

Interviewing for an 'upper crust' job:

YOU are the product

Better jobs go beyond the usual turf-related duties, and require a more methodical search and top-notch interview skills.

■ If you're about to begin a search for a new career opportunity in the private or resort golf course market, make sure you "look" before you look, advises David Stefan, president of Chase America, an executive search firm based in Jupiter, Fla.

In other words, consider your options. Opportunities in golf now go beyond the usual "superintendent" classification, and include positions with golf course developers, construction firms and design/architectural firms. You might even want to consider a job with a supplier, in product development or sales.

"These groups [often] hire people with backgrounds such as golf course superintendents," says Stefan. "The superintendents serve as project managers, construction superintendents, design coordinators, golf course designers, independent consultants or property managers."

Salaries in any of these positions will

vary according to the location and overall job prestige and description.

More and more, a golf course superintendent's knowledge has to go beyond turfgrass science.

"A private club has a greens chairman and someone who reports to the general manager or greens chairman," says Stefan.

"At a resort, you report to the vice president of operations, who might not know you or understand what you do [as far as turf is concerned]. But he's looking for the skills that he's most interested in: your business skills.

"He doesn't ask whether you can grow grass," says Stefan. "He assumes you can do that. He wants to know if you can do zero-based budgets, and capital equipment appreciation and evaluation."

"Property manager" is another job title that needs a variety of responsibilities, depending on the property to be managed. If you manage the property for a homeowner's association, you consult with the association members and are responsible for their lawns, trees, streets, sewer maintenance and the landscaping. If there's a golf course as part of the development, throw that in as well. Stefan suggests a qualified property manager/superintendent can earn between \$90,000 and \$120,000.

Product, packaging & value—At this point, you're not talking about a pallet of

Stefan: Some jobs require business smarts.



fungicide or a new greens mower. *You* are the product. And you have to dress well and be well-spoken. Leave the casual wear at home, and dress in a suit and tie.

What do you bring to the table? How do you maintain the facility? Talk about your crew.

You're going to need two resumés:

1) The short version is sent before you arrive in person. It's one page in length, and lists your career objectives, significant accomplishments and experiences, and education.

(Do not list marital status, religion, birthdate, the year you graduated or any other date which can place your age. This is not required information.)

Include a cover letter of introduction.

2) The long version includes references, specific dates of employment, with no lengthy gaps in your work record. Mark it "Confidential," and leave it with the company representative before you leave—only if you think you'd like to work there.

If you'd rather they didn't contact your present employer right away, ask them not to do so until after they decide to hire you.

You might include a letter of recommendation with the longer resumé, as well as copies of training certificates and awards you've earned.

At the interview—"Image supersedes reality," says employment consultant Jack Kaine. He believes that anyone looking for new opportunity should perfect:

- how you look,
- what you say,
- what you present to a prospective employer (resumés; letters), and
- how you prepare.

Be positive, enthusiastic and confident. A recent "USA Today" survey found that attitude carries more weight with a prospective employer than your work experience and a personal recommendation.

A positive attitude, says Kaine, starts

APPROXIMATE SALARY RANGES FOR FACILITY

Private and Public Course \$30-\$60,000

Golf Management Co. \$40-\$80,000

Golf Resort \$40-\$80,000

Multiple Golf Course Facility \$70-\$120,000

Director of Agronomy \$70-\$80,000

Gen. Mgr. Golf Operations \$90-\$110,000

-Source: David Stefan, Chase America

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immediately with your thought process.

"Just think about the person you most like to work with. Do you think about their strengths or their weaknesses; your similarities or your differences?"

The way you present yourself, and your perception of the employer will ideally lead to what Kaine calls, "an agreement of the minds." Call it empathy, or hitting it off or clicking. "If it's a successful meeting, it'll work for everyone."

Take control. Don't just walk in, shake hands, sit down and wait for the interrogation to commence, says Kaine. Better to take charge, but in a positive, assertive way. Don't be aggressive, demanding or obnoxious. At the very least, you must make a good first impression.

Kaine: Listen more than



you talk.

The person who speaks first "sets the tone of the meeting." But don't comment about the weather or how long it took you to find the place.

Say something that helps you get control.

The more questions you ask, the more you will be able to control information, time and climate; and steer the direction and content of the information exchange.

Listen. The person who listens the most and best will always have the greatest effect, because they have information. "If you listen more than you talk," promises Kaine, "you increase the probability of getting the job."

Never argue, but ask questions to further your understanding. Ask "what?" questions, not "why?" questions, and let the interviewer know what you're trying to learn before you ask a question. And get permission to ask questions. (For example, "Can you share that information with me?")

Practice with a friend. Role play.

"You know you've done well," says Kaine, "when you can state their case better than they can."

Kaine and Stefan lectured during the recent GCSAA trade show and conference in San Francisco.

—Terry McIver

GCSAA

convention wrap-up

SAN FRANCISCO, FEB. 20-27

New officers

Gary T. Grigg of the Royal Poinciana Golf Club in Naples, Fla., was elected president of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America during its annual meeting.

Grigg told the GCSAA membership that his goals this year would be in five areas: the environment, membership growth, image, government relations and growth of the annual conference and show.

Immediate past president Joe Baidy of Acacia Country Club, Lyndhurst, Ohio, will continue to serve on the board of directors.

Other new officers: Bruce Williams of Bob O'Link Golf Club, Highland Park, Ill. (vice president); Paul McGinnis of Union Hills Country Club, Sun City, Ariz. (secretary/treasurer); and directors Dave Fearis of Blue Hills Country Club, Kansas City, George Renault III of Burning Tree Club, Bethesda, Md., Tommy Witt of Wynstone Golf Club, North Barrington, Ill., and Michael Wallace of Hop Meadow Country Club, Simsbury, Conn.

Golf tourney winners

Todd Barker of Fore Lakes Golf Course, Taylorsville, Utah, shot an even-par two-day total of 144 to win the Division A flight of the GCSAA Golf Championship. Barker, son of the 1977 GCSAA champ, is a top amateur golfer in Utah. The 45th annual event was held at five courses in Monterey, Calif. Other individual winners:

Division B: Greg Hall of Renton, Wash. (gross) and Dennis Vogt of Cherry Hills, Colo. (net); 1st Flight: Scott Wagner of Silver Springs, Md. (gross) and Fritz McMullen of West Bloomfield, Mich. (net); 2nd Flight: Sean Remington of Chevy Chase, Md. (gross) and Ed Cimoch Jr. of Mount Cobb, Pa. (net);

3rd Flight: Paul Jamrog of Blechertown, Mass. (gross) and Ivy Latham of Allen Texas (net); 4th flight: Dennis Flynn of Katonah, N.Y. (gross) and Tim Powers of Pound Ridge, N.Y. (net); 5th Flight: Ron Garrison of Center Valley, Pa. (gross) and Scott Woodhead of Belgrade, Mont. (net); 6th Flight: Roger Stewart Jr. (gross) and Trevor Oxtoby of Vienna, Austria (net);

Senior I: Alan Andreasen of Mission Viejo, Calif. (gross) and Mike Bavier of Palatine, Ill. (net); Senior II: William Johnson of Plymouth, Minn. (gross) and Ken Goodman of Wheeling, Ill. (net); Super Senior: Clete Idoux of Granite City, Ill. (gross) and John Grant of San Rafael, Calif. (net); Affiliates: Dave Bingham of Fresno, Calif. (gross) and Jim Davis of San Diego, Calif. (net).

On the international scene

Leaders of the world's golf course management and greenkeeping organizations met during the annual show. The "summit" focused on three subjects: golf and the environment, the education of superintendents and the status of the superintendents' profession.

During the meeting, the GCSAA received specific requests from several countries:

- Argentina requested permission to reprint GCSAA technical articles;
- Australia requested that all information traveling over international borders be sent through national governing bodies;
- Sweden asked for copies of all turf and equipment research;
- The U.K. asked the GCSAA for information on certification, and to consider common standards for certification; and
- Uruguay asked the GCSAA to continue its educational visits.