

GOLF

COURSE NEWS

Serving the Business of Golf Course Management

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Three out of four superintendents say job has become more challenging

To quantify current career conditions for superintendents, *Golf Course News* commissioned an independent online survey of 4,000 readers in December 2003. The survey generated a 13.7 percent response. Three out of four superintendents say their jobs have become more difficult because of a combination of slumping course revenue, budget pressure and ever-increasing golfer expectations. Following are key questions and responses from the survey:

1. Compared to three to five years ago, has your job become more challenging or less challenging?
More challenging 73%
Less challenging 2%
No response 25%

Reasons why the job has become more challenging (specific responses):

- Increasing golfer expectations 20%
- Tighter budgets 19%
- Rounds down/greater competition for revenue 16%
- Slump in the overall economy 11%
- Job title/increasing responsibilities 10%
- Course maintenance problems 6%
- Labor shortages/issues 5%
- More regulation/environmental issues 4%
- Other 9%

Reasons why the job has become less challenging (specific single responses):

- New course ownership
- Dealing with employees better
- Better tools and equipment
- Learning more
- More money in the budget
- New technology

2. How secure do you feel your present position is?

- Very secure 41%
- Not secure 40%
- Somewhat secure 11%
- Not sure 7%
- No answer 1%

3. As a superintendent have you ever been terminated or quit for budgetary, technical performance or personality/political reasons?

- No 63%
- Yes 37%

Main reasons for "yes" responses:

- Personality/political 23%
- Budget 7%
- Technical performance 2%
- Other* 11%

*Course bankruptcies, taking new jobs, promotions, etc.

4. Has a close friend who was a superintendent ever been terminated or left a position for technical performance, budgetary, personality/political reasons, or to take a job outside of golf?

- No 4%
- Yes 96%

Main reasons for "yes" responses (Note: multiple responses allow total to exceed 100%):

- Personality/political 83%
- Technical performance 70%
- Take job outside golf 52%
- Budget 43%

5. Did your formal training to be a superintendent prepare you adequately in terms of people skills?

- Yes 51%
- No 46%
- No response 3%

6. How long have you been working in your current job as a superintendent or assistant superintendent?

Average: 8 years

7. How many years have you been working in the golf industry?

Average: 19.5 years

ALMOST HALF OF THE SURVEYED SUPERINTENDENTS SAY THEY DO NOT FEEL SECURE IN THEIR JOBS, OR THEY ARE NOT SURE