

Top 5 Myths About Getting Your Next Job

By Dan Burns

Author of *The First 60 Seconds: Win The Job Interview Before It Begins*

Job seekers today face tremendous challenges. Our national unemployment rate is 8.9%, more than 13.5 million people are out of work, and approximately 2 million college students are graduating this year and attempting to enter this strained job market.

The good news is there are jobs and companies are hiring. There's competition, but if you have the appropriate tools and techniques to bring to your job search, success is within your control. Now is not the time to take the same job search approach of years past. Now is the time to take a proactive approach and employ techniques to help set yourself apart from the competition.

To be effective in today's job market, it's important to understand the five myths about getting your next job and how to overcome those myths.

Myth #1: It's the resume that is going to get you the interview and the job.

Your résumé is not the key to your success. The resume is a basic requirement, not a differentiator. It's extremely difficult to differentiate one resume from the next and the act of sending a resume does not equate to success in getting an interview or a job. More appropriately, everything else you can do to make a positive impression and differentiate yourself from the competition is what will get you your next job.

It is absolutely necessary that you research the company and job requirements and specifically customize and detail your resume to the expectations of your prospective employer. Learn more about the company and the job than anyone else and let it show.

Instead of focusing on just a resume, put together a "credentials package," which includes other very important components to differentiate you in the mind of the hiring manager. One additional component is the Personal Profile, which has nothing to do with your work experience and everything to do with who you are as a person—what makes you interesting, different, and unique from everyone else. A hiring manager wants to hire someone they really like, someone that "fits" within the team environment on a personal level. The Personal Profile lets your prospective employer meet you personally, before meeting you in person.

Myth #2: During the interview you have sufficient time to sell yourself to your prospective employer.

The person interviewing you will make a decisive qualification of you within the first 60 seconds of the time you meet. If you wait until the interview to sell yourself to your prospective employer, you're too late. A qualified decision will have been made and the time allocated to an interview is just not enough to differentiate yourself from the competition. You have to sell yourself before the interview begins.

Make a concerted effort to complete the 60-Day Plan outlined in *The First 60 Seconds*, which includes eleven activities to help you:

- Assess and understand your job opportunities and career market,
- Prepare and present your unique and differentiating credentials package, and
- Effectively arrange and prepare for the interview and the first 60 seconds of your meeting.

Myth #3: Pursuing your next career opportunity starts with the job search process.

Most people pursue a career change as a *reaction* to some event in their lives. Maybe you've been laid off. Maybe your expenses have increased or have a child going to college. Reacting puts unnecessary boundaries and time-frames on how you address your job search and you end up doing only those things that can be completed within your pre-defined time frame, limiting your effectiveness and overall success.

Proactive development of realistic and achievable career goals and plans **today** is the key to getting your next job **tomorrow** and achieving the career and financial success you deserve.

It's critical that you make the effort to develop a realistic and attainable career plan. Start by developing a written set of short-term career goals, and realize that no matter how simple your goals are, as long as they are in writing you will have done more than most of your competition. With your goals defined, you can then proceed to define a plan for reaching your goals.

Myth #4: My experience should speak for itself.

Never assume a person will interpret your work and related experience the way you feel they should. People involved in the screening and hiring process have unique and subjective perspectives regarding what the company may be looking for. Understand this and plan for it accordingly.

To effectively convey why you are the best person for the job, prepare a **Summary of Qualifications** document. Another component of the “credentials package,” this document gives your prospective employer a one-page customized summary of your professional experience, personal attributes, and why you are the best person for the job. If prepared correctly, it may be all the reviewer needs to read.

Myth #5: Competition is so great that you won't be able to get the job you want.

Most of your competition will simply show up for their interview and attempt to talk about their résumé and qualifications. Beating out the competition is all about differentiation—setting yourself apart from everyone else and showing your unique strengths and qualities. The key to differentiation is making a focused and concerted effort to surpass what is normally expected. It's about developing a proactive plan for pursuing the interview process and making a great first impression with a hiring manager before you even have a chance to meet. It's about spending an appropriate amount of time on one of the most important activities of your life—getting that next job as you climb your career ladder.

Whether unemployment is up or down, whether the economy is doing well or not, there are always new job opportunities, and there is always competition for those jobs. You must focus on activities that differentiate you from the competition to win your desired career opportunity.

Dan Burns is the author of ***The First 60 Seconds: Win the Job Interview Before It Begins***. For the past fifteen years, Dan has served as an owner of a national technical and management consulting company, providing consulting and employee placement services to Fortune 500 companies and helping people successfully obtain their next great career opportunity.

The First 60 Seconds is a comprehensive career guide for anyone currently looking for or considering their next career opportunity. It is a unique and revolutionary approach to viewing and addressing the job search process. It's all about differentiation, and the book covers more than forty unique and effective “differentiators” for setting you apart from the competition.

For more information and to order your copy, go to www.thefirst60seconds.com.