

13 Reasons You Will Never Get a Job

By: Colin Daymude

Yes I know that 13 is an unlucky number and even that may deter some of you from reading this. Just this once how about being a contrarian? That's right, go against the grain. Make a difference in your life. Okay let me be perfectly honest with you. Nobody owes you a job. And to make it worse most job seekers are faced with a perfect storm of barriers that never existed in the past.

Those barriers include huge competition for a single position, social media, applicant tracking systems, the complete elimination of entire job descriptions and industries, not to mention a totally overwhelmed HR and recruiting department. You have to be prepared to put your best foot forward. Your most prepared foot. And the one that completely differentiates you from the flock.

Although "experts" are skirting the issue and giving you false hope, I don't have any problem telling you that you are likely going to stay unemployed, unhappy and a complete burden on society if you continue to do the things I've outlined below. Consider it a wake up call; consider it an opportunity. Because statistics show that only a very small percentage of you will take any action. Interesting, that's about the same percentage of people in the world who are independently successful.

Your choice, it's a new world with new rules so you have to be ready to do new things.

These 13 reasons outline opportunities that most people will never take advantage of. That's good news for some of you because the difference between successful people and unsuccessful people is that successful people will do what unsuccessful people will not. Here you go (don't kill the messenger).

1) You spew facts vs. stories. There's an old adage in sales and marketing that stories sell and facts tell. People can relate personally to stories and the more you know about the company and person that you are interviewing with the better you can get that person to relate to what you are talking about. Stories evoke emotions and get people connected. And being personally connected is the differentiator you need. Think about the book series, "Chicken Soup for the Soul". It is just a compilation of short stories about real life. It's also the best selling book series of all time. But what if instead of telling a heart wrenching story about a paraplegic who learns to walk again and fights all odds to win a dog sled race in the Antarctic all alone, it was just a series of facts like, "Man rides sled across the snow"? One of the most powerful things you can do is call up former employees and employers and just shoot the breeze with them. Write down all the wonderful, "remember when" stories as well as the stories of success and challenge that make you unique. You need other people to jog your memory. If you can give your story personality and feelings, then you will gain instant rapport with anyone you talk to. Instant differentiator, you win.

2) You don't present solutions. Let's be real, an employer wants to hire someone to solve a particular problem. Either they don't have enough of something or they want to fix/change something. And if they had all the solutions then they wouldn't need you. So after you have thoroughly researched and analyzed the company, its culture, the competition, the industry and the people you are interviewing with then you better know what solutions they need and be able to communicate it. If you don't, it's okay because somebody else

will. One great tool is to actually perform a S.W.O.T. analysis on the department, industry or company you are interested in. S.W.O.T. stands for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats. Just Google it if you need a template to help guide you. And believe me, any employer worth working for will be completely impressed not only by your research but by your diligence.

3) You're lazy. Anything worth doing is worth doing well. Abe Lincoln said that if he had 8 hours to chop down a tree then he would spend the first 6 sharpening his axe. Unfortunately most people don't want to put forth the time and effort to do what they need to do to secure an interview and a job. The facts are clear that the vast majority of jobs are attained by some sort of active networking practice. And not by posting your resume on-line or applying for job after job. Yet most people are not willing to do what it takes to establish and nurture (you don't just make a connection and then magic happens) the right networks. When I suggest that people actually call companies and build a rapport with associates in order to seek referrals, they look at me like I'm crazy. But that one additional step can mean the difference between having or not having network contacts, job referrals, insight, interview process feedback and much more.

4) You're boring. Surveys of recruiters and Human Resource managers show that the number one trait that job seekers lack is high energy. The bottom line is that people want to be around other people who are upbeat, exciting and at the very least, energetic. The perception is that high energy people are on the ball and exude confidence; low energy people are lazy, unmotivated and no fun. Regardless of whether that is true or not, you had better have a gut check about your output. And I'm not just talking about the live interview where your handshake needs to be strong and secure (ladies included) and your voice confident and strong. During your phone interview, your energy is even more important because no one can see the bright expression of excitement that is hidden by technology. The only way to portray confidence and high energy on the phone is to have the proper inflection, tonality and great volume. With blue tooth and other type headsets, it's more and more important to speak up. And after all, if you're not excited about what you have to offer, why should anyone else be? And please get some honest feedback from someone about how you sound. True story; I was actually offered a job because of a message I left on an answering machine. It wasn't the message itself; it was the energy, passion and drive that delivered it.

5) You don't add up. Have you ever talked to someone and they just make you turn your head and say, "hmm"? Well how do you know if someone isn't saying that about you? Here's the best way to tell. If you have anything to hide, have covered something up, or speak in half truths or your resume doesn't match what you say or what you wrote on your application. If any of those things are true, people will say, "Hmm"

about you. The biggest lies we tell are the one's we tell ourselves (think of your kids who will honestly say they didn't get into the cake, all the while covered in chocolate icing). No job, guaranteed. Be honest and be consistent. There are no perfect people in the world. In fact the only people with no problems are well, dead people. What differentiates people is how they handle those problems. So turn your past issues into opportunities. Employers are looking for solution providers so be one.

6) You only speak one language. I'm not talking French or Spanish. I'm talking about the three ways that people communicate and learn. People

learn and disseminate information in one of three ways; auditory,

visual and kinesthetic. Without a full dissertation, this is what I'm talking about. Auditory learners can grasp information just by you talking to them. Visual learners need some form of pictures or stories to create the picture before they "get it". Kinesthetic learners need to be an active participant before the information gets through their thick skulls (that's me). These interviewers would most benefit from a Socratic type interview where they were guided to come up with their own conclusions about why you are the "man" for the job.

Oh and by the way most people are visual. I just happen to be kinesthetic. Which means that I am so dense that you can talk 'till you

are blue in the face and I won't get it. I know what you are saying, "So what"? Well let's say that there is an even distribution of the population (33.33% each) that prefers to communicate in one of the three styles. And you prefer to communicate in one of the other. So you are visual and the interviewer is auditory. You show graphs and pictures but don't really "explain" why you are the best candidate (stories are also like pictures). Have you ever wondered why you have a passionate message that just doesn't produce the results that you are looking for? Well this is the number one reason. Why do you think that Google paid like a gazillion (I'm sure that's the official term) dollars for YouTube? Because video appealed to the masses in a way that written text never could. So the solution is always to appeal to the interviewers preferred style. How do you do that? Well it would be great if you could give them a test to determine their preferred style but the fact is that you just don't know. So the only solution is to ALWAYS communicate in all three styles. And if you do.....wow you will do what 99% of job seekers not only don't know how to do but they are also not willing (see lazy above) to do. Hey what's the big deal anyway...being unemployed is not that bad. I'm sure that Obama will extend your jobless benefits and eating out is so over rated.

7) You're a quitter. If I hadn't just had two glasses of wine complements of Delta on my first class upgrade I would have said that you need to have more perseverance. (Disclaimer: I am not condoning the use of alcohol to enhance your creative abilities) But let's be

real here. Most people quit too soon. Studies show that 81% of professional sales people take 5 calls to close a sale. But a full 90% give up prior to making that critical 5th call (48% quit after the first call and another 24% quit after the 2nd call). I can think of a significant number of hires who scored the position just because they were the one who stayed front and center with me. And not just when I had a position open, no these candidates made regular contact regardless of whether anything was available. And you know the best part is that I really appreciated those candidates staying top of mind with me. Why? Because it kept me from having to weed through hundreds of unqualified candidates.

8) You don't take advantage of opportunities right in front of your face. Right now I am sitting on a two hour plane ride from Kansas City back to my home in Atlanta. I had an idea pop into my head to write this article after talking to a couple of job seekers who are close to 100% guaranteed not to get employment anytime soon (see reasons 1-13). Oops the battery on my laptop is completely dead and Delta just doesn't have the foresight like the Virgin Atlantic visionaries to add AC; even in first class (yeah I'm spoiled, so). I am actually writing this entire article on my iPhone because my laptop battery died (I thought about writing a book about writing a book on my phone). I have never understood how someone can spend hours on a plane and not at least have something to read, let alone work on. But in all seriousness, opportunities are all around us every day. Most of the time we are just not prepared to take advantage of them. They say that luck

is when preparation and opportunity cross paths and that is so true. Here's a great example. And this story came from an article in the Atlanta Journal almost a year ago. Yes I was prepared for the opportunity and cut the article out and filed it under, "opportunities". Anyway the article is about a marketing executive who was a little down on his luck (not enough business) so he decided to create some by actually scheduling flights (mostly first class) to no-where in particular. Why? Because most decision makers were on flights and in first class. The result was that David Topus, marketing and business consultant, landed a 3 year business relationship with former Delta CEO, Leo Mullin, countless contacts and even a 100k deal because of a seat assignment mix up. Now I understand that most people don't have the means to spend a couple of grand on a first class ticket just on the chance that they will meet someone, but you are missing the point. David just created networking opportunities that exist for all of us, every day. Instead of a first class flight, the opportunity you create could come from a Chamber Networking function or a MeetUp group that you start, or god forbid strike up a conversation with someone in line at the grocery store. The differentiator is that David took an active role in his networking whereas most people think that "showing up" is good enough. Seriously, the whole "90% of life is just showing up" has really screwed up a lot of folks. In the very best of markets maybe that has a hint of truth; with the results only lasting short term. In this market it has no relevance what so ever.

9) Your resume sucks. Alright I've reviewed more resumes than I can count. Do you want to know the bottom line? Okay here you go. You know that resume writer that you paid big bucks for? Fire them and hire an editor instead (at a fraction of the price). Your resume won't get you the job or interview but it can certainly lose it for you. So use this as a rule of thumb. Don't make it too long, too complicate (go for it if you are a PhD in Neuroscience and are applying for the same but still be careful because a recruiter is likely screening your resume) or too messy. It doesn't matter how good a candidate you are if your resume shows how poorly you can hire a proof reader or do it yourself. And here's some very valuable information (you can send me a check if you want) that will completely differentiate you from the rest of the world. Go back and read number 6 above. Take out some words (no fluff in the resume please) and add a few graphs or charts that are easy to read. It will immediately catch someone's eye and it will resonate with another 33 1/3% of the population who are visual learners (come on, we all like to look at the pictures).

10) You need immediate gratification. An article in The New Yorker highlighted a 1960's study that showed there is a direct correlation between a child's ability to delay immediate gratification and success. In fact the 30% of kids who could delay getting a marshmallow for just 15 minutes scored on average 210 points higher on SAT scores. The 70% who could not delay immediate gratification struggled making friends and handling stressful situations. To put this in perspective, the job seeker that needs immediate gratification is the one who posts their resume every day, they do mass mailings of cover letters, and they mindlessly apply for job after job. The job seeker who can delay immediate gratification will do their due diligence by researching companies, individuals, industries and competitors. They will put together a package of solutions and take the time to build relationships as well as practice until their message is clear and value oriented. So what's it going to be? One marshmallow now or two in 15 minutes?

11) You're a taker, not a giver. If you are always looking for what a company is going to do for you and what your benefits will be then you are thinking backwards and you are doomed to fail. Everyone's favorite radio station is WIIFM (what's in it for me) so it's only natural to be a little selfish. The only problem is that your potential employer listens to the same station and they have the upper hand. So if your mission is not to

add value to individuals and organizations then you've added one more reason why you may never get a job in this economy. The best way to learn how to add value is to make a list of the common concerns an employer might have about hiring someone and answer them. Employers are really only concerned about 3 things. If you can do the job. If you will do the job. If they like you. Answer the objections before the interviewer has had a chance to ask you about them and you are in baby. Other great ways to add value is by doing a S.W.O.T. Analysis or actually preparing a summary of how you will attack the position in your first 90 days (please include items related to soliciting the help of other people in the company).

12) You're going it alone. Here's the bottom line. Two heads are better than one and you only have one (if you do in fact have two, skip this section). Napoleon Hill in his masterpiece, Think and Grow Rich, described it a little more elegantly. He said that a mastermind is "The coordination of knowledge and effort of two or more people, who work toward a definite purpose, in the spirit of harmony." And also, "No two minds ever come together without thereby creating a third, invisible intangible force, which may be likened to a third mind." In fact he also stated that nothing of greatness was ever achieved by a single man. Yet so often, especially when we are down and out, we tend to play turtle and hide in our shell. You should be doing just the opposite by joining forces with accountability partners who will challenge you to do things that you would never do on your own. And of course, you should return the favor. If you want to know where to find an accountability partner, don't worry, they are everywhere and likely looking for you as well. See number 8 above.

13) You aren't prepared. I had to add this in just to make it an even 13 reasons that you will never get a job (only if you are actually a participant in one or more of them). Brian Tracy, the world famous sales trainer said that for every minute you spend planning, you save 10 minutes in execution. That's a 1000% return on your energy. To put that in perspective, if you do the proper planning and preparation then you can have one interview and get the job or you can be poorly prepared and continue to interview over and over and over again. Get it? So what should you be preparing? In a word, everything. Interview questions (with your accountability partner), reviewing your resume (with your accountability partner), interviewing other people (because you learn when you teach), researching companies, individuals, industries, trends etc and practice relating the information over and over until you are good at it and you exude confidence (because you will when you know your stuff). I could go on and on but I think you get the point. Everything you do, you should plan and prepare for.

There you have it. 13 reasons why you may not ever get a job in this economy. I hope that is not the case. I hope this has been a wake up call for you because these are also 13 ways that you can differentiate yourself from most every other job seeker. It's a buyers market and you better have the right product for anyone to be interested. Dents, dings and scratches need not apply.

Colin Daymude, Chief Employment Officer at The Job Genius specializes in teaching active job search strategies that dramatically reduce the time a candidate spends in the market. He does this by taking Human.