



CHIEF
EXECUTIVE
OFFICER
GARY
BURNISON



What Really Matters in a Job Interview

Let's face it—nobody hires a résumé. They hire people.

And people are complex.

"I just froze." And so went an interview as described to me recently by one of my son's friends.

Everything was such a blur. He couldn't remember a single question—only his spinning head and sinking confidence. He wondered, had the interviewer even glanced at his résumé? Was he just one of many—or truly being given a fair shot?

When the agonizing 45 minutes were finally up, he left—sweating, disheveled, dazed, and confused. "Completely shook."

I could empathize, but also just had to ask him—what about the interviewer?

Perhaps the interviewer had spoken with a dozen candidates that week. Or maybe there were back-to-back meetings. Distracted. Busy. Or maybe they were simply having a bad day.

The fact is, even on our best days, interviews are a mixed bag. We rarely know what we're walking into. Just like life, they're complicated.

And, as the saying goes, we are not where we used to be, but not quite where we want to be.



WHAT INTERVIEWERS WANT...

Whenever I interview people, there are specific qualities I'm looking for—the **4Hs**.

HUNGER. It's what wakes us up before the alarm clock—not just to get a job, but to make an impact.

HUSTLE. It quashes pedigree every time.

HEART. It's where inspiration lives—where passion meets compassion.

HUMILITY. It is the grace that whispers, "It's not about you."

Even when we have a handle on what interviewers are looking for, there are still unknowns. The interview intangibles.

WHAT CANDIDATES CAN DO...

Chance absolutely favors the prepared mind.

For every interview—whether on screen, in person, or even when sharing a video—we must be prepared to be a storyteller and

deliver a message about:

- **WHO** we are
- **WHAT** we've done
- **WHY** we want to work there
- And always **have questions** for the interviewer at the ready.

The most common thing I hear when people come to me for interview advice is—what will they ask, what will the questions be?

My advice? The questions don't really matter—it's our preparation that really counts.

We can't control the interviewer or the questions, but we can always pivot to our preparation. No matter the question, it's always our Who, What, and Why.

This is not reading lines off a teleprompter or memorizing a script. For every question asked, though, we can always find a way to weave our story into virtually any answer.

Keep in mind, it's not just the interviewer

The fact is, even on our best days interviews are a mixed bag. We rarely know what we're walking into.

who is evaluating us. We are also evaluating them. This is a two-way street—and it needs to be a fit for everyone.

As one executive shared with me just the other day: "The pitch may need to change, but who I am does not."

And that's what really matters. **■**

For more career advice, read Gary Burnison's latest book, **I Need a Job!**