media (website, apps, social media, etc.) is desirable.
- You will be the go to source of information to customers and staff. It is of the utmost importance that you convey this knowledge in a well-conceived manner in both written and verbal form.
- Believes in the power of proactive communication (i.e. orienting and culture setting) of customers, staff, and guests to ensure the core values of the facility are being recognized and achieved.



# Accountability

- KIPPEN, SCHEER, WALLACE Uses strategic plans, budgets, and metrics to set goals, measure and report on performance, and make course corrections when needed.
- KIPPEN, SCHEER, WALLACE Developing Direct Reports and Others: provides challenging and stretching tasks and assignments; holds frequent development discussions; is aware of person's career goals; constructs compelling development plans and executes them; pushes people to except developmental moves; will take on those who need help and further development; CEO operates with developmental system in the organization; is a people builder and “multiplier.”



# Integrity

Establishes and maintains the facility's core values and guiding principles; is genuine and authentic and capable of 'straight talk' communications at all times; is the consummate ambassador for the club in all settings; is a credible leader who maintains the right balance between consistency across the membership as a whole and individual member needs and interests



# Execution

Achieves desired results; establishes clear goals, objectives and timelines for the team; holds self and team accountable; inspires a commitment to tasks and knows how to get things done; gets whole team aligned when necessary and knows how to “close the deal.”



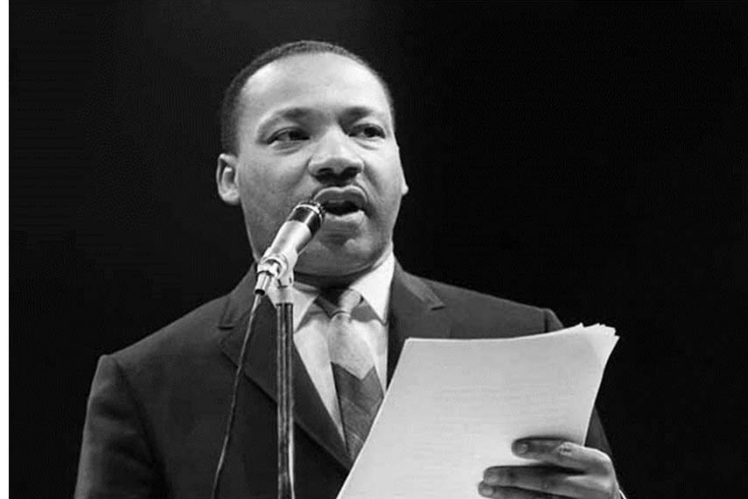
## Decision Quality

Makes good, timely decisions; based upon a mixture of analysis, wisdom, experience and judgment; most of his/her solutions and suggestions turn out to be correct and accurate when judged over time; always sought out by others for advice and solutions



# Charisma

Possess a strong, savvy executive presence and confident leadership style.



## Action Oriented

Enjoys working hard; is action oriented and full of energy for the things he/she sees as challenging; seizes more opportunities than others.



# Change Management

Anticipates changing trends in the environment. Harnesses ongoing and updated tools to build organizational capacity and reliability. Engages staff and workforce through timely communication of priorities and is able to make the right tradeoffs. Instills the right urgency to move organization toward continuing progress and new outcomes.







# Innovation and Creativity

Is good at bringing the creative ideas of others to market; has good judgment about what new things and suggestions will work; can facilitate team brainstorming; can project how potential ideas may play out to the club's advantage. Robotic mowers, Moisture meters, GPS sprayers



# Patience

Is tolerant with people and processes; listens and checks before acting; tries to understand the people and the data before making judgments and acting; waits for others to catch up before acting; sensitive to due process and proper pacing; and follows established process.



# Time Management

Uses his/her time effectively and efficiently; values time; concentrates his/her efforts on the more important priorities; gets more done in less time than others; can attend to a broader range of activities.





Understand that the “fit” has to be right. You have to have the right skills and be a great cultural fit with a prospective new club...and they have to be a great fit for you!

# Look in the Mirror



As an executive search firm, our success comes from helping place candidates with the right skills with clubs that have the right culture



You need to understand what kind of club and club governance environment that you'll be at your best with...and don't stray from that




It is wisdom to know others; It is  
enlightenment to know one's self.

- Lao Tzu



**“You can make a living or you can design a life...  
it’s your choice.”**

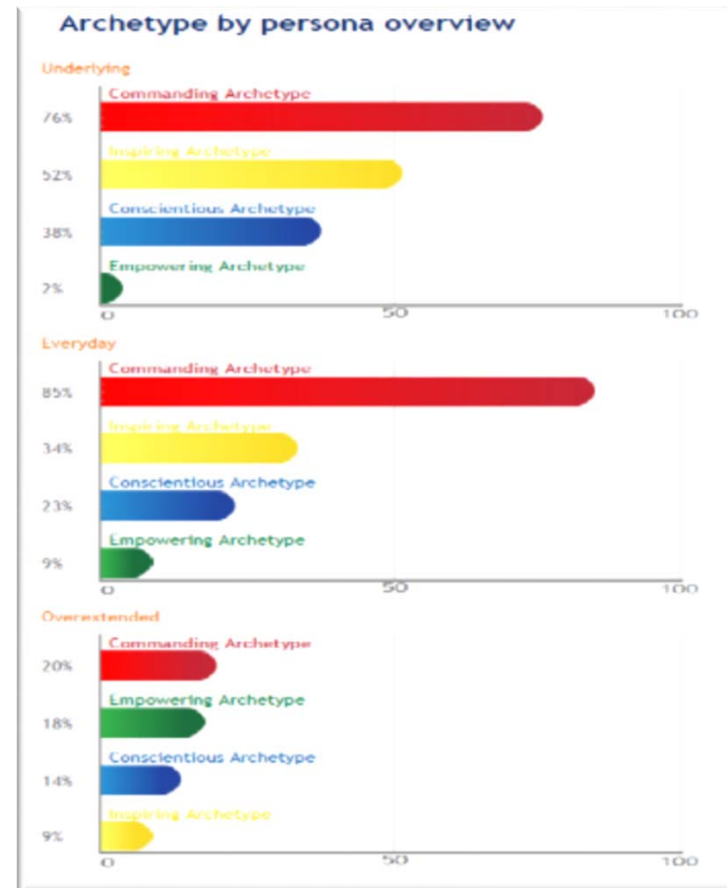
**-- Jim Rohn**



**“Once you understand what excellence is all about...you see how excellence manifests itself in any discipline.”**

**“Life is about the pursuit of excellence. That pursuit is probably more exciting to me now more than ever.”**





**– Joe Rogan**



# Knowing Yourself Professionally

## Thinking About Your Career

Golf Course Superintendents (GCS):

-  With your SWOT analysis, be honest and take a global look at yourself
-  GCS spend most of their learning and education time on technical matters
-  GCS spend virtually no time on their career development
-  GCS should pick a time every week to improve those other career skills, the skills that will lead to greater, complete professional proficiency and greater job satisfaction

# Leadership Development Objectives

## Personal Aspirations

- Better the lives of my family and work family
- Achieve work/life balance, pay off “personal debt”
- Change the club business leadership structure and business model
- Be the best in my field

## Development Themes

- Transform from a great operational leader to a strategic leader
- Transform from a hero leader to a leverage leader
- Transform from a inspirational role model to a success partner
- Be a communications leader
- Build lasting powerful relationships/partnerships
- Have a broad based (full) life

# What You Should Know about Tom Wallace

*Vision (who I am):*

**A LEVERAGED LEADER**

*Mission (why I exist):*

**TO MAXIMIZE MY LIFE AND THOSE I COUNT ON AROUND  
ME BY LEVERAGING ONE ANOTHER'S ENERGIES AND TALENTS.**

*Message OF LEADERSHIP (How I make decisions): ALWAYS USING THE 4-E's*

**EFFECTIVE-Will this decision produce the results.**

**EFFICIENT-Will this help the business operate more soundly.**

**EQUITABLE-Will this decision favor or discriminate against anyone.**

**ETHICAL-Will this decision be viewed as proper and moral.**



# What You Should Know about Armen Suny

*Vision (who I am):*

**A RELATIONSHIP LEADER**

*Mission (why I exist):*

**TO ENJOY LIFE AND THOSE I ASSOCIATE WITH BY WORKING WITH PEOPLE WITH INTEGRITY, DRIVE, WHO LIKE TO HAVE FUN WHILE HELPING OTHERS**

*Message OF LEADERSHIP (How I make decisions):*

**Goals- clear focus on the end result**

**Honesty- it's ultimately easier and it's fairer to others**

**Listen- running off the cliff without looking or listening is a chancy proposition**

**Smarter People- reading & mentors from other fields expand your horizons**

**Impact on me and mine- balance life and business**





Prepare for the next great opportunity.  
Today is a great day to start your career  
planning!

# Professionalism

- KOPPIN  
KUEBLER &  
WALLACE Dress professionally and appropriately
- KOPPIN  
KUEBLER &  
WALLACE Look people in the eye when you talk to them
- KOPPIN  
KUEBLER &  
WALLACE Speak clearly and express your ideas in terms that members understand
- KOPPIN  
KUEBLER &  
WALLACE No surprises, don't leave your GM, Pro or Green Chair without answers
- KOPPIN  
KUEBLER &  
WALLACE Treat your team members as you would want to be treated, ask for their opinions
- KOPPIN  
KUEBLER &  
WALLACE You can't be successful if you aren't on the golf course but make sure that your administrative duties get covered
- KOPPIN  
KUEBLER &  
WALLACE Remember, while perception may not be reality, it's pretty close

# Applying for a New Position

 Cover Letter

 Resume

 Interview


# Cover Letter

 You have to get their attention in the first paragraph

 Read between the lines in the job posting





 Learn about the club and course

 Who do you know?...Find your connections to influencers








 Write a cover letter that addresses your experience dealing with the course's key issues, one page is plenty

 Make sure that your cell number and email are included





# Resume

-  You must create a reason for someone to look at the rest of your resume
-  Start your resume with something important and different, clubs hire people not just skill sets
  - ✓ Consider something like- core values or perhaps a personal statement (bullet points will be looked at more often then paragraphs)
-  Think about what members consider important, not your peers!
  - ✓ So many Superintendents lead with their renovation experience, consider leading with conditioning, playability, improved conditions and detail
-  Contrary to what you may have heard, include early work experience, it's part of your story


# Resume

-  Put links to your clubs; make it easy for them to learn about your club
-  Portfolios, create a link to a password protected online portfolio
-  One nice color picture can get someone to look, consider it
-  Always tell the truth, no lies or exaggerations
-  Put education towards the bottom of the resume unless you are an Assistant
-  Name your file for the club's convenience not yours- Smith, John Resume, this lets them put you in the file without having to rename it
-  Include your contact information on each page (a 2 page resume is plenty)

# Before the Interview

-  Think about how you would respond to job applicants that don't act professionally
-  The Club has to be able to contact you on your cell phone or by email
  - ✓ If you aren't able to answer the phone, what will they get for a message
    - ✓ Bad things- not set up for messages, a full message box and can't leave a message, a generic message, a garbled message with background noise from you
    - ✓ Good things- A mildly energized, short succinct personal message
    - ✓ Return the call as soon as you can from a quiet place, explain that you were on the course
-  Emails that aren't answered in a timely fashion diminish your chances of getting that interview
-  If you are presenting a portfolio, send it to the club before your interview, presenting materials during your interview causes a committee to stop looking and listening to you

# Interview Preparation

 Many clubs will start out with a phone interview, suggesting a Skype or Facetime interview will give you a better personal connection

## Practice

- ✓ If you aren't able to answer the phone, what will they get for a message
- ✓ Have you ever practiced for an interview?
- ✓ They say practice makes perfect...well it doesn't but it does make you better
- ✓ Starting next week, video yourself answering a potential interview question
- ✓ When you've seen your golf swing on a video, you know what your problem is
- ✓ When you watch yourself answering interview questions, look at your body language, listen to your voice inflections, listen to how clear and focused your answers are
- ✓ If you practice this every week for 15 minutes, you will get significantly better and you'll be more confident in an interview setting
- ✓ Have someone you trust evaluate your video, painful but it will help
- ✓ Do mock interviews with people asking you questions
- ✓ Remember that generally speaking, you are the only expert in the room
- ✓ As much as possible, research the search committee members



**WHAT  
HAVE  
WE  
LEARNED?**

# Take Aways

Becoming a World Class or Better Candidate, is a commitment and takes time, consistent time

To be a better candidate and Superintendent, think from the members' perspective

Get out of your comfort zone, shore up those areas that you can be better at

Be honest with yourself, identify what you want professionally and personally

Just because you can get the job doesn't mean you should, culture matters

Hard work and good decisions lead to success...also true for your career planning

Your interview skills are easier to fix than your golf swing!



