

# Using the Case Studies in Level 1



**Building your confidence level in understanding the case studies initially will help with completion of work experience portfolio now, and in Levels 2 and 3**

**By Michelle Hupfer, PGA**

The October 2016 PGA Apprentice edition article in *PGA Magazine* provided an overview of the case studies, and how they are the cornerstone of the entire PGM program. This is the second article of a four-part series focusing on Level 1.

## Course Manuals

Reviewing the course manuals and completing various pre-seminar activities prior to attending the Level 1 seminars allows apprentices and PGA Golf Management students to be familiar with the subject matter, and participate more fully in seminar discussions and activities. Pre-seminar activities involve reviewing case study content, as well as reviewing situations at their place of employment. This helps attendees see the relevancy from hypothetical scenarios to real life circumstances.

The case studies are predominately found in the *Business Planning* course manual, where the first lesson introduces the fundamentals of business planning, and provides an overview of

the PGA Business Planning Model. The pre-seminar activities revolve around the five phases of this model. Apprentices and students will analyze the case studies while completing each of the pre-seminar activities.

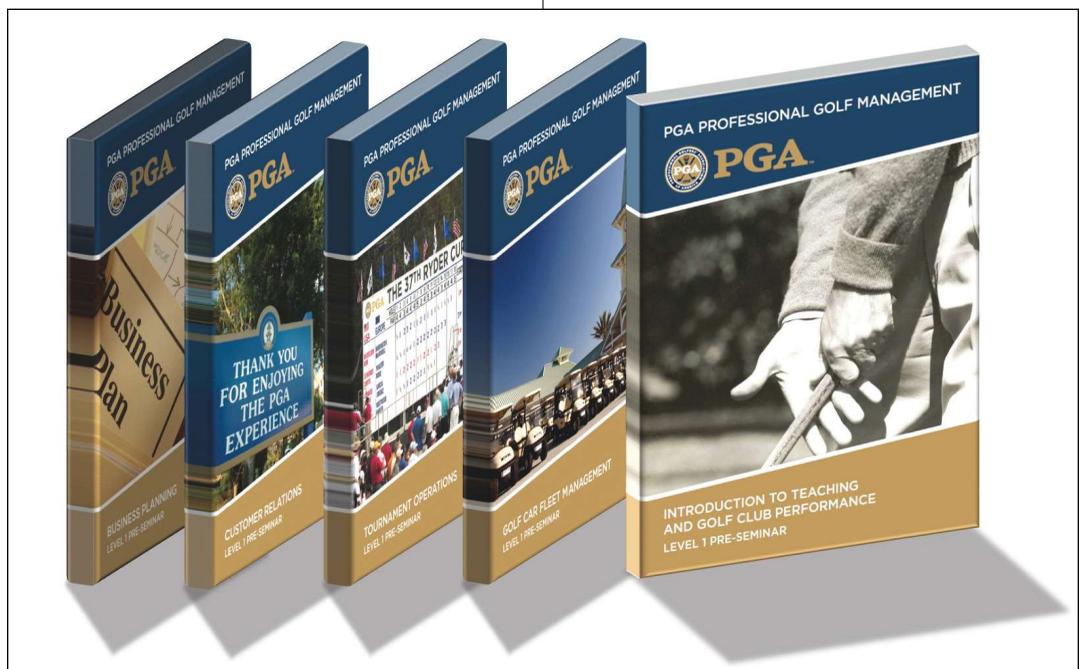
## Seminars

The case studies are brought to life in the Level 1 seminars where exercises are facilitated to stimulate critical thinking and create realistic situations for improvement as outlined in the Business Planning Model. This interactive setting provides a forum in which to apply the Model and allows apprentices and students to develop knowledge of common business planning practices, tools and concepts to share best practices from their own facility.

The *Business Planning* seminar also allows apprentices to start the requirements of the work experience portfolio. Each apprentice will choose one of the two case studies for the entire PGM program, and the initial learning opportunity is to develop this business plan to improve performance in the golf operation.

The connection to the case studies is continued in the *Customer Relations* seminar, as customers are essential to the success of a golf facility. The customer is the central focus when developing the five phases of the PGA Business Planning Model, from identifying the vision to the core values, to appreciating the customer's perspective, their expectations and their ability to evaluate a facility's products and services.

After developing the business plan, how are the appropriate staffing, systems and resources identified to provide the "PGA Experience" for these customers? The use of videos depicting various customer scenarios is central to the delivery of this seminar, with a big focus on staff



The case studies intertwined within all of the Level 1 courses are designed to give apprentices and students a "real-life" example to apply what they've learned in course manuals and seminars.

**Send Your Ideas**

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training for appropriate customer interactions.

The PGA Business Planning Model continues to be the foundation in the delivery of the *Tournament Operations* seminar. The foundation of successful tournament business begins with a clear understanding of what the tournament is supposed to accomplish for the facility.

One approach to gaining that understanding is to look at tournaments in the light of the facility's stated mission and its overall business objectives. Apprentices and PGA Golf Management students will be able to clarify this as they develop a tournament business plan that is aligned with and supports the overall business plan being developed for their chosen case study facility.

A seminar activity using four different tournament scenarios set at the case study facilities is conducted to plan and negotiate the details of one of these events. The concepts from the *Business Planning* and *Customer Relations* seminars are expected to be applied during this negotiation. Both the "client and the PGA Professional" need to assess the planning interaction to determine the value of the event for both the customer and the facility. This small group activity in the seminar is vital to apprentices as they continue to understand the connections to the work experience portfolio activities that are case study driven.

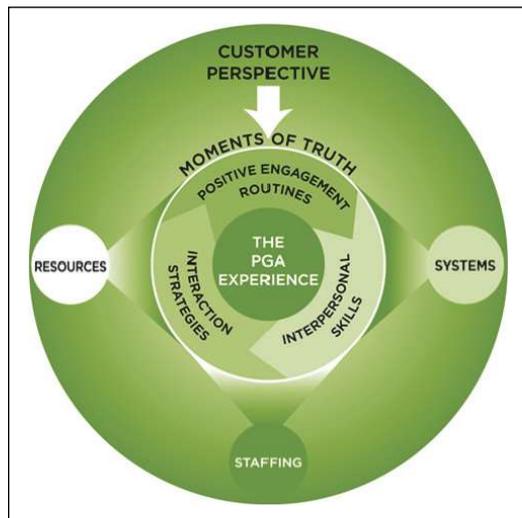
**Portfolio**

After attending the seminars, apprentices will complete the Level 1 work experience portfolio, which includes developing a comprehensive



business plan for their chosen case study facility. The details of the business plan demonstrate an apprentice's ability to create a realistic plan for performance improvement in the golf operation by focusing on business objectives, plus strategies that are relevant to the financial projections and customer's expectations. This plan needs to incorporate the various core business areas of a golf operation, including: tournaments, golf car fleet, merchandising, instruction, player development, staffing, marketing, etc.

**THE CASE STUDIES ARE BROUGHT TO LIFE IN THE LEVEL 1 SEMINARS WHERE EXERCISES ARE FACILITATED TO STIMULATE CRITICAL THINKING AND CREATE REALISTIC SITUATIONS.**



The PGA PGM curriculum will continue to utilize the case studies to help PGA apprentices and PGA Golf Management students in Level 2, where *Golf Operations* focuses on implementing the business plan written in Level 1. Additional courses in Level 2 include *Merchandise* and *Inventory Management*, *Turfgrass Management* and *Intermediate Teaching & Golf Club Alteration*. The continuation of the case study concept in Level 2 will be discussed in the third article in this four-part series.

For additional information on the PGA PGM Program, please contact the PGA Education Center at 866-866-3382 ext. 6 or [pgagpmmmentor@pgahq.com](mailto:pgagpmmmentor@pgahq.com).

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When completing work experience activities, it's important to align answers with a long-term vision (above) that also incorporates the PGA Customer Relations Model (left).