

The Renovation Paradox

Hospitality leader Earl Conte Jr. believes the member experience must keep pace with a club's investment in its facilities.

DELRAY BEACH, FLORIDA: On Par Hospitality's concept began with two very different service experiences. "Several years ago, I had a disappointing experience at one restaurant, followed shortly afterward by an outstanding experience at another," recalled Earl. "What struck me was that the employees appeared to be from the same generation. It got me thinking. If the people were similar, what created such different experiences? I began thinking more deeply about culture, standards, training, and leadership."

Earl has spent more than 14 years in luxury hospitality, including 5-star golf resorts and private clubs such as Pinehurst Country Club in North Carolina, Kiawah Island Golf Resort in South Carolina, The Palencia Club and The Boca Raton in Florida.

"Private clubs are investing extraordinary resources in golf courses, clubhouses, and amenities," said Earl. "Those investments create expectations, but ultimately, people determine whether those expectations are fulfilled."

THE COURSE RATING

That observation helped shape the "On Par Method," a hospitality performance framework built around five stages: Diagnose, Define, Execute, Protect, and Sustain. The Course Rating provides club leadership with an independent view of the member journey and identifies friction points from arrival through departure. It also reveals where standards, handoffs, and leadership reinforcement are breaking down.

"The 18 Principles of Championship Hospitality translate those standards into everyday behavior," Earl explained. "One principle is 'Own the whole course, not just your hole.' Members don't experience the bag drop, golf operations, clubhouse, spa, recreation, and dining room as separate departments. They experience one club."

A small detail shared at arrival and recalled later in the clubhouse can turn an ordinary handoff into a personalized experience. Conte calls those moments "The Short Game," which anticipates needs, connects touchpoints, and makes the experience personal. "The best service often is not a grand gesture," concluded Earl. "It is a small moment executed consistently at exactly the right time." ■

For more information and to contact Earl, please visit OnParHospitality.org.



Earl Conte Jr.

“Private clubs are investing extraordinary amounts in golf courses, clubhouses, and amenities. Members ultimately experience those investments through people. You do not win a round of golf with a single spectacular shot. You win by consistently executing fundamentals across 18 holes. The member experience is no different. The Course Rating gives club leadership an independent view of how members experience the club today and a practical plan to make that experience feel as good as the golf and facilities. Facilities create expectations. People determine whether those expectations are met. Club leadership must ensure the human experience evolves at the same pace as the physical one.”

— EARL CONTE JR., FOUNDER
OF ON PAR HOSPITALITY

