

Why you didn't GET THE JOB

Your CV was prepared by a professional, you did all the necessary groundwork before the interview and you thought the interview went extremely smoothly. You might have even complimented that horrendous tie that your prospective employer was wearing. Then why aren't you celebrating your newly acquired job yet?

1. Your CV wasn't specific

Many people make the mistake of using the same generic CV for every job they apply to. Your CV must be tailored specifically for the position you are seeking. Employers want to hire people who are focused and specifically interested in their industry and company, so having a generic unfocused CV with a very vague objective statement and skills inventory will fail to capture the employer's attention or convince them that you are the best fit for the job.

2. You omitted a cover letter

Every CV should be accompanied by a cover letter to personalize your CV and communicate in a precise, specific manner your objectives and the specific value-added you will bring to the job. The cover letter should be short and specific and should leave the employer in no doubt as to your interest in the company and industry and your unique qualifications for the job you are targeting. Cover letters, like the CV should also be specifically tailored

3. Poor follow up on CV

You might feel that after dropping off the CV, the ball is out of your court. But if you don't call up to follow up, your CV is bound to get lost in the abysmal pile of CVs that the company must be receiving. Call the company and make it clear that you're calling for a follow up. Try to get an interview and make your intent clear.

4. Lack of preparation for the interview

Many candidates make it to the interview stage and disappoint the employer with their obvious lack of preparation for the meeting. Poor preparation includes slovenliness in researching the company, not being up-to-date on the state of the industry, not understanding what the job requirements are and not having answers to common interview questions. You MUST enter the interview armed with the maximum amount of knowledge about the

company, industry and specific job so you can then tailor your answers specifically and position your skills and past experience in a manner that demonstrates your unique suitability for the position in question and the valuable contributions you can make to the company.

5. Unprofessional attire for interview

First impressions go a long way and you may be hard-pressed undoing

6. Unprofessional behaviour during interview

Your interviewer will be scanning your etiquette. They will be looking to see if you can conduct yourself in a professional environment. Any unprofessional behavior can result in you being taken out of the race. Don't be too aggressive, condescending. It is very helpful to read some literature about body language and interview skills if you are relatively new to the interviewing

employees who are less than enthusiastic about the company's products and bottom line and will negatively impact the company culture.

8. Poor reference checks

Before giving a prospective employer names of references make sure you are very familiar with their professional opinion of you and there will be no unpleasant surprises. Many a successful job application



the damage if you send out a wrong message with your interview attire. Dressing too casually or completely inappropriately for the interview may communicate a lack of respect for professional norms of conduct as well as an unprofessional non-conformist attitude overall. Always aim to err on the conservative side in your attire with crisp, clean business attire and avoid tight, casual or loud clothes as well as unnecessary accessories and excess make-up for women.

scene and unfamiliar with the basics.

7. Lack of interest in the company

It is surprising how many jobseekers will make it to the interview stage and then demonstrate a total ambivalence and lack of interest in the company not to mention an obvious failure to research it in detail. Employers want to hire people who will be keen, enthusiastic members of the team and will carry the company banner with pride; the last thing they want are disgruntled

has ground to a halt because of unsatisfactory or outright negative feedback from references at or after the job offer stage. Yes, they are actually going to cross check the references. Wherever possible, get the references in writing so that you are intimately aware of the feedback your reference source has on you and there is no margin for error.

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THE PEOPLE PROFESSION

The career choice of working for an NGO is never easy. There is so much field work, something that most of us would want to avoid or are too "classy" to do. Most importantly, it's a challenging experience. So, why should someone consider NGO as a profession? Here's why.

● **Satisfaction with the work you do:** You may grow the aptitude to unswervingly influence and aid a weaker section of society. This feeling is tremendously rewarding. You'll learn that you're creating constructive changes, and that in itself is an enormous basis of mental peace.

● **It develops your skills more than you know:** These will help to complement technical or quantitative backgrounds of individuals. For instance, you may get better on your networking abilities and your organizational skill set. It is evident that you'll work with people from numerous diverse backgrounds who are amalgamated in their fervor for a social cause. You will be proficient

to think outside the box. Most organizations have a limited amount of resources so it is probable that you'll make a good use of what is available to you. The talent to come up with exceptional solutions to common issues is an ability that every consulting firm values. This in turn will help you to achieve expertise.

● **It shapes you as a person:** NGO work transforms you into a much more grounded individual. You'll be able to regulate yourself to a humble level of pay, since in the NGO world salaries on average are much lower than what is being offered in consulting and banking industries. Conversely, job security is ensured. Prospective employers will see that you were enthusiastic to accept a more modest level of pay so as to give your efforts for the greater good. In addition, this type of work affixes a lot of zest to the character of your resume and this stands out during the application procedure. Working to make the world a better place can be more than rewarding. I assure you that. Some people have a bigger plan of starting their own NGO. If you are dedicated to work for the society, it's not such a bad idea. But you should consider a few steps if you don't want to fall on your head.

● **Start your NGO after working**

for others:

Even though the preliminary fundraising campaigns may be successful, nevertheless the anxiety in relation to money decisions such as overhead costs, the distribution to community, whose requests you undertake are varied and many. As the director, it is fundamental to be acquainted with balancing budgets, supervising volunteers and how to put in writing of funding proposals. One is also answerable to the board and donors. Working for other first can give you an idea of what you are about to encounter.

● **Comprehend how your NGO may calculate the outcome:** In case you do not initially decide what you will be using as a gauge, you may get frenzied when it comes to the day-to-day processes of the NGO you are working in. it's important for you to know how to evaluate the outcome. If your organization isn't doing any good to the society, you should rethink your choices.

● **Bring about a proposal after completion of proper research:** Deduce what other NGOs are doing in the area and then ask yourself whether you should start a novel plan or support one that has already begun. As someone who is young, you can help bring a new and innovative outlook to the

development industry. This will help usher to adapt to a new surrounding. Being open-minded is also essential.

● **Your beneficiary is not your receiver:**

Seeing as the contribution of community members is what helps to make a project flourishing, you should look at the people you are trying to help as your partners. It is as a result a two-way correlation. It is imperative that you find out which abilities your community members already have, what they are trying to get better at and the materials which are needed.

With the flexibility of NGOs in responding to local needs, upholding a good rapport with the people and the capability to correspond at all levels from a neighborhood to the top echelons of government, working in this regard is promising. Hence, facilitating people in need and providing access to resources, your working in an NGO may have a meaningful impact on the lives of many people.

NAIMUL MUQUIM

Gender Warrior Face off with Sheepta Hafiza

A lot of women think it's difficult to become successful in corporate career for various reasons. They either never start (even after having a good, tremendous in some cases) or stop even before the race begins. Next Step took the initiative to talk to Sheepta Hafiza, Director of Gender Justice and Diversity Safe Migration Facilitation about the corporate life of women so that her life can inspire all our readers to take a closer look at success and the ladder.



Next Step: You are an inspiration to a lot of women. Tell me about the feeling. **Sheepta Hafiza:** It's a tremendous feeling. I see young generation, especially girls; they are smart, intelligent, better groomed and they have great potential. I'm sure they'll take our country way ahead. Being an inspiration to them gives me great joy as it is one of the very reasons of our work.

NS: What motivated you to work instead of the living "Bangladeshi dream" of a housewife? **Sheepta Hafiza:** Most of the credit goes to my parents. they were always socially active- building schools, bringing women to schools. My father at all times said, "You have to be involved in social work and do something for the country. You owe this to the motherland." So, yeah, I believe parents should be supportive of their children for them to go and take charge of their life later on. Even after I got married, the spirit of doing something for the society never faded. In fact, I could never ignore my responsibilities outside my house. I knew that I had to do something for the society along with taking care of my family.

NS: What is it like to be working for Gender Justice? **Sheepta Hafiza:** It is fun, fulfilling, and not to mention, a challenging job. Positive changes delight me the most. We are still trying to change typical mindset towards women and it has paid off to a certain extent. But women are still being deprived from their rights and I hope to make it disappear someday.

NS: So, what do you think it takes to be successful? **Sheepta Hafiza:** Seriousness, dedication, and the attempt to do one's best. It's not always the case that one will get the best-fit organization. I consider myself to be part of an organization where I have to work to bring positive changes and it's exactly what I wanted to do in life. So, finding the right match to work is also an important factor to be successful in life.

NS: Do you think it is a rough ground for women to succeed in the corporate world? **Sheepta Hafiza:** I believe the problem lies within the mindset and values. Neither women, nor men are groomed up well enough to be sensitive towards each other. Well, of course the typical mindset of the society is holding women back. No matter how good you are at the job, it will always be challenged because you are a woman. Well, that's the typical patriarchal mindset of our society. On top of that, you also have to consider the fact that women take care of their families. Think about it, they already have tons of extra burdens on their shoulders. There is work, family, and sadly the criticizing society. So, in a competition, they have to do more than others. Sadly, not many corporations recognize the effort. Therefore, women take that entire struggle and yet, there is the society and their criticism. So yes, I believe it's much tougher and women probably have to do double the hard work than a man to be equally successful.

NS: Were there any obstacles that made you want to quit working? **Sheepta Hafiza:** So many times! But I guess that's only human nature to want to quit when things are getting out of hand. I remember when I had just started working as a team leader. It was hard for me to get along with all the team members. But I learnt to deal with them. More than that, there is always this resistance towards gender inequality that you feel like fighting against the current. However, I kept trying and it hasn't been easy. It's the cause I work for that keeps me going.

NS: Is there any popular idea that you disagree with? **Sheepta Hafiza:** Since I work for gender justice, I come across the statement that men are insensitive. It's oversimplified. It's not necessarily the case. Men can also be sensitive and great colleagues. Women can be insensitive at times. So, I'd say it's not wise to make judgment based on gender always. Also, it's not necessary to make your boss happy if his/her demands cross the lines. If you are dedicated and serious, your work will be noticed sooner or later and you will get that long awaited promotion. Meeting demands beyond the boundaries will only corrupt your soul. Ultimately they will value your personality over whatever they had wished you did for them.

NS: Is there anything you wish you knew when you started? **Sheepta Hafiza:** Everything! But to dignify the question with an answer, I'd say a good advisor. There was no one to direct me towards my goal. True, I eventually found the right path. Although, I'm grateful to my sister for one advice she gave me. I once wanted to quit and spend more time with my family and my sister advised me to hang on for a little while before I figured things out. Look how fruitful that advice turned out to be.

NS: If given a chance, would you like to live a work-free life? **Sheepta Hafiza:** A life without work is something I can't think of. I still take care of my house. It's a lot of stress maybe, but I can't tell you enough how rewarding it is. Although I look forward to the day I retire because I have plans to write some books.

NS: What would be the one piece of advice for all the women out there who can be empowered and are in a decision dilemma? **Sheepta Hafiza:** Everything is important- marriage, children, work. It's only a matter of time management and you can manage everything. If you think it's hard to be a mother and still work, you are wrong. Work is the best thing that can happen to anyone, it gives you a purpose, confidence, and a whole different world to work with. Most importantly, it gets you respect from your children. So, don't think of sacrificing your career for anything. The moment you are independent, you'll see how the world falls on your feet. Well. If she can, so can you.

ASIF KAMAL

CONNECT TO NEXT STEP

Take your next step to connect to us. Email us if you have an interesting story to share related to career. Tell us if it has been a bumpy ride for your career or has it been the exact opposite. Like us on facebook to stay updated. Mail us if you have any suggestions, feedback, and ideas.



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