



## **Your Questions and My Opinions: Ready, Set, Go**

From time to time I get questions from job seekers and it occurred to me that if one person wants to know, there might be others pondering the same issues. So here are a few of your questions and my personal opinions. Short, sometimes sweet and always to the point. Ready? Here we go:

### **1. Does overselling yourself in an interview hurt or help you in the long run?**

Claiming to have experience, skills or talents that you do not possess is not only detrimental to your career but can result in termination. It's perfectly okay, however, to say that you've have similar experience that transfers (writing web copy may transfer well to writing collateral, for example.) If you've had to acquire a new skill on the job in the past, share how you successfully overcame that challenge. And if you want to be really aggressive, offer to acquire the skills on your own time by taking a class or studying online.

### **2. How can I camouflage gaps in my resume?**

I don't believe you need to hide anything. Again, misrepresenting your employment can lead to termination. Instead, be prepared to explain each gap and how you used the downtime constructively. Did you take a class, travel, or tackle a project in your home? Spin it in a positive light but don't fudge your employment dates.

### **3. How often should I follow up if the recruiter stops responding to me?**

There is no easy answer to this question. It is unfortunate when recruiters and hiring managers—for whatever reason—don't circle back to candidates in a timely manner. Speaking from experience, not knowing is so much worse than being told you're not a fit or another candidate has been hired. I personally use a 3-touch combination of phone and email outreach. With each voice mail or email I let them know that I will be contacting them again, and I tell them when. On the last attempt, I politely express disappointment, remind them how to reach me, and invest my energy into more positive pursuits. It can be hard to let go, especially when you think you're perfect for the job, but I think your time is better spent uncovering new leads and networking.

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