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When I was a young man and the president of a growing ministry, I wanted to have a team-building event for our leadership. I suggested a golf tournament where we could practice all year long to challenge each other on that one Saturday. If you've ever played in a golf tournament, you're usually in teams of four. Now the man who most loved to challenge me was Dale, the head of our print shop. Even though neither one of us was very good at golf, every year we'd go neck-and-neck, and we had fun teasing each other through the process. One year, I beat him by one stroke. It was a wonderful year. About a month ahead of the tournament, he would start to put notes on my desk with quotes like, "You're a loser!" and "You're never gonna get the ball in the hole". He was really rubbing it in!

One year I was in a foursome ahead of him. There was a particularly difficult hole where you could not see the hole from the tee. If you've ever seen golf, you know, that you normally hit the ball from the tee toward a flag on the green. That flag is supposed to be in the hole and all around it are sand traps -- holes they put sand in and if your ball goes in it, it's pretty tough to get it out of it. So this hole was the hardest one of the 18 holes. And you couldn't see the flag because it was over a hill. You just had to hit the ball way up this hill and then walk up and see the top of the flag over the hill. You couldn't even see the green. You just shot toward the flag.

Well, because I was a little bit ahead of Dale and he had been teasing me and harassing me all morning, I was pondering what I could do to get him back. Finally when I was over the hill and Dale couldn't see me, I removed that flag from the hole, and I walked it way over and put it into the sand trap. So he hits it up to the hill. He can't see me, but he can see the flag. I'm chiding to him, "You'd better hit it right to the flag!" Well, he hit the best shot of the day. I mean, we watched it, and it came down and it landed right in the sand trap where the flag was!

I walked a little bit further and watch excitedly as Dale came over the top of that hill. The look on his face was priceless! He made his best shot of the day, right at his target. But the target was all wrong!

Do you realize that it is that way in life? You can have the best shot, but if the flag is in the wrong place, you will still wind up losing. That is true for the education system. If the flag is in the wrong place for teachers, then kids will be graduating from school without any skills. Graduates will come out of college who don't know what to do.

Do you realize that this is happening now? We have lost out way. The goal of school at one time was to equip students with life skills. But someone moved the flag. So maybe it's time to make a change, to have a shift. It's time to grab the flag and put it back on the green. If you are a teacher, let the change begin with you. Decide to teach your students a least one new skill that will help them be competent in life. Reaffirm the purpose of educating is to equip them to serve and succeed in life.