

The art of lying: Job interview edition

OROBİ BAKHTIAR

It's no wonder, really. Even as children we were socialised to tell white lies about the gifts that grandma brings or how dinner tastes. Job interviews are simply a high-stakes extension of that dynamic. It is a situation almost designed to encourage lying. Candidates must put their best foot forward, and managers need to sell the job. Some companies say they want radical honesty, but do they? It is part of being a well-socialized person in our society to use

Just how far are you willing to go to land your dream job?

The education lies

"I have all the credits, I just didn't graduate."

If you lie about a degree, you will probably get caught or worse, because some of these background checks take time, the truth might not turn up until after you have been hired, and then you will lose your new job. And if you do not have a degree, it's not the end of the world; several jobs out there do not



require a college education, and even the jobs that list a degree as a necessity are willing to overlook it for the right candidate. When job listings include a specific college major is one of their preferences, candidates will often lie about what they studied just to give themselves a supposed leg-up in the interview process.

However, your experience says much more than your degree does, and any company worth working for will overlook the semantics of a college major for a truly qualified candidate.

The experience lies

"When you said Java, I thought you meant experience making coffee."

People lie about having sought-after technical and professional skills all the time in job interviews. However, these lies are pointless, seeing as even if you get the job, you won't actually be able to do it. You certainly should not lie about abilities that you don't have. There is no point in being hired for a job that you can't do.

As much as hiring managers might try to find them, the perfect candidates just don't exist — and if they did, they definitely would not talk about how perfect they are. So instead of blurting

out this exaggeration during your job interview, focus on highlighting the duties of the role that you can perform with near perfection, backing up your claims with anecdotal evidence and former or current job functions.

The no-show interview lies

"I couldn't find your location." (So, your answer to this dilemma was to turn around and go home, and not call and let them know that you got lost?)

Being late to an interview is never a good look. And, if for some reason you are tardy, the last thing you want to do is lie about the cause of your delay. Most hiring managers will be sympathetic to uncontrollable circumstances like traffic or delayed subways—but if they somehow find out that the real reason you were late is that you overslept or were simply too engrossed in a Netflix marathon to get off the couch, then you can say goodbye to whatever position it was you were pining after.

The termination lies

"I (or any family member) was in a bad accident and the hospital, so they fired me for not showing up to work." (No they didn't — there are some bad companies out there, but no company does this.)

There is a huge stigma surrounding the idea of being fired, which is why so many prospective job candidates will lie about it both on their resumes and in an interview. However, a simple background check by a hiring manager will unveil this information, and it is always better to give yourself a chance to explain what happened than it is to be caught in yet another unnecessary lie. Because nobody wants to talk badly about their former employer to the person who could be their future employer, this is a lie that comes up quite often in a job interview setting. And thankfully, this is a falsehood that typically works in your favour, saying negative things about your last boss or company is one of the worst things you can do in an interview.

THE BOSSMAN

BY E. RAZA RONNY

