

THE BRIGHTON GROUP

WHY YOU DIDN'T GET THE JOB Attitudes, Actions & Omissions That Can Cost You

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Bellevue, WA – November 10, 2009 – Because there is an average of only one available job today for every six unemployed people – three times as high as in a normal economy – competition is tough enough without giving potential employers reasons not to hire you, according to OI Partners-The Brighton Group (Bellevue), a leading global career transition and coaching firm.

With the U.S. national unemployment rate at 10.2%, 15.7 million people unemployed, and only 2.5 million available jobs, that translates into an average of 6.3 unemployed people for every job opening, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

“Despite these numbers, people find jobs when they treat their searches as full-time projects that must succeed, and persevering no matter how difficult it is. People need to continually be on guard not to defeat themselves through their attitudes, actions, or omissions,” said Christopher J. Ihrig, Managing Partner of OI Partners-The Brighton Group (Bellevue) (www.oipartners.net).

Following are the top reasons why people today are not landing the jobs they seek, according to career consultants from OI Partners-The Brighton Group:

- “Not over it yet” or expressing anger or disappointment with previous employer. “During interviews, some people are acting wounded, angry, sad, or are becoming teary-eyed about being laid off. This can make you appear unstable and communicate you don’t understand the business reasons for layoffs,” said Ihrig.
- Failing to ask for the job, or not inquiring into what the next step is. You have a much better chance of getting a 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 these results for them. Also damaging is not inquiring at the end of an interview what the next step is, and assuming you know it,” said Ihrig.

- Not being able to personally connect with the interviewer. Chemistry is at the root of nearly every hire. Employers choose people who seem most likely to get along with others, and are the types co-workers want to be around.
- Lacking humor, warmth, or personality during interviewing process. “Many job applicants are one-dimensional during interviews and are too focused on getting their talking points across. Don’t forget to show qualities that can be a plus in the decision-making process, including humor in good taste, warmth, and understanding,” said Ihrig.
- Appearing over-qualified for the job. Because of the lack of job openings, many people are applying for positions below their past income and experience. “Address interviewers’ concerns you may leave once the job market improves by countering that your experience will solve problems and create solutions with the ultimate goal of helping the company increase revenue. As a result, everyone’s salaries will improve – including yours,” said Ihrig.
- Failing to set yourself apart from others. Job-seekers must make the strongest case possible why they are the right person to hire. “Specifically address what impact you can have on sales, profits, costs, productivity, complaints, or other areas within the next three to six months. Use quantifiable achievements from past positions to back up your performance promise,” said Ihrig.
- Not showing enough interest and excitement. Companies are looking for people who are enthusiastic about working with them, and can motivate and inspire co-workers and direct reports. Communicate this in a variety of ways and express your enthusiasm for hitting the ground running.
- Not researching a potential employer and discovering latest news about them. It’s critical to do your homework before an interview so you can prepare in advance the right questions about their current and future products and services to discuss during the interview.
- Focusing too much on what you want and too little on what the interviewer is saying. Listen carefully and analyze what an interviewer is saying, translating this into what you can do to help them fulfill their needs. “When answering questions, be sure to match the communication and personality style of your interviewers,” said Ihrig.
- Not following up frequently or aggressively enough. Many employers seem to be waiting for the absolute, ideal person to walk through the door. “The decision-making process is much longer today. Your follow-up efforts need to be more aggressive and frequent than usual, without becoming irritating,” said Ihrig.
- Trying to be “all things to all people.” Devote most of your effort to what you know, what you do well, and don’t try to stretch your actual qualifications too far. Mainly target jobs for which you have at least 75% of the stated qualifications.

- Not successfully transferring past experience to the opportunity. There are more opportunities in some job functions and industries than others. Be prepared to translate your past experience to fit the opportunity using quantifiable achievements, results, and terms that are relevant to the new position.
- Making an inappropriate personal presentation. Not wearing the right level of attire to an interview or sloppy personal hygiene. You only get one chance to make a good first impression.
- Over-explaining why your past job was eliminated or referring too much to your previous company. “Don’t spend a lot of time talking about your most recent employer, especially the reasons for leaving. If you were laid off from a large company, communicate that you would fit in at a smaller employer,” said Ihrig.
- Feeling you can “wing” the interview without preparation. Many job-seekers are not prepared to answer difficult questions. “Prepare and practice a 90-second verbal resume and answers to possible questions so that you come across strong as succinct,” said Ihrig.

About OI Partners

OI Partners is the talent management and leadership solutions firm that provides a better human experience for a better business outcome. Established in 1987, OI Partners Inc. is a corporation of leading career consulting, executive development, leadership development, and outplacement professionals located in more than 200 locally-owned offices in 27 countries. For more information, please visit www.oipartners.net or call 800-232-5285.