

The Truth Behind 5 Common Job Search Myths

Stop making these assumptions about your job search.

By [Arnie Fertig](#) March 25, 2014 | 9:56 a.m.

When you are looking for a new job, don't allow yourself to be undermined by your [preconceived ideas](#) or by the advice of well-meaning but uninformed friends and colleagues. An effective job hunt requires up-to-date knowledge about how employers go about looking for talent, plus insight into the nature of the entire process.

Too often job hunters experience frustration along the way because they begin their search without examining fundamental assumptions about themselves and how they are perceived. Don't fall prey to these five inaccurate or outdated ideas:

1. Your résumé is about you. Of course you are the subject, but it is more than just about you. It's about how you represent the answer to an employer's needs. It's about you in relationship to that potential employer, so you shouldn't just use it to simply list all the responsibilities you've had and the things you've done. An employer's job is not to look at your background and figure out if the position at hand is a good fit for you. Just the opposite is the case.

Of course, it's true that your skills, experience, successes and education are about you. These are all [critical elements of a résumé](#), but you shouldn't write them in a vacuum. You need to frame them as a marketing document that positions you as the answer to an employer's needs.

Carefully review position descriptions for which you would be well qualified and highlight keywords of importance. Then, make certain to incorporate those words into the descriptions of your accomplishments and skills. In this way, your résumé can be seen as a document that conveys your value to an employer.

2. A recruiter's job is to help you get a job. [Recruiters work](#) for their clients: the companies who hire them. They receive a hefty commission when they successfully identify a talented individual who is hired.

As in many other professions, some recruiters care about the people with whom they interact. They will try to help you where and when they can. Others seek only to maximize their own income and can't be bothered to spend any more time than is absolutely necessary with someone who can't fulfill that goal.

The bottom line, however is that unless you represent close to an ideal match for what a recruiter seeks, he or she will not likely be able to place you into a new job.

3. Job seekers and employers must both sell each other on the opportunity at an interview. If you are looking for the employer to educate you about why you should value the opportunity at hand, you have not done your homework. Never make the mistake that an interview is the appropriate time

for you to learn the basics about a company or the opportunities it offers. If an interviewer feels like you are expecting him or her to sell you on the company or position, you have likely just lost hope of attaining it.

4. Networking is all about obtaining help from others. Networking is about building relationships, not viewing people only for the assistance they might lend to you. Putting out the message, "Can you help me to...." isn't networking; it's begging.

Relationship building takes time, and it involves getting to know other people, building human connections and understanding what you can do for others as well as what they might be able to do for you.

[A good networker](#) always understands the value of offering to help before ever asking for anything. When you build solid relationships and take the time to learn about others, you'll see your efforts come back to benefit you many times over. Networking is all about giving to get and paying it forward.

5. You can beat age discrimination by omitting dates from your résumé and LinkedIn profile. For sure, age discrimination in hiring is rampant. Bear in mind, however, that most people in their 30s to mid-40s won't hesitate to provide dates on their résumés and profiles. When you fail to do so, you give rise to the proverbial elephant in the room. If you are in your mid-to-late 50s or even early 60s you might even make an employer assume that you are older than you are.

You deprive yourself of the opportunity to be found by your contemporaries by failing to include the dates that you attended college and earned degrees [on LinkedIn](#). This can work against you because those contacts might be able to help you. An old college classmate might even be that hiring manager eager to reconnect with you, recognize your value and hire you.

Happy hunting!