

Top 10 Confessions from the hiring side of the desk

Hiring Managers Tell All!



It's not very pretty ... but you deserve to know the truth!

We asked one question: "What's one thing you wish you could tell every job seeker ...but never will?" Their answers will shock you (but you deserve to know the truth!)

His name was Gary, and he was perfect for the job ... but he didn't get it. He answered all the Director's toughest questions with ease. So ... what went wrong? Just one thing: Gary did not tell her that he wanted the job. He assumed (like so many candidates do) that she would know it. She didn't. When I pressed her later to reconsider hiring Gary, she said "I can teach people new skills. I can't teach them to want to come to work every day. I'll hire passion over perfect skills - every time. The guy I hired was less-qualified, but he was clearly excited about coming to work for us."

This was the first of many painful lessons I learned in my early days as a recruiter. The rest are reflected in this top 10 list. While their answers might shock you, there is a silver lining! Knowledge is power. Use this list to understand the invisible barriers, then TAKE ACTION to make sure they don't get in your way of job search success! And remember: employers are not "out to get you!" They are simply trying to find the best fit ... as are you.

For this top ten list, we surveyed recruiters & decision makers at companies ranging in size from funky fun start-ups to global Fortune 500 companies. We asked them "What's the one thing you wish you could tell every candidate ... but never will." Their confessions will shock you ... but knowledge is power! Use this list to understand the barriers, and what you can & cannot control. Then take the time to plan and practice breaking through these barriers ... because you can!

1. **Referrals rule!** "Networking works. I will interview & hire personal referrals first ... every time ... over any online applicant (there really are no rules). But I will never admit it! Network your way into us whenever you can!"
2. **I don't understand you (and I don't have the time or energy to figure it out. That's your job).**
"PLEASE help me understand how your skills translate to our business needs! If you don't do this, I'll hire the next guy who can. Oh, and as for the culture fit ... if we wear suits here, you need to wear a suit. Please show up like you belong here."

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3. **Dodgy? Avoiding questions? Hiding the truth? We're done.** "Please be honest! Just like you, we're trying to figure out if this is going to be a good long-term fit. If you avoid my questions, I'll assume you are lying ... but you're probably not trying to lie! If you have something you're afraid to talk about, do it anyway. It's okay! I do, too. Mistakes and bad situations happen at work all the time. That's real. The question is this: are you willing to admit it? Own it? Did you see the problem, and understand why it happened? Did you learn from it? Will you do things better next time?"
4. **That job posting might not be real.** "Be careful with your time online ... because we might just waste it."
5. **If you apply online, and don't play the keyword search game, I will never see you.** "Please don't apply if you're not a fit! If you are, your resume better show it. Our systems and screeners won't see you otherwise."
6. **If your resume doesn't grab me in the first 5-7 seconds, I'm moving on.** "Sorry. It's the truth."
7. **The early bird gets the job.** "The first candidate to pick up the phone gets the interview (drop everything and call me right back). The one who stays responsive to me during the interview process gets the job."
8. **I hire passion over "perfect" experience ... nine times out of ten.** "Just like you, I want to have fun at work ... which means working with people who want to be there. If you're excited about the job, TELL ME!"
9. **If you don't tell me you want the job, I'll give it to someone else who does.** "See above. If you don't tell me you want the job, how will I know? I'm tired of getting calls AFTER we pick another candidate ... saying "But I really wanted this job!" Really? Why didn't you tell me when you were sitting in front of me?!"
10. **I stereotype. And so do you.** "Is it legal? Nope. Is it human? Yup. Here are some examples: #1 - I'm tired of employees who are always late to meetings. If you're late for an interview, I know how late you'll be to work. #2 - If you're young, I'm afraid I'll have to spend a fortune in time and energy teaching you how to behave at work. #3 - If you're old, I'm afraid you'd rather be at home ... and won't work as hard as me. I'm also worried that you're set in your ways and won't adapt to our company. But if I'm taking the time to interview you, then I'm hoping you'll prove me wrong. So do it."

You can do this!

Now that you understand some of the biggest secrets from the other side, you can control many of the biggest barriers to success. Do NOT do what most job seekers do: cross their fingers and hope for the best. Take small steps, each and every day, to walk through your fear and increase your own chances of success. Then let the rest go!

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