

Job listings can be absurd. We've all seen what has become the generic job listing and, quite frankly, I'd rather read an obituary. It reads something like this:

Established 18-hole private country club seeks an outstanding superintendent to replace retiring superintendent. Applicants should possess a four-year degree in agronomy or related field. Certification by GCSAA desired.

Benefits include medical, dental, 401K, and expenses paid for local and national education. Club has progressive goals and seeks a team player to work with general manager and green committee chairman. Salary commensurate with experience.

Decode the above message and it would translate into this:

Eighteen-hole private clubs needs a head greenkeeper because we fired ours since we think we need a change. We have no idea why it would take four years to get a degree in grass growing, but we'd like to think you are dedicated if you took the time to do such a thing. We don't really understand what "certified" means, but we think it is better than "noncertified."

We saved money again this year by getting our benefits package from a member's friend so your health insurance probably won't cover you very well. You probably won't be around long enough to be fully vested in our retirement plan, but we'll offer it anyway. You can go to seminars, but we have a policy that you can't spend more than \$35 per day on meals and lodging.

General manager has recently been authorized to buy a book on turfgrass management and wants to put you in the middle between himself and the green chairman. The green chairman is selected on his ability to pontificate at the men's grill every day. We really don't want to pay much money, so if you have lots of experience, you are probably overqualified for the position.

It's tragic, but probably not far from the truth. Maybe a factual (and brutal) listing would be better. Like this:

Eighteen-hole high-end public daily-fee golf course seeks a superintendent. Our last superin-

Seeing Job Listings as They Really Are

BY DAVE WILBER



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tendent quit when we stopped paying our bills. Applicant will need to do more with less while being prepared for us to either sell the course or hire a management company to run the place. Your maintenance budget has been constructed by fantasy writers and includes a large lease payment for equipment that has been worn out already.

Superintendent must be able to do all jobs, as we've already cut the staff by more than 10 people. We might offer a bonus if the course ever makes money. But it probably won't so you'll have to live on the small base salary we offer.

What's that? It's too negative, you say? Well, OK — here's a job announcement that we'd all like to see but is really an endangered species:

Nice golf facility that is what it is and intends to stay that way seeks a superintendent who can manage assets and staff to the best of his or her ability. Position reports to a benevolent dictator who has been the long-term green-committee chairman.

Salary will allow you to have a comfortable life and live within a 15-minute drive of the club. You will work long hours as a self-starter, and we will insure that you have a budget to allow for a capable staff. Getting away for education and mental health is encouraged.

You will be evaluated on the things you can control as a superintendent, and not be treated harshly for acts of nature and other things out of human control. We can't pay you more money than the general manager, but you will be paid on par with the rest of the department heads at the club.

Fantasy, you say? Well, let's hope the above job listing becomes more of a reality for Turfheads who deserve positions like it.

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