

APSEA So Chap. Mini-Trng Session October 2013

TOPIC: "Be Clever and Cautious at Your Interview"

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1. Be Clever and Cautious At Your Job Interview

Well-meaning job seekers sometimes get too creative when being interviewed by their potential employers. Wacky responses were revealed by hiring executives in a survey by Accountemps, a large staffing service for financial professionals.

2. Creativity Can Backfire

A group of 150 Senior Executives offered several examples of candidates going too far in their attempts to stand out while being interviewed:

"One candidate said that we should hire him because he would be a great addition to our softball team."

"One individual said we had nice benefits, which was good because he was going to need to take a lot of leave in the next year."

"An applicant once told me she wanted the position because she wanted to get away from dealing with people."

These statements reflect poor responses to common interview questions, such as: "Why should I hire you?" Career experts offer several alternatives that can help job candidates respond more successfully.

3. Break It Down

Richard Phillips, founder of Advantage Career Solutions in Palo Alto, California, suggests a three-step approach that flows from the job description:

A. Begin your answer by listing the top three to five requirements of the job as you understand them, based on your research and what you've

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learned in the interview. (Know the Company’s or Department’s Mission Statement and their Goals and Objectives prior to the interview).

B. Summarize how your skills and experience will enable you to make a significant and positive impact in those areas.

C. Finish by stating your interest in the organization. Keep it short and sweet (but maintain focus on your Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities).

4. Tailor Your Story

Joe Turner, author of *Job Secrets Unlocked*, suggests you prepare your best "story" to answer the question by showing how you will go the extra mile.

"Here is where you tell that story of exactly how you worked 60-hour weeks (if you did) , acquired new skills, or whatever it took to distinguish yourself and meet the challenge head-on to successfully make the sale, save the project, rescue a client or whatever it was," he says. "If you can monetize the end result, your story will only be that much more dramatic. Since no other candidate can duplicate your own personal story here, you'll make a memorable impression."

5. Run With Your Ideas

During the process of researching the employer and preparing for the interview, think of what you might do if you had the position, advises Carla-Krystin Andrade, author of *Kick Start Your Job Search*. "Perhaps you have an idea for a new feature for their product or a new process that is relevant to the position," she says. "This is the perfect time to tell them about this idea and show them how you would bring value to the position if they hired you."

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