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The Price of “Free”

Why Politics Has Forgotten

Common Sense

By Dale Jodoin

Politics used to follow rules of logic and math. You could see where money came from and where it went. It made sense. Today, politics often ignores those simple facts. Leaders promise free programs without explaining how they will be paid for. But in reality, every dollar must come from somewhere. You can borrow, print, or tax, but the result is always the same. Someone pays. It may not be today, but it will be tomorrow.

Economics is like physics. You cannot cheat the laws of balance. When governments spend more than they take in, they build a kind of energy debt. That debt has to be released later through inflation, higher taxes, or cuts to public services. These are not political opinions. They are measurable cause and effect results.

Once, politics focused on responsibility. Now it is based on psychology. Humans crave safety, reward, and belonging more than logic. When times are hard, and prices are high, people become emotional voters. If someone promises relief, the brain releases dopamine, the same chemical linked to pleasure and trust. It creates a short term bond between voter and politician. But it also shuts down critical thinking.

Studies in behavioural economics show that people value immediate rewards more than future ones. This is called “temporal discounting.” Politicians use it to win elections. They offer benefits today, knowing that future costs are invisible to most voters. When debt grows slowly, the pain is delayed. Like eating junk food every day, it feels fine until the health bill arrives.

Psychology also explains why people defend bad policies. Humans are tribal creatures. We want to belong to a group, even if the group is wrong. In politics, this becomes “motivated reasoning.” Voters bend facts to protect their identity. They argue not to find the truth but to protect their side. The result is loyalty without logic.

Media adds to this problem. Modern news rewards emotion over information. Algorithms push stories that trigger outrage or pride, not understanding. Research from major universities has shown that false or emotional headlines spread faster than factual ones. This constant stream of reaction weakens public focus. People believe they are informed, but they are actually conditioned to react, not reason.

The cost of this behaviour shows up in the national budget. Canada, like many Western countries, spends billions more than it earns each year. Debt is now one of the largest items in government spending. Interest payments alone take away billions that could have funded hospitals, education, or senior care. This is the scientific side of fiscal policy: compound interest grows whether you like it or not. Every borrowed dollar multiplies over time.

When people grow used to government support, another psychological effect appears. It is called “dependency reinforcement.” Once people rely on outside help, their motivation to return to independence weakens. The longer support continues, the harder it becomes to stop. The system feeds itself until it collapses under its own weight.

Culture plays a role too. For generations, Canadians valued hard work and self-reliance. Those values supported stability. But modern culture often celebrates comfort over discipline. It encourages instant rewards and constant approval. From a psychological view, this is a shift from delayed gratification to emotional satisfaction. It weakens long-term planning and feeds political short-termism.

The fix is not complex, but it is uncomfortable. The same way a diet requires discipline, national recovery needs restraint. Balanced budgets protect stability. Responsible spending builds trust. These are not outdated ideas; they are natural laws of systems. Whether in biology, physics, or economics, unchecked growth always leads to collapse.

Citizens have more power than they think. Each vote signals what kind of system we want to live in. A vote for endless spending is a vote to delay pain. A vote for accountability is a vote for future security. The choice comes down to understanding the science of consequence.

A country is like a household. You cannot keep running up the credit card and expect it never to be due. Debt is not evil, but it must serve a purpose. Borrowing for growth is good. Borrowing for popularity is not. The laws of economics do not care about politics. They always balance out in the end.

The truth is clear. A stable country cannot be built on feelings alone. It needs facts, discipline, and courage to say no when spending goes too far. Real help does not come from promises that sound nice. It comes from leadership that respects the truth, even when it hurts. Science and math may not win elections, but they always win in the end.



It Is Possible to Recover

From a Bad Interview

By Nick Kossovan

A job search strategy job seekers overlook: making a recovery attempt after a bad interview to try to alter their interviewer's opinion that they're not the right candidate.

Like anyone who's ever job searched, I've had my share of bad interviews when I wasn't at my best. My nerves got the better of me; I hadn't slept well, traffic threw me off my game, a Mexican lunch wasn't settling right, and I leaned against a wall, serving as a cautionary lesson I'll never forget.

I'd arrived early for a 10:30 AM interview, so I walked up and down the hall outside the interviewer's office. A guy was painting nearby, and we struck up a conversation. Then I looked around for a chair so I could sit down and gather my thoughts. Not seeing a chair, I leaned against the wall across from my interviewer's office. The moment I realized what I'd done, my interviewer opened her door. I could see she wasn't impressed as she looked towards the painter, who said, "I'll redo it." I took off my jacket, folded it, and carried it into my interviewer's office. The interview was curt and short.

It's inevitable that, no matter how well you prepare for an interview, there will be days when you don't perform your best. Sometimes I wasn't as articulate as I'd like, or I didn't connect with my interviewer, or the interview ended abruptly before I could convey my value propositions, leaving me wondering if I could still salvage the opportunity.

If you haven't interviewed in a while, nervous energy can easily spiral into anxiety and self-doubt. There's also the possibility, which I've experienced a few times, that your lacklustre interview performance was due to a lack of chemistry with your interviewer or feeling that things didn't quite "feel right." In such cases, accept that this wasn't the right job, company, or boss for you, trust your gut instinct and move on. However, if you genuinely want the job, instead of beating yourself up and dwelling on what went wrong, focus on ways to bounce back from a less-than-stellar interview. Think you have nothing to lose and everything to gain.

1. Send an email ASAP after the interview

On the same day, send an email that highlights your skills, experience, and value, and elaborates on any points you feel you didn't communicate as effectively as you could have. Your email should include:

- Express gratitude for the opportunity to interview.
- Acknowledge that you wish you had communicated certain aspects of your experience and skills more clearly.
- Clarify or reinforce your value by highlighting a key skill, experience, or insight that sets you apart.
- Reiterate your enthusiasm for the role and the company.

Subject: Thank You and Follow-Up
Hi [Interviewer's Name],

Thank you for taking the time to speak with me this morning about the [job title] role at [company name] and your vision for [specific aspect of the role].

Upon reflecting on our conversation, I would like to expand on when you asked me to share a situation in which I demonstrated leadership. After I left, I realized I should have mentioned the marketing committee I led during my time at [previous employer].

This cross-functional team consisted of five individuals from various departments, and our goal was to ensure that all company materials adhered to brand guidelines while maintaining high design standards. Our efforts led to a 70% increase in employee satisfaction with internal materials, which had a positive impact on overall engagement and productivity.

Again, thank you for your time.

Sincerely,
[Your Name]

When composing your email, avoid being too candid, like, "I'm so sorry I completely bombed the interview." Instead, keep it more professional, such as, "I wanted to expand on a point about my leadership experience," or "I have more concrete examples I want to share with you regarding my software knowledge."

2. Call and request an opportunity to elaborate.

The majority of job seekers will only be comfortable sending a version of the email example I gave. Job seekers who stay within their comfort zone are more likely to have a prolonged job search. However, a bold move that has worked for me is to call and say something along the lines of "Hi [Interviewer's Name], do you have a few minutes? [wait for response, which'll likely be "yes"] Thanks. During our conversation yesterday, I felt that I didn't fully convey my experience in [specific area]. I'd like to better explain how my experience in [specific area] relates to the [position]."

Sure, you could insert a paragraph into your follow-up email asking to schedule a call, but that isn't nearly as proactive (read: controlling your job search) as taking a deep breath and making the call asking for a chance to elaborate. I've yet to meet a hiring manager who wouldn't be impressed by a candidate trying to recover from a bad interview.

Everyone messes up an interview now and then; however, don't assume you're automatically out of the running. Think about how you can recover from a poor interview. Dwelling on a bad interview accomplishes nothing, especially when it's possible to bounce back.

Nick Kossovan, a well-seasoned corporate veteran, offers “unsweetened” job search advice. Send Nick your job search questions to artoffindingwork@gmail.com.

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