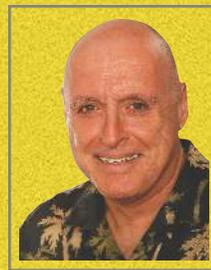


THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



823 Avoid These Job Interview Mistakes

The last couple of days we've talked about how to answer some common job interview questions. I'm Jerry Roberts and today, we talk about some mistakes made by job hunters that can ruin their chances right off the bat. That next, on The Extra Point.

In Extra Points #821 and 822, we gave advice and examples on how to answer some of the more common job interview questions. Today, the focus is on mistakes that can undermine your chances of being hired.

First, it's important to understand the nature of what's happening when you're looking for a job. You've likely heard the term "job market," and the emphasis here is placed on the word "market," because there is buying and selling going on.

You're offering to sell your skills and your time. The prospective employer is offering a price in money and benefits, to secure what you're selling, to be used in a specific manner (job description), at a specific location (workplace), and at a specific time (schedule). When you break it down, those are the components of the transaction.

Since it is a transaction and you are your product, wouldn't you want to present that product in the best possible way, in order to make it as attractive as possible to the potential buyer? When I refer to being "attractive," I'm talking about avoiding basic errors that reduce your perceived value. The following are some common mistakes made by job seekers.

1. Arrive early and engage in friendly conversation with whoever greets you. I remember the story of a guy who was rushing one morning, not in a positive mood, walked in and told the receptionist he was there to see Mrs. So-and-So for the interview. When she responded that there would be a slight delay, he grumbled that

people had schedules and "these interviews should be held on time." The receptionist nodded and thanked him for his patience.

After a short wait, she invited him into an office and said the interviewer would be right in. A couple minutes later, the same woman came back in the office and sat down behind the desk. Right, the "receptionist" was the interviewer. Mistake #1, not having your head straight when you walk through the door.

2. Unless the job you're applying for is strictly entry level and you have little or no job experience, you want to create a professional resume. There are tons of free templates and examples online.

3. Not asking for the job description in advance of the interview. I'm not saying every employer will have one, but you should ask. A job description shows you exactly what the company is looking for in their new hire.

4. Not doing any research on the company. I've had applicants ask me, "So, what kind of business is this?" Five or two minutes online can give you some useful information you can bring up during the interview.

5. Being unable to show or explain positive examples of past successes and achievements. Even if it's the first job you've ever applied for and you have no employment history, come up with an example that highlights your great work ethic. Give the interviewer something to work with.

6. Not asking any questions of the interviewer, once they've gone through their list of questions for you. If you get the job description and spend a few minutes online, you should have no trouble coming up with at least two or three relevant questions.

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7. Finally, if you do come up with two questions, may God have mercy on you if the two are, “How much an hour does it pay?” and “When can I get my first vacation?”

Back to the initial point, you’re selling a product. Think of that as you answer the questions and go through the interview. Always be honest, but always present yourself in such a way that it checks off all the boxes for the interviewer, and gives them good reasons to want to buy what you’re selling.

That’s The Extra Point. Be responsible and make something good happen today. For 93.3 and the Ray Gibson Show, I’m Jerry Roberts.

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