

PGS and the Roller Coaster

By Debbie Waitkus, Golf for Cause®



A few years ago, while meeting with a consultant we reached that special moment of our appointment when we needed to schedule a time for our *next* appointment. I suggested a couple times that worked for me and, in return, received...silence.

“What’s the matter?” I asked. “Neither of those times work?”

“No,” he responded. “I have that time on Friday blocked as “PWS.” With all the acronyms flying around I wasn’t sure what PWS meant and asked for clarification. After all, this was a consultant and PWS could be something I should know about!

He defined “PWS” as *Personal White Space*. It’s the time he blocks in his calendar every week to do whatever he needs to do to clear his mind. Sometimes, by getting out of the office and turning his attention elsewhere, an idea or answer simply pops into his mind. PWS helps him refocus.

Working hard in, on, and for your business is a given - especially with today’s economy and the value we place on time. The resulting stress that we endure can feel insurmountable. So, creating PWS in your calendar can be priceless. As a business golf consultant, I recommend playing golf during your PWS. Or let’s just call it PGS – *Personal Green Space!*

Now, on a personal level, I don’t know about you, but I’m not particularly enjoying the roller coaster ride presented by our economy over the past couple of years. In my youth, I was never crazy about riding the amusement park’s *Comet* when it went backwards. I guess I’ve always wanted to be able to see where I was going.

With memories of spiral loops and the length of the ride going round and round in my head, I called my financial planner several months ago. In addition to talking about various markets and the economy in general, our conversation drifted to golf. She and I share an interest in the game, so there’s always a golf story to tell. Usually her stories involve some aspect of successfully mixing golf and business. But this time her story had a different twist.

It’s no surprise that her business has been hit very hard in the last year. Without a lot of positive news or predictability to share with investors, she’s watched some portfolios shrink in value. For her, work hasn’t been much fun lately. What’s more, her husband was recently laid off and was out of work.

Yet, she told me how golf has been a wonderful diversion. She and her husband had been enjoying their time together on the golf course. Uninterrupted togetherness. They'd been taking refuge in the change of scenery (and beautiful scenery at that!) and the opportunity to concentrate on something completely different. It was the middle of an Arizona summer and they were having so much fun that even the heat didn't bother them. Golf allows her the time to completely refocus, away from her business, so that when she returns to the office she feels ready, refreshed, and full of positive energy. A rejuvenation of mind, body, and spirit. Obviously, PGS works!

Here are some interesting statistics about women and the benefits of golf. According to an Attitudinal Study by Starwood Hotels and Resorts Worldwide, Inc., *From the Boardroom to the Back Nine: The Importance of Golf in Business*, 63% of women executives who play golf claim that their biggest business (or sales) deal was made while playing golf. 69% believe that if women played more golf they would succeed more at business and 100% feel playing golf is a good way to relieve business stress.

You can “turn golf into gold[®].” Bear in mind that “gold” means many things:

- revenue resulting from business deals done on the golf course
- business relationships established or enhanced on the golf course
- quality time spent with family and friends
- giving back to the community
- personal challenge and growth
- PGS – rejuvenating mind, body and spirit

Next time you need to get off the riveting roller coaster and refocus, pick up your clubs. Play 9 or 18 holes, or just head to the nearest driving range. Go by yourself or with someone else. Put some PGS into your calendar and experience the benefits!

Debbie Waitkus, author, speaker and business golf consultant, is the founder and president of Golf for Cause[®]. She is also co-founder and partner in the National Women's Golf Alliance (www.nationalwomensgolfalliance.com) and past-president of Women in the Golf Industry. Debbie can be reached at [602/840-0607](tel:6028400607) or dwaitkus@golfforcause.com.