



JOB AND CAREER ADVICE

AGEISM AND YOUR JOB SEARCH

If you've ever felt your age was a hindrance in getting hired, today's blog is for you.

Ageism, like racism and other forms of discrimination, exist to varying degrees in our imperfect world. Rarely will an employer blatantly tell you you're too old, but it's a clear sense you get. Frankly, failing to generate an interview for a job where you're clearly qualified, could also be due to age discrimination.

So, two things. 1. How do you let that affect you? 2. What will you do about it?

Many of my clients are over forty, and thus fall into that protected age class. But being in a protected class doesn't mean you won't face discrimination. I remind my seasoned clients that dealing with age issues – and hearing “no” a lot – is a bit like being in sales.

Salespeople often hear “no.” If they take it personally and carry a defeatist attitude, their “no” becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy.

Job hunters – don't let that happen to you! Realize that that company wouldn't be a place you'd want to work if that's their attitude.

Now to address the second part – what can you do about it? There's no foolproof way to be somebody you're not, nor should you seek that. Instead, use your age as a value-add.

For example, given your experience, you are better prepared to hit the ground running. Cite examples of how you've been able to work with/mentor younger workers.

Employers are concerned older workers aren't up to date with technology. Be prepared to address that issue. Have you taken classes to keep current? What sorts of technology do you currently utilize?

Another concern is that older workers are set in their ways... not open to change. Provide examples of how you've embraced change. Think about it for a minute. These past 25 years have seen more workplace changes than at any time in our nation's history.

Make sure your appearance portrays a positive image. Does your outfit remind someone of the 1980s? Scruffy beards are a no-no. Be aware of proper grooming, men and women. You don't want to be seen as disheveled or frumpy.

Let's address some resume tips to hopefully not get screened out before getting a crack at an interview.

Leave off your date of education. How far back to go with your job history is very subjective. For most people, there's little need to go beyond 15 years or so, but it'll often depend on that older work history and how it might tie into the job for which you're presently applying.

Just list one phone number on the resume, but don't label it as "cell" or anything at all. Listing a home number – much like having an AOL email address – signifies age.

Unlike one's race, national origin, etc., age changes over time. What's "old" to a 25 year old may not be "old" to a 55 years old. You can't necessarily change an employer's mind who's focused on hiring younger talent, but you can control how you let that affect you.

Do what you can to show value on the resume and during your interviews, then be prepared to move on to an employer who truly values what you bring to the table. Good luck!

FOR MORE INFORMATION,

SUBSCRIBE TO OUR NEWSLETTER

