

WHAT DOES OVERQUALIFIED REALLY MEAN?

When someone tells you that you are overqualified, there are things you can say and do that will prevent you from being screened out by hiring authorities.

CONCERNS OF HIRING AUTHORITIES

Most employers know that a job seeker will not accept a job and stay with the company for thirty years. They want to make sure they enjoy a return on their investment when they hire an individual. They will invest in their orientation, onboarding, compensation package, employee engagement and training. They want to hire someone who will become an asset to their company and make them look good.

When someone appears overqualified they have three primary fears:

Fear Number One - This candidate will be bored

Fear Number Two - They can't afford to hire this candidate

Fear Number Three - The candidate will leave as soon as they find something better

HOW TO OVERCOME THIS OBJECTION

Here are some strategies to overcome this objection:

1. Focus on skills vs. job titles

Show how your skills and accomplishments are a perfect match to their job description. Do not bring attention to your past job titles or skills that will not be utilized in this particular opportunity.

2. Take salary off the table

Make it clear from the beginning that you are flexible when it comes to your compensation package. Explain that your previous salary is not relevant to your current priorities and job search.

3. Reveal advantages of hiring you

If you anticipate that your salary may be a concern to a hiring authority, focus on your accomplishments and show how you have either generated revenue or saved past employers' money. This will help the employer see the return on their investment if they hire you.

4. Do what it takes to schedule an interview

Be prepared to deal with the overqualified issue when you call to follow up on your application. Sell the hiring manager on at least giving you a meeting if not an interview so that you can overcome any concerns in person.

5. Understand the job better than anyone else

This allows you to show how you are the perfect person for the job without overwhelming the hiring manager. Employers appreciate it when you have done extensive research on their company, as well as their opportunity.

6. Express confidence, interest and enthusiasm

Hiring authorities will react positively to someone who shows confidence and a high level of interest in their company and opportunity. Couple that with enthusiasm and passion for the job and you will win over the hiring manager.

7. Display your ability to adapt and change

If you have extensive experience, an employer may have concerns that you are stuck in the old ways of doing something. Discuss training you have participated in or changes you have initiated that would be considered cutting edge.

8. Discuss loyalty and commitment

Discuss your stable work history and your loyalty to your past employers. This will help overcome the fear that you will leave the minute something better comes along. Explain that you intend to make a long-term commitment to their company.

9. Inform your network and referrals

Inform your network and your referrals of the exact type of opportunity you are seeking. This ensures they do not oversell when they are called for a reference. Make sure they stress the skills needed for each particular opportunity you are considering. The more informed they are, the more they can help you.

WHY THIS RESPONSE IS COMMON

In the past, the term “*you’re overqualified*” was reserved for individuals who had twenty plus years of experience. The term is now being heard by job seekers in their 30’s or 40’s and even recent college graduates.

If a hiring authority requires a high school diploma and you have a college degree, you could be labeled as *overqualified*. If you have a post-graduate degree (or two or three) that is not required, again the term *overqualified* is commonly used to screen out candidates.

Hiring authorities will hire someone who will fit in with their company culture and core values. If they do not believe someone is a fit, they will often use the term *overqualified* as their reason for eliminating someone from the interview process.

There are other scenarios that lead to the overqualified objection including:

- The job seeker who is mass mailing Resumes or CVs and cover letters with no customization. If you don’t explain why you are interested in their specific job and your past employment was at a higher level, you will be screened out.
- The job seeker who has extensive experience and lists several accomplishments that are so incredibly amazing, the employer is scared off.

- The job seeker who feels the company will raise the salary range to match their salary demands. All employers have a budget and salary ranges, so this person will be screened out.
- The job seeker who worked at the level of this opportunity many years ago and there is no conceivable reason why they should take this big of a step back. If there is no explanation, this person is screened out.

This objection will not go away! It is important that you learn how to overcome this objection so you will be seriously considered for opportunities. In addition to the strategies we mentioned I want you to develop a two part strategy.

Part One – Your job search correspondence

Develop an explanation on your cover letter explaining why you are extremely interested in their opportunity (considering your background).

Part Two – During your interview

Explain why your experience, skills, accomplishments, confidence and interest make you a perfect fit for their job.

Follow the advice in this session and you will no longer dread the objection “*you’re overqualified*”.