



## **HAPPEN**

### **The Elimination Game**

There's no doubt about it - the process of job search is a process of elimination.

On the one hand, by analyzing the market and conducting an elimination process to narrow your focus, you will be better able to zero in on the best job targets for your search – the types of industries, companies and roles where your talents and contributions will be most valued. The lack of an effective plan can cost you weeks or even months of effort.

On the other hand, you also have to maneuver through the employer's elimination process by moving adroitly through each stage of the hiring system. This includes writing a top-notch resume and cover letter, getting the green light from the recruiter to meet with the company, passing the initial human resources interview and moving through the balance of an indeterminate number of interviews until you have an offer in writing. A misstep at any point could cost you the job, even if you are among the best-qualified candidates.

Considered this way, as a double-edged process of elimination, it's easy to see that strategy plays a key role in a successful outcome.

It takes strategy to rethink your old roles and repackage the skills into appealing new combinations. Are you an account manager with marketing expertise, or a marketing expert with client management skills? Strengthening key areas in your resume could easily change it from one perspective to the other.

If the job posting calls for leadership with an influential style and strong negotiating skills, can you can rebuild your marketing materials to emphasize that theme? You want to customize everything you send out and wrap it all, cover letter included, tightly around the target role. You need to show all employers and especially those in new sectors and different types of companies exactly how you could fit in and add immediate value.

How would you reconfigure your current array of expertise to appeal to:

- a start-up firm, or one where rapid growth is a major challenge
- an entrepreneurially-based company, or a sales-driven one
- a company with competitive pressures that is in need of a turnaround
- one with a common or uncommon product or service challenge
- an exclusive high-end distributorship
- a global firm, a smaller company, a family-owned enterprise?

If you want to improve your job search efforts take a closer look at the elimination process. Eliminate job targets that are not working for you. Zero in on the ones where your skills will be most valued. Create fresh and convincing marketing materials. Then ‘thrive and survive’ the employer’s elimination process.

Of course, it needs to be said that being eliminated can also be taken personally as rejection. Too many rejections can add up and leave you somewhat de-motivated. As a job seeker there are a certain number of ‘no’s’ you will need to get through until you reach that final ‘yes’ – and from that perspective we can also view the elimination process as the pathway to success.

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