

## GOLF... Work or Pleasure?

Golf has always been a favourite game amongst the affluent in society. As involvement in the game brings with it investments such as golf lessons, attire, golf set(s), green fees and for some, country club membership(s), the game self-selects its players. Understandably, golf is often perceived as a sport for the elite.

Some say this process of self-selection brings a wealth of business opportunities, making golf an excellent networking platform for those aiming to move into the inner circle of customers/clients with the greatest potential. The uninitiated may ask "Does this "relation-building" approach of golf really work in the world of business?"

### CASE IN POINT...

Shortly after I started my own business, I was enjoying a "chill-out" evening with a couple of friends. One of them said to me "Now that you have your own company, you need to pick up two things – cigars and golf."

He explained that I needed to elevate my status in the business community and many business people smoked cigars and played golf. He offered his cigar and insisted that I try it. Like a child with a new toy, I was game to try it. Cough! .... Next up? – Golf!

I signed up for a golf lesson the very next week. Despite burning a S\$1200 hole in my pocket, I thought this is an essential investment for business growth. Yep, I charged it into my company's expense account, of course. What do you think about that, tax officer?

The golf lessons were elating. There was much more, I learnt, to the game of golf than first appearances suggested. Swinging the club and actually hitting the tiny golf ball was just the tip of the golf 'iceberg'. Golf requires agility and concentration of mind and body. I liken golf sessions to Yoga as the swing of the golf club requires stretching and twisting of your torso and limbs. Personally, it is definitely a great form of exercise. I grew to enjoy and appreciate the game (although I could do without the heat of day).

Years ago, I recalled someone asking a friend whether he still played golf. He replied, "Yes, just a social game." Now that I am plugged into

the game, I cannot understand why anyone would do it for any reason other than sheer enjoyment of the game itself!

### SO, IS GOLF FOR WORK OR LEISURE?

For me, to choose one over the other does not do justice to the game of golf. But for the benefit of the golf uninitiated, I have interviewed 3 golfers aficionados for their personal thoughts on the game:

*'A game of golf cannot be work, but it explains something always true. We only remember the great shots we made during the game. Nothing else matters and this is why I keep going back to field. We will all be successful business people if we are having fun and striving to make better shots at what we do in business and at every challenge we face.'* Mr Kyong Yu, C.E.O. HiNet Pte Ltd

*'Golf is not just a game, it's a business tool.'* Mr Tendy Tsai, Golf Pro, USGTF Pte Ltd

*'If we can do business while enjoying, why not? Golf itself is a game of two or more. While we are playing the game, we have a lot of time to walk and talk and get to know each other. But one must remember that whilst it gives you a lot of opportunity it does not guarantee you a successful business relationship.'* Mr Peter Liaw, DBS Vickers Securities Pte Ltd

### CONCLUSION

Golf is a game of mind and grace. Whilst many play golf as part of their networking, others play for just the passion and joy of the game. Hence, to each his own. To me, it's a "WIN-WIN" situation when you can enjoy the game and build up your business network at the same time!

*This is a "speak my mind" article by Ms Mirah Agus, C.E.O, Beaufort Consultancy Services Pte Ltd. Edited by Intellitrain Pte Ltd.*