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Some Uncommon Job Strategies That Actually Work

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There is no shortage of advice about how to land the job of your dreams, fulfill your deepest career aspirations, and obtain and sustain profound bliss from your work. These strategies, drawn from my 35 years of experience in the Human Resource profession as a practitioner, consultant, and researcher, can help.

While organizations certainly make hiring mistakes, the odds are that all job applicants will be rejected at some point in their job search. These reasons are sometimes avoidable (e.g., our resume doesn't have the "right" keywords according to screening software, someone misplaced our application) and other times substantive (e.g., we don't have the necessary breadth and/or depth of skills the employer wants, our career goals aren't a good fit with the organization's strategy).

So what can you do to increase the odds? The following strategies are under-utilized by job applicants at every level. While they won't guarantee you will be selected, they may work in your favor as they effectively convey why employers should consider hiring you.

1. *Make your resume performance and skill laden.* The vast majority of resumes I've seen over the past 35 years contain a laundry list of prior and current job duties. Such listings tell a consumer of the resume absolutely nothing about your talents and the results you have produced or helped others to produce when applying those talents. The only thing such a list conveys is your view of what you were supposed to do in past jobs. If you were a hiring manager, which would be more helpful to you – a list of what candidates have supposedly done, or evidence of the candidate's skills and how those skills produced specific results?
2. *Stop treating an interview like a first date.* Many of us think we must show ourselves in the best possible light during an interview and reveal nothing that could be seen as a negative. For example, if asked what one of our greatest shortcomings is, we might say, "Well, I guess sometimes I take the job too seriously," or "I tend to want to work real long hours." Savvy interviewers can see through this deception quickly. An increasing number of organizations use "Behavioral Interviewing" techniques, which make it hard if not impossible to lie in an interview and get away with it.
3. *Don't waste time and energy trying to find out why you didn't get the job.* While there is some merit in seeking feedback, chances are an employer will not tell you why. Some fear adverse legal consequences if they do. And even if they do give you some feedback, how will you ever know if it's the truth? Accept the standard response and move on. Attaining a position in an organization that is a good fit is hard work. Eliminating time wasters can help you focus on that work.
4. *Be inquisitive.* Too many candidates view job interviews as one-way streets — the employer asks questions and we respond. We should be interviewing employers as vigorously as they interview us—if not in the actual interview then in a separate discussion. We should have truckloads of questions about the job, the department and the entire organization before we even apply for a job. Both parties wish to reduce the risk that's inherent in the selection process, and getting answers to our questions can help make that happen.
5. *Be a sponge.* We can gather helpful information about an organization simply by observing what goes on inside it. At an interview, note the physical layout of the workplace, the body language of those who work there, and the general feeling you get. Observations are legitimate data sources about workplaces often overlooked by job applicants. Many of us leave jobs (or are asked to leave them) not because of skill deficits or lack of challenges but because there was a poor fit with the organization.



Kevin on how his degree has benefited him professionally:

"The MPA has been valuable because it exposed me to fantastic and driven classmates and future colleagues. It also exposed me to cutting edge leadership and management topics. One such topic, the Balanced Scorecard, is what I currently consult to clients about."

Kevin with some advice for current students and recent graduates of the MPA degree program:

"Realize that as great as your professors are, you are still responsible for developing a passion and even more knowledge about an area that you're interested in. Of course, the professors and classmates will help you, but you are responsible for becoming more knowledgeable about your area of interest."

"Networking, not in the transactional sense, is very importance. In order to build relationships that may eventually benefit you, seek out ways to help fellow students and organizations. Find ways you can be of value to others, and then when you have a need, they will be more likely help you."

Georgia Health Policy Center advises Grady Task Force

The Georgia Health Policy Center presented to the Greater Grady Task Force analysis of the Atlanta market's uninsured admission patterns to inform solutions Grady Hospital's financial crisis.

The task force was formed to address the issues that threaten Grady Health System's long-term viability, and one proposed solution is to charge counties based on the number of uninsured who seek care at Grady.

Georgia State University President and task force member Carl Patton said, "There is a widely held assumption that if only Grady were paid for the uninsured patients who come from other counties, there would be no funding crisis. The results of the Health Policy Center's research refute this assumption."

Center Director Karen Minyard gave an overview of how uninsured patients in Grady's five-county market move across county lines to seek care. According to the Center's research, bordering counties send some inpatients to Fulton County; however, a very small percentage of those seek care at Grady.

Minyard said, "Even though Grady cares for a large number of uninsured, some the admissions patterns are not what we expected." One pattern involved Gwinnett County. Of the 1,470 Gwinnett admissions in Fulton County, 164 occurred at Grady, and other Georgia Metro areas display similar patterns.

"This is a bigger question for us than what to do about Grady. This is a question of what to do about the large number of people without health insurance, who live in our state and communities," Minyard said. "This is a question of how to deal with the rising costs of health care caused in large part by technology and in some part by poor health."

A diverse group of 17 top business leaders serve on the Greater Grady Task force, which was created by the Metro Atlanta Chamber of Commerce at the request of the board of directors of the Fulton-DeKalb Hospital Authority.



Georgia Health Policy Center, established in 1995, provides evidence-based research, program development and policy guidance locally, statewide, and nationally to improve health status at the community level. The Center conducts, analyzes and disseminates qualitative and quantitative findings to connect decision makers with the objective research and guidance needed to make informed decisions about health policy and programs. Projects to date focus on some of the most complex policy issues facing healthcare today including, community and public health; public and private health insurance coverage; long-term care; child health; and community health systems development. For more information, visit www.gsu.edu/ghpc.