

Danger...You Can't Work for Less!

by R.J. Porter

Today for individuals who have endured a long fruitless search, and for many merely wanting a new position, it may appear to be a smart idea.... *working for less may eliminate the competition.* But hidden behind this faulty logic and the mistaken idea that "This will win me the position," lays great danger that is seldom considered! Unfortunately, too often this is an idea that sacrifices not only today but also the future... the true cost shows up tomorrow. Working for less usually eliminates the cheap candidate... the one who seems too cheap to be quality. *"If I ask for less I'll be the most attractive candidate" often results in total failure. And lets consider what is the result when it does get you the job!*

It begins a downward spiral... a tumble into mediocrity and under achievement. Finishing ahead of the crowd is a worthy goal, but seldom at the cost of pride, upward mobility, intellectual challenge **and financial growth.** The questions that loom large are how much of a fit can the position be if the salary doesn't reflect your contributions and earn you respect.

It usually starts when a professional or executive who's been successful at a high level, tries to compete at lower levels because **"they can afford to work for less."** They're usually looking for the comfort level they previously had in the industry or discipline they have now grown accustomed to... but at levels held years ago. *And, how are their approaches received? With suspicion and disbelief naturally!* In a negative process geared to eliminate hundreds of applicants, **where is there credibility when an individual is trying to work cheaper and at a lower level than before?**

Their attempts to turn back time create doubt and raise far too many debilitating questions!

Are they killing time waiting for something better? How much time and effort will a company invest in a "temporary" employee?

Were they overpaid before? Water seeks its own level; is this all they're capable of! What organization wants to hire someone who has already topped out, who will become a permanent fixture at a lower level and an obstacle to "fast trackers?"

Will they try to take the boss's job? It's a logical concern in our CYA economy. The economy may be great but there have never been more people looking for that "greener grass." Everyone wants to reap the profits of a smart move.

Does **"over qualified"** sound familiar? Maybe you should ask why you **are!!** *And you thought it was age.* When you're rejected, they give a reason; in a down spin... over qualified, boring for you, age, salary, education, etc. *"Overqualified"* sounds "hopeful" even when the door is closed in your face. Excuses never change facts; you didn't receive the offer. If you are "over qualified", maybe you are competing at the wrong (too low) level. **No one looks for quality in the bargain basement!**

Recognize the need to "sell" your services at their **highest level;** to present yourself and your qualifications in the very best light, so they know they can't live without you! We are all micro organizations selling a service; **and success depends upon how well you market those services.** Don't expect answers from within; if you don't know every industry's needs and every discipline's highlights, you cannot know the options available to you. Why do individuals in a dying or contracting industry keep identifying themselves with that specialty?

On your own, you have only your *past* to rely on when choosing a future direction! Locked in a single industry, how can you recognize your potential within other industries, your overall market

value or other alternatives. *Without a clear view of the future, how do you develop a plan to get there?* If you don't know your value, how much do you dare charge... **or worse discount?** Twenty or thirty percent less than you make? Forty or fifty percent less? Can it get even worse? Yes! Can you **buy credibility? No!!** Does it have to get this bad? No!

Every decision-maker has needs and those needs present an opportunity for the knowledgeable salesman; "crystallize" the need and become the immediate solution. *Complicated?* **NO!** It's marketing... selling services to the individuals who most need them **because they are the ones who are willing to pay the most. But will they buy cheap? No one buys a Rolex for \$250 cash ... ask yourself why?** We are told more than 37% of all executive, management and professional positions are created for the individuals who accept them. A miracle? Not at those levels!

The limitations of relying on the past to point the way to the future are not cast in stone. It doesn't have to be that way! It's really your choice... keep looking over your shoulder and walking into walls or develop options, square your shoulders and move into a new arena where you can reap the benefits the skills and abilities you have to offer. Seek opportunities you can create and reap their fair market value.

There is a sound and simple reason some people make very large salaries while most others do not. **They ask for the money!** It's not magic; it is expertise and understanding.

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