

Victoria Uni Presentation : Getting the Job You Want

Introduction :

When candidates look at getting themselves a job.

So many candidates these days in the electronic revolution just send through a 2-4 page cv thinking that will get them a job. Many of them work in roles where strategic thinking is required, and yet they fail to implement the skills and competencies required in this field of endeavour when preparing a cv.

Here are 3 Simple words that may assist you to focus: Preparation, Opportunity and Success.

We will come back to this later.

I spend my day sifting through a myriad of cv's from people who are looking to change jobs. They are looking to move forward in their career, flee from poor management practices or even just a poor boss, they are just plain bored and unmotivated in the current environment.

However, if I am to judge them by their cv's some will not pass muster. Here are just some of the reasons why.

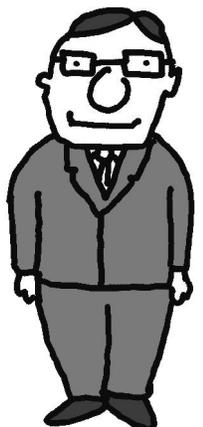
Here is a look into what I saw: typing error, misspellings on resumes; zero mention of accountability; inconsistent information; absent information from previous jobs; half-completed resumes; and six out of seven resumes were from wanna-bees. The sad part is that some of the wanna-bees took more time to position themselves than some of the veterans.

If you are a serious player, and you want to separate your candidacy from the sea of competition, I suggest you take your job search seriously, even if it is for a contract role. Take your time. Who you are being in your job search is a reflection of who you will be on the job.

Read the ad or job posting in full. If asked, answer the questions concisely and accurately; in recruiting, time is money. If there are instructions to follow, don't demonstrate what a rogue you are. These days recruiting involves a lot more processes, and the bigger the company, the more risk involved. If you cannot follow the application instructions, you are sending a message that you can't assimilate to their ways of doing things.

On the other hand, if you follow the instructions verbatim and don't do anything above and beyond — like using some creativity in your communication or application — you may be sending a message that you give just what is asked and nothing more.

If you are applying for a job with me, look me up, at our company web site www.heliumnz.co.nz and talk to me in my language. Don't address me by Dear Sir when my name is Lyndon. It tells me you don't care. Find out who the employing manager or contact person is and get their name and title correct.



Typically the person who is hiring is someone who has done the job before, and done it well, or a HR advisor or recruitment specialist, so they are expecting you to blow

them away with knowledge, pizzazz, terminology, and technology. If you are applying with me I am a recruiter and I expect you to provide an accurate cv that describes how you add value. Most recruiters use competency and behavioral based assessment interview techniques (STAR is a framework to assist in this process by focusing on situation, tasks, actions and results. In essence this is about the value you have added to the various roles you perform. It is not a high level generic

statement such as skilled in Project Management; it is providing examples and evidence of what you delivered.)

Gaining a job is a sales process and I expect you to use that to your advantage. Market shows that you know how to positioning yourself in the right manner. Work on developing a compelling reason why the employer will select YOU.

Preparation, Opportunity & Success

This means having an up to date cv ready, having spoken to referees who will act for you, speak to your network of friends and acquaintances, start engaging with recruitment companies.

Remember it is a two way process you need to become actively involved in securing your next job if the sword falls. Keep in touch with your agency!!!!

Helium's mantra is preparation, opportunity and success. This can apply to you.

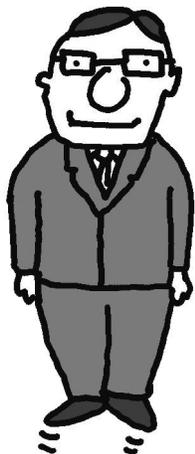
Preparation : Research and CV

Do your homework. Find out what company you are applying with, go to your browser, type in the company's site, and look at who is requesting your services. Tailor your application and response to what they are looking for. Get on LinkedIn and find out as much as you can about the employing manager!

Job searching is a sales process. *You* are selling to *me* on why *I* should invest in *you*. That takes positioning, discernment, listening, questioning/probing, and salesmanship.

Who you are and how you conduct your job search is an indicator of how you will function in this role for others. This seems easy enough to understand; however, sometimes when we are too close to something, we catch a case of running on automatic, or a case of entitlement. We forget the game we are playing. We also forget that in *this* game, it is always about winning. Winning the game means working and gaining the opportunity you want and deserve. Losing the game means you keep looking.

Be prepared to invest in developing a strong cv that provides evidence and examples of your abilities and achievements. Do not use generic statements that are supposed to convey Value – they don't. Back it up with some firm evidence and examples of what you actually did (remember Actions in STAR – this is the real meat of the cv !)



This is why it is important to make sure your cv STANDS OUT from the others. Most CV's are generic in nature, and omit providing the compelling evidence to say PICK ME!

As with every profession, people are evaluated by their performance; our performance in this industry is about quality of hire, Helium is focused on getting the RIGHT PEOPLE the Right JOB, it's about quality not quantity.

- CV

When developing a cv does your cv add value and demonstrate your skills, experience and competencies or is it just a 4 page document using generic terminology. Start thinking about improving the content to add value. Think is there a compelling reason to select you for an interview!!!! If not, then you need to develop a reason.

Most companies conduct behavioural and competency based interviewing techniques. (Refer to article on Helium's website). The format Helium use is the STAR technique:

Situation

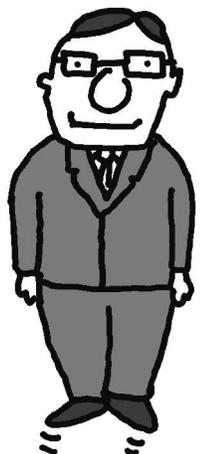
Tasks/Responsibilities

Actions – this is the area of value where you describe exactly what you did and achieved, and how you went about doing what was required.

Results

The Actions area is often omitted in modern cv's which is interesting as this is where clients ascertain where is the value that you contributed to the role. (Refer to Helium's CV template)

- What sort of job do you want?
- Target and strategies Approach
- Prepare for the Interview
- Suggested Reading :



Joel Spolsky : Smart & Gets Things Done

<http://www.joelonsoftware.com/articles/GuerrillaInterviewing3.html>

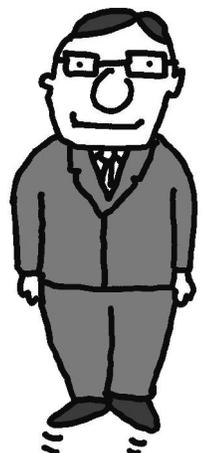
10 Reasons Why Interviews Fail

10. Over-explaining why you lost your last job. It's okay to mention that your last position was eliminated, but then move on to what you can do for this employer. Emphasise what you bring to the new employer, how you can help the hiring manager become more successful by making him look good.

9. Conveying that you're not over it. During interviews, some people act wounded, angry or sad. These are normal emotions after a redundancy but they don't belong in a job interview -- or you may give an impression of being unstable and communicate that you don't grasp the business reasons for redundancy. Give your self a health check after a redundancy or restructure – make sure you are in a positive frame of mind and are clear on your career direction. If asked by the interviewer a negative question about say, " What didn't you like about your previous manager or company" Try to answer this as a positive by suggesting things that might have been improved, try and leave out the personal comments.

8. Lacking humor, warmth, or personality. Many anxious job candidates can be one-dimensional during interviews, and are too focused on getting their talking points across. Don't forget to show qualities that can be a real plus in the decision-making process, including humor in good taste, warmth, and understanding. One thing interviewers want to know, of course, is how pleasant you would be to have around the place every day. A smile goes an extremely long way.

7. Not showing enough interest or enthusiasm. After all, companies are looking for people who are excited about working with them and for them. This is critical especially during the first interview because if you fail to convince the interviewer you have the skills, experience and passion for the job, then you will not pass GO and collect \$200.00.



There are some simple ways to do this : research the company, find out about any interesting or new projects the company is involved or initiating. Mention this during the interview. Compliment interviewer on these initiatives, or refer to the article of news that you read about.

6. Inadequate research about a potential employer. It's essential to be up on the latest news, so be sure to research the company before the interview. Be prepared with well-informed, thoughtful questions about its products or services and its future plans. Many applicants aren't bothering and it shows.

Refer to comment about showing interest above.

Compile a list of questions you want to ask, have it written down prior to interview. When interviewer asks if you have any questions bring out the paper and go through questions. If any have been answered during the interview acknowledge this.

5. Concentrating too much on what you want. Focus more on what the interviewer is saying. Listening carefully is crucial in steering the conversation toward how you would fit in and what you have to offer. Asking questions will give you clues as how best to answer those difficult or leading questions from an interviewer.

Place yourself in the employer's shoes and try to think what they are looking for, then seek to present evidence that you meet the requirements.

The place for negotiating what your expectations are is at the offer stage and not before. Disclosing what you want early in an interview can be the kiss of death.

4. Trying to be all things to all people. Devote most of your effort to talking about what you know you do well, and don't try to stretch your actual qualifications too far. A good rule of thumb: Don't apply for any job unless you have at least 75% of the stated qualifications.

Be realistic and honest about your skills and experience target those roles that will give you the best chance of success.

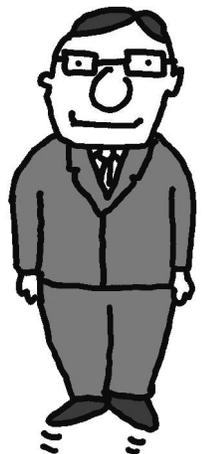
3. "Winging" the interview. Many hiring managers say that candidates often aren't ready to answer difficult questions. So rehearse. Prepare and practice a 90-second verbal resume, and some answers to possible questions, particularly in the situational and behavioural areas - so that you come across as succinct.

Remember this is about providing evidence and examples that are factual and demonstrate your skills. Generic and high level answers are a fail!!! You need to drill down to the detail, so again place yourself as the interviewer and ask your self what sort of question will be asked next? Have the answer ready.

However, even better is to have taken the person on the journey from start to finish.

2. Failing to set yourself apart from other candidates. You have to make the strongest possible case for why you are the best person for the job. Specifically address what impact you can have for them. Use quantifiable achievements from past positions to back up your performance promise.

1. Failing to ask for the job. You have a much better chance of getting the job if you ask for it. Close the interview by summing up what you can bring to the job, and ask for the opportunity to deliver those results.



OPPORTUNITY : The Interview

Another element of taking your search seriously is the level of effort you have put forth in personal competency development. What have you done to increase your awareness of the marketplace? What have you done to improve and expand your skills and experience on your own?

Opportunity is about working with recruiters, and or HR professionals so that they will identify you as talent that they wish to engage with allowing them the opportunity to contact you again when there is that RIGHT role. Everybody is talking about engagement, talent acquisition – however, YOU, the candidate, are still considering getting a job as a transaction, where you just flick out your cv. Getting the Right job requires effort, dedication and some nous. Can you say, that you have thought about this? Seriously!

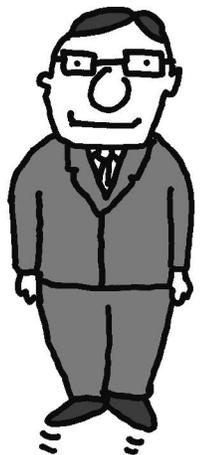
More and more employers are now searching for better ways to employ good people. We all know stories where we have hired the wrong person and the problems this cause – it's a lose –lose scenario. Wasted effort all round.

Employers now are looking at assessment techniques mentioned earlier behavioural and competency based interviewing, technical ability tests, psychometric tests, asking people to prepare a presentation to deliver to interview panel, reference checking the list goes on. It's not just an interview and a reference check any more. Helium advocates preparation and planning both in your cv and for the interview. Feedback from clients is staggering about the number of people that do no research or preparation for interviews and wing it. This sort of behaviour is transparent and obvious and results in rejection. This is not the out come we are seeking, yet why do so many people treat the interview process with disrespect.

Employers are seeking people who are motivated and interested in working for them in the role advertised. It's about ENGAGEMENT making the employer feel that you are interested and challenged by the role they are offering. It's simple, yet so many of us fail at this level.

Some Tips: Interview Role plays

Get two friends to assist you simulate an interview. Use one person as the Interviewer and the other as an observer. Video record the interview. Afterwards conduct a debrief and analysis of the interview. Where were the weak moments? What caused you the moment of hesitation or fluster. Repeat again using different situation. If experiencing difficulty breathe, ask for time to think about the question rather than respond straight away.



SUCCESS : Execution and Delivery

Is taking your job search and your career seriously, it means continually upping your level of service offering and depth of service. Invest in your own development, learn the systems, learn the technology, and apply it.

Develop a strong cv that actually explains the value that you bring to an organization. Give clear concise examples to demonstrate your skills and competencies. Expand on one or two key projects in depth.

Research companies and roles, target key companies that you want to work for. Work with recruiters and they will work with you. Be prepared to put in effort that separates you from the rest of the people searching for employment. Think about your cv and use the "SO What CHECK "? If I've written something and my response is "SO What "it is usually too generic and there isn't any compelling evidence for me to say – yeah I can see value.

Target the type of roles you want. Do not just allow a quick job alert from a job board to send off a cv. Think about what you are looking for and do not just hit the send button.

Success is getting the role you want at the company of your choice. It is not a random act of chance but a journey of dedication and effort.

Some Tips:

Negotiate on the offer but do not push too hard! At this stage you are still untested. Remember to be humble and self effacing. If you claim to be the best prepare yourself for a test and someone looking to take you down. Remember your passion! Make sure you as a person shines through.

