

Career Columnist

Consider a couple more resolutions

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Was landing a new job one of your New Year's resolutions? If so, you may want to consider two more resolutions that can help you achieve that goal.

Resolve to not take rejection personally. The ability to withstand disappointing response for prospective employers is key to landing a job these days. Unless you happen to be from one of the in-demand health professions, where shortages of applicants are common, you're likely to make contact with a number of employers before encountering at least one that offers a job.

Until that job offer is extended, you may not impress every hiring manager you meet. Prior work experience and accomplishments are only part of the formula that produces job offers. The intangible factor many call "chemistry" is another ingredient. Hiring managers tend to hire people whose personalities and work style will be a good fit for their department as well as the company culture.

It's important not to let your confidence be undermined by those hiring managers who don't deem you the perfect fit and offer you a job. The same skills and personality traits that didn't motivate them to extend a job offer will be precisely the combination of qualities that prompt another employer to say, "You're perfect for the job. How soon can you start?"

When hiring managers ask why you're looking for a job, don't try and hide the fact that you lost your job due to a "downsizing" or "cutback" by your prior company. Employers are well aware that economic circumstances forced many companies to cut even the most skilled employees during the last few years.

Be sure, however, not to convey any bitterness about being terminated. Companies aren't eager to hire malcontents. You may want to assuage an employer's concerns about any lingering anger or resentment by fleshing out the response regarding your pink slip. Consider saying, "Frankly, although I was disappointed when it first happened, I've had time to reflect and realize I was long overdue for a new challenge, the kind of challenge your vacancy offers."

Another response you might consider is: "I'd been thinking about making a change before my job was cut but, as you know, it's easy to get locked in to the security of a position that provides a good salary and excellent benefits. Ultimately, I've come to feel the company's downsizing was a blessing in disguise. It provided the catalyst I needed to seek a new challenge, and frankly, that's why I'm excited to be meeting with you. I've researched this company and am very impressed with your product line and the investments you've made to stay at the leading edge. I see an exciting future ahead for this company and am eager to be a part of the team that brings it to fruition."

This kind of response turns what could have been deemed a potential negative into a very

big positive.

What if you're currently employed and looking to change employers because you don't get along with your current boss and are tired of tolerating the situation?

Be discrete when responding to the question, "Why are you looking for a new job?" Avoid saying anything negative about your boss' personality or management style. He or she may likely be offended by negative remarks about your superior.

Don't sabotage yourself by mentioning a conflict with your current boss. Instead, offer a positive response such as: "I'm looking for a new challenge," "I'm seeking an organization that offers more growth potential," or "I'm eager to join an organization that ranks first in its field."