



What Makes My Spidey Senses Tingle With a Job Candidate

By Nick Kossov

Call it my spidey senses—a feeling that something, or someone, is risky or dangerous—or "Professionally Ingrained Cynicism;" when someone doesn't feel right, they just don't "feel right."

When you've been hiring for as long as I have, you develop an innate sense that tells you when a candidate is exaggerating or lying outright.

Consider these scenarios as a hiring manager:

1. A candidate claims to be a cutting-edge CPA. You ask them for their opinion on how blockchain may affect the corporate accounting function and related staffing. They look at you as if you've got three heads.

2. A candidate's cover letter promotes themselves as a lead-generating digital marketer. However, when you Google them, you learn that they only have a few hundred X/Twitter followers, haven't posted on LinkedIn in months, have barely any presence on Instagram, and aren't on TikTok.

An experienced hiring manager will walk through a candidate's digital footprint to determine if they're interview-worthy. If deemed to be, they'll ask probing questions for their opinions on or a "tell me a time when you" story to expose candidates who aren't what they claim to be, such as the CPA not being cutting-edge or the digital marketer not practicing what they preached.

I've interviewed enough candidates to conclude that many have an overinflated sense of their skills and value to employers. "I have advanced Excel skills" is often untrue when given a test to assess Excel skills. "I speak French fluently" often becomes questionable when I conduct the interview in French.

Fake candidates—candidates who grossly overstate their competencies—are becoming increasingly prevalent, prompting employers to scrutinize a candidate's background more deeply than ever before.

Your verbal responses and evidence of ability must be aligned.

Today, the hiring process of many employers, not all, presents job seekers with a Catch-22. In today's job market, employers seek the "perfect candidate." Searching for a unicorn often makes lies more attractive than truths. Consider how many people buy into get-rich-quick schemes. People tend to believe someone if they can believe they can serve their self-interests, such as making them rich.

Lies and exaggerations are unethical attempts by candidates to tell hiring managers what they believe they want to hear, hoping to convince them they're the unicorn candidate, hence why my spidey senses tingle when a candidate is excessively polished. The adage "too good to be true" is an adage I live by. I can tell when a candidate is talking to me straight or is rehashing verbiage some self-proclaiming career expert said would influence an interviewer. Having hired my share of Jekyll and Hydes, all tough lessons, I want to avoid a candidate who, once hired, is unrecognizable from the person they were during the hiring process.

In addition to being excessively polished, my spider senses tingle when a candidate is:

1. Not giving me straightforward, concrete answers.

Dodging my questions or not giving straight answers is evasive, a major red flag. A candidate who's being evasive irritates me, sometimes to the point of ending an interview early. Besides being aggravating, evasiveness makes me feel the candidate is hiding something or is reluctant to admit they don't know the answer.

During an interview, you must communicate clearly, straightforwardly, and, above all, honestly.

2. Not managing their emotions.

For many candidates, their emotions or being easily triggered (read: offended) are their own worst enemies. During an interview, if a candidate can't control their emotions or maintain their composure, including nervousness, an indication of an inability to cope with stressful situations, I wonder how they'd handle an angry customer yelling.

An interview isn't the place to bring up your financial and personal struggles. Instead of trying and hoping to make your interviewer feel sorry for you, focus on using examples and numbers to demonstrate why you'd be a great hire.

3. Unable to convincingly (keyword) explain why they're looking to leave their job.

If you're currently employed, your interviewer will ask, "Why are you looking to leave your job?" My spidey senses go off if a candidate's answer doesn't feel right.

As someone who's changed jobs more than most, when asked why I'm looking to leave, I've given answers along the lines of:

- Company reorganization or downward trend in the industry.
- Shorten my commute.

These are reasons everyone can relate to. When a candidate says, "I'm looking for more responsibilities and career growth," I ask myself, why isn't their current employer giving them more responsibilities? Why aren't they being promoted?

4. Unable to explain job changes.

As I mentioned, I've changed jobs frequently. Changing jobs to achieve career goals is often necessary, such as when I wanted to experience working overseas. However, your job changes need to make sense. They need to be supporting an end goal. It's your responsibility to connect the dots and create an overarching career story in your resume, LinkedIn profile, and certainly during an interview. A candidate without a compelling career story makes my spidey senses tingle. I look for candidates looking for a job that'll contribute to their career story, as opposed to just wanting a paycheck.

Nick Kossov, a well-seasoned veteran of the corporate landscape, offers advice on searching for a job. You can send him your questions at artoffindingwork@gmail.com

CLARINGTON INTRODUCES PLANNING FEE REFUND WAIVER

The Municipality of Clarington has announced that it will retain the flexibility not to refund planning fee.

As of July 1, 2023, the Planning Act requires municipalities to refund planning application fees when decisions are not made within a specific time frame.

A Clarington statement said this measure can put municipalities into a position where they must either refund fees, or deny development applications that may need more time than the legislation allows.

It said staff consulted with the development community about these changes. "Many applicants do not wish to collect a fee refund or have the municipality prematurely deny an application. They would prefer to work together with the municipality in a timely and efficient manner to move the application forward," the statement said.

As a result, Clarington Council voted to introduce a Planning Fee Refund Waiver to allow the Deputy CAO of Planning and Infrastructure to waive planning application fee refunds under certain circumstances.

The waiver would be used when an applicant and municipal staff are working together in good faith, but require additional time to advance an application. The waiver would not limit the municipality's discretion to ultimately approve or deny an application, and would not negate an applicant's right to appeal a decision to the Ontario Land Tribunal (OLT), the statement said.

The legality of the waiver in context of the Planning Act is not immediately clear.

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NEW WORLD ORDERED CATEGORY

By Dale Jodoin

In today's politically charged environment, the dynamics of power and representation have shifted dramatically. No longer do politicians solely vie for the majority's vote; instead, they strategically cater to specific factions, often sidelining the broader electorate. This calculated maneuvering leaves many feeling disenfranchised, questioning the efficacy of their participation in the democratic process. The focus has alarmingly pivoted towards a minority, leveraging their support to maintain control, thereby creating a pervasive sense of voicelessness among the majority.

In major democracies like Canada, the United States, and Great Britain, a concerning trend has emerged. Political figures, whom we might liken to would-be dictators, implement policies that ostensibly dilute the majority's influence. One such tactic involves the manipulation of immigration systems, allowing an influx of undocumented individuals. This strategy is not merely about demographic change but is perceived as a way to engineer a voting base amenable to the incumbent powers, further marginalizing the traditional electorate.

The weaponization of information plays a pivotal role in this new political theatre. Through what can be termed as 'military-grade misinformation,' a systematic campaign is waged to shape public perception and opinion. This form of brainwashing, especially targeting the youth, employs sophisticated media strategies to distort reality and suppress dissent. The mainstream media, often financially entangled with these political entities, becomes an echo chamber of the ruling class's agenda, undermining the principles of free and independent journalism.

Control over media narratives is a critical tool in the would-be dictator's arsenal. By proclaiming a war against 'disinformation,' these figures mask their true intent: to monopolize truth and suppress alternative viewpoints. Independent journalists and media outlets that challenge the status quo face relentless pressure, with their legitimacy and survival at stake. In this landscape, the media not only reports on the political spectacle but becomes an active participant in the consolidation of power.

As this grip tightens, the once clear line between friend and foe blurs, with the enemy emerging from within the echelons of power. The irony is palpable – those elected to serve the public interest increasingly resemble autocratic rulers, with democratic institutions hanging in the balance. However, history teaches us that such overreach will inevitably lead to resistance. The very tactics employed to suppress and control are likely to sow the seeds of discontent, prompting public outcry and mobilization.

The path to reclaiming democracy is fraught with challenges, yet it is not insurmountable. The populace, once awakened to the machinations of would-be dictators, can initiate a pushback through peaceful protest and the ballot box. The essence of democracy – the power of the majority – can be revitalized through informed and active participation.

In crafting a fictional yet realistic narrative, this analysis serves as a cautionary tale and a guide. It underscores the importance of vigilance in the face of creeping authoritarianism and illustrates how democracy's erosion can be countered by the collective will of its citizens. As we navigate these troubled waters, the handbook on thwarting would-be dictators is being written by the very individuals committed to preserving the democratic ethos. The ultimate lesson is clear: power resides in the hands of the people, and with informed action, the tide of autocracy can be turned.

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