

Why Should I Hire You?

By
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The other day I was speaking with a young fellow who had been laid off from his job at a large consulting firm. His education and work experience were exceptional so I was surprised to learn he had been out of work for eight months. "Why so long?" I asked him. He launched into a list of things he couldn't do, experience he didn't have and technology he didn't know. All of these plus "the economy" were why he was still looking. It wasn't until I asked him what he wanted to do in his next job that a glimmer of passion entered his voice.

Being out of work for an extended period is certain to erode even the most confident job seeker. That's why it's so important that you stay focused on your strengths and how your special qualities, skills and abilities can benefit a potential employer. Remember you are the only person in the world who knows everything about what you know!

Here are a few suggestions to help you stay on track.

Never argue for your limitations. It's easy to start thinking in terms of what's missing if you've been out of work for a long time but arguing for your limitations will never bring you the work you seek. Focus instead on how you can position your unique skills and abilities to support a potential employer's goals. Pay particular attention to the things that are so easy for you that they seem unimportant. The fellow I refer to was a natural relationship builder and communicator yet he could not see that his gift for communication is what could set him apart in the technical world he traveled in. Ask yourself what sets you apart, what makes you different.

Fill in the gaps. If there is knowledge, skills or experience you want or need, set about getting them and brag about your efforts to do so instead of shining a spotlight on what you don't have.

Think of yourself in terms of results. People buy solutions. A client who is a voice-over talent left this message recently for a customer she wanted to win back. "Hello, Bill. This is Jane Doe. I was the voice of Top Notch News during the 3 or 4 years when the network had its highest ratings. How can I help you regain that position? Call me at ..." . She got a request to submit her demo reel the next day. How will hiring you move others closer to their goals?

Ask good questions. Craft a series of questions that are open ended, thought provoking and position you in terms of results. Avoid directive questions that signal the answer you are looking for or require a yes/no response. Ask yourself, "What are the biggest questions I can ask in response to this opportunity?" For example, "What are the organization's most important goals?" " How do you see this position impacting on the

achievement of those goals?" "If I were offered the opportunity to work with your organization, what would you like me to accomplish in my first 90 days?"

Learn the art of selling. True selling is actually a wonderful process of learning about others and listening for an opportunity to serve through what you offer. It is the single most important tool in your job search kit.

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