



*Building the Best Organizations in the Insurance Industry*

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## **IT'S NOT ME, IT'S YOU**

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There are many times that you may enter in to an interview uncertain and shaky, but walk out feeling you have totally nailed it flawlessly and that all of your skills are totally in sync with the position. Afterward, you either never hear back or you find that you were not offered the job, and it can be baffling and frustrating. There are numerous reasons why this happens, and no two situations are the same.

The company I work for spent the better part of a year interviewing and searching for a candidate to fill the slot as my co-worker here in the office. Time after time, I would hear of candidates coming in and being interviewed, and yet no one seemed to ever get hired time and time again. So many candidates I heard of seemed to be qualified and had the skills that we were looking for, so I could never quite figure out what was going on.

Finally, I asked one of the supervisors involved if they could help me understand the process and why so many candidates that had the skills, had been passed over. I would like to share with you the reasons I was given for this, in hopes of sharing how it is not always about just skills and experience.

I work for a fairly small organization as a whole, but the particular department I work in, which is the media group; we are an even smaller portion of the overall company. Because we are a small group with a large responsibility and a large amount of work to accomplish, we tend to be a pretty tight-knit group. We have to work together in tense and stressful situations at times, and therefore the person joining our team has to "fit" with the team.

Now, the candidates coming to be interviewed looked great on paper, and even passed through the initial meet and greet phone conversation. They were then given some "homework" which would kind of test some of the skills and show a bit of their creative side. After all of that was adequately performed, they were called in for a meeting of the various supervisors. This is the point which I visibly saw the most; so I am not sure how many got disqualified prior to this stage.

Anyway, upon asking about those candidates that I saw come through but never heard from again, it turns out the majority of them, after they had been interviewed, were determined to just not quite seem to be the right "fit" personality wise for the group. As

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I said, we are a small group that has to function well in disaster situations (I failed to mention we are a disaster relief based organization), and so if you throw a wrench into the machine, it can be disastrous. For this reason, they were very picky about who to bring in to the team.

I had never considered this aspect, and think maybe some of you reading his might not have either. That being the case, just remember it may not have as much to do with skills and experience as it does with how you portray yourself professionally in attitude and temperament. That is why it can be more important to know the company and the type of work (team, individual, team size, etc.) to have a better feel for whether you would be satisfied and fit into the group structure.