

Getting the job

Interviewing techniques can make the difference

A recent survey of professional recruiters indicates that strength in the economy does not guarantee an easy job search. The survey indicated, however, that many job hunters can blame themselves for their difficulties in obtaining employment offers.

The poll, conducted by Romac International's strategic outsourcing division, asked hundreds of employment managers, professional recruiters, search consultants and employment agency representatives to answer the question, "When there is high demand for qualified personnel, what are the major reasons why candidates are rejected by employers?"

According to Jack Erdlen, Vice President of the Romac division, "It is quite apparent that specific job knowledge or ability is the major factor in screening a candidate. However, it is not always the most qualified person who gets the job offer."

Erdlen continued, "From the data we obtained, it is quite obvious that the experts believe job hunters can influence their own destiny to a great degree. Contrary to what most applicants think, they do have an opportunity to affect the decision making process."

The disqualifying factors mentioned most frequently in the survey, following the unanimous response of "lack of technical credentials," are as follows:

- **Uninspiring Resume** - The format, content, accuracy and general appearance of a resume must make a positive statement. It is the first indicator of an applicant's background, knowledge, strengths and past accomplishments. A quick, "thrown-together" version of a resume will remove you from consideration immediately.

- **Unprepared Candidates** - A poor impression is created immediately when it becomes apparent that the job hunter has not done his or her homework and knows very little about the company and the organization and is not prepared for the interview.

- **Poor Communication Skills** - The individual is unable to clearly explain how he or she qualifies for the position and does not relate specifically to job requirements. Correspondence related to ad replies and direct contacts is not tailored to address each situation.

- **Poor Body Language** - Eye contact with the interviewer is avoided and an effortless presentation is put forth. At the same time, there is little reaction to the information being shared and general interaction is weak.

- **Lack of Enthusiasm** - Whether nervous or not, the failure to express oneself in a lively, confident manner is often interpreted as a lack of interest in the company.

· **Unrealistic Requirements** -

Whether high or low, inappropriate salary and/or benefit package requests can lead to an immediate rejection. Rigid travel restrictions, schedules and location preferences may be insurmountable obstacles; therefore, the company has to reject you.

· **Emotional Attitudes** -

Fear, desperation, dejection, indifference, etc. may be felt by job candidates but they most certainly should not be conveyed to potential employers. An overt display or discussion of personal problems will imply weaknesses which will be associated with your ability to perform properly on the job.

Personal Presentation - Many people still ignore the importance of dress and appearance. Ability to represent the images of the company are of concern to an organization regardless of the nature of its business. If "getting your act together" requires investment in time and money, it will most likely pay valuable dividends.

· **Ineffective References** -

Even though friends and acquaintances can provide good references, they might not be the right ones. The most impressive information will be furnished by those contacts who are familiar with your professional abilities and your reason for availability.

Erdlen suggests taking the time to inventory your present techniques and tools, review previous experiences and strategies, and rethink more positive approaches.

"Job seekers must remember that the process of finding a new position and improving ones career is a continuous learning process," he said. "Regardless of a person's discipline or level of expertise, efforts to ascertain acceptable and advantageous job hunting methods will be rewarded."

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