

HOW JOB DESCRIPTIONS ARE CHANGING

Job listings are getting more homogenous, misleading, and imprecise for people who just want to know if they're qualified and whether to apply.

It doesn't take being an employment expert to realize that workplaces are evolving in the 21st century. Still, it may come as a surprise to discover that recruiters are looking for "superstars," "ninjas" and "wizards" to "work hard, play hard" on a "tight-knit team," in a job that for whatever reason involves "nerf guns."

A new project published on United Kingdom job aggregator AdView compiles the most popular words among the copious amounts of jargon job seekers have to sift through to try to understand listings (see the full list below). Some of the terms on the list are all too familiar: "Dynamic," "proactive," "self-starter" — words that mean nothing but encompass everything. But other terms are even vaguer: Employers are apparently hoping to find "rockstars" fond of "blue sky thinking" who "kick it into the long grass." And somehow, "ping-pong" fits into the equation?

This lingo may fuel confusion — and frankly prove emotionally upsetting to those of us who were told we couldn't be wizards when we grew up because they "didn't exist" (thanks, Mom). But there's a reason why recruiters are changing how they talk about work, and it's kind of our fault. So we're ninjas now?

In an economy where skill shortages are the norm, companies are desperate to recruit the best talent they can to keep their businesses running smoothly. Part of their tactic is to come up with catchy job titles that appeal to young people who want to do good for the world, according to a recent Wall Street Journal article. Incorporating "evangelist" or "wizard" into a job listing does more than just imbue a role with purpose; for companies that have been around for a while, it shows a potential applicant that executives are willing to adapt and modernize.

As one might suspect, there are indeed downsides to these catchy titles, the Journal reports. They will likely be less searchable for older applicants, and people in the workforce may have trouble defining what a "recruitment ninja" actually means on a one-page resume when they look for future opportunities.

Whether positive or negative, the trend has taken off as companies across the country and in Europe try to rebrand their culture as "synergistic" and "incentivized." New age jargon that clouds the specificities of a role continues to gain traction, with cities known for hipster, youthful vibes taking a special liking to the terms.

According to the AdView project, Seattle, and San Francisco were the guiltiest cities for using jargon, and other cities across California as well as Austin, Texas, ranked high. Far lower on the list were metropolises such as New York, Detroit, and Philadelphia.

But even major political and financial hubs are jumping aboard the jargon cruise. Washington, D.C., and London were both among the top 10 guiltiest cities for using jargon, though neither capital is especially known for its hip workforce.

So what does all the jargon mean? Well, it gives employees more agency — now, they can be “shine artists” at shoeshine places or PR ninjas at their corporate office. But it also means that job listings are getting that much more homogenous, misleading, and imprecise for job seekers who just want to know if they’re qualified and whether to apply.

Here’s the gist: For those of us who dreamed of going to Hogwarts, this is our moment. You’re a wizard, random applicant, just leave the wand at home. But for everyone else, let the jargon headache ensue — it’s going to be a wild ride.

The 40 most used buzzwords in U.S. job listings

1. Fast-paced
2. Dynamic
3. Team player
4. Detail-orientated
5. Action-orientated
6. Self-starter
7. Proactive
8. Deliverables
9. Leverage
10. Proven track-record
11. Results-orientated
12. Can-do attitude
13. Actionable
14. Action plan
15. High-growth
16. Impactful
17. Groundbreaking
18. Benchmark
19. Disruptive
20. Growth opportunity
21. Synergy
22. Superstar
23. Go the extra mile
24. Go-getter
25. Win-win
26. Pain points
27. Think outside the box
28. Work hard, play hard
29. Plan of action
30. Results focussed
31. Rockstar
32. Brainstorm
33. Ping pong
34. Ninja
35. Strategizing
36. Independent thinker
37. Wizard

38. Doer
39. Tight-knit team
40. Laser-focused

Credit: <https://www.theladders.com>