





Around the Coffee Table with Dale Jodoin

If We Want to Buy Canadian, Let Canadians Build Canadian

By Dale Jodoin
Columnist

Here's something to argue about over your coffee. If somebody opens a bakery and creates four jobs, why don't we think of that person as an investor?

We celebrate when a corporation announces 500 new Canadian jobs. We should. But fifty little businesses creating ten jobs each just created the same 500 jobs. Nobody holds a press conference for them. The young woman baking cakes from home who dreams about opening a bakery is an investor. So is the guy buying a food truck, the woman sewing clothes for a flea market or the mechanic considering a small garage. They are risking their money and their time. Canada needs them. Small businesses represented 98.2 percent of Canadian employer businesses in 2024. They employed about 5.8 million people, almost 47 percent of Canada's private sector workforce. That's millions of paychecks. Yet before the first customer walks through the door, the bills start arriving. Rent. Insurance. Equipment. Permits. Licences. Taxes. Utilities. Of course we need rules. Nobody wants unsafe food or dangerous workplaces. But how much regulation protects Canadians, and how much simply protects paperwork? The Canadian Federation of Independent Business estimated businesses spent \$51.5 billion complying with government regulation in 2024. It estimated almost \$18 billion represented red tape that could be removed without harming the public interest. Maybe small businesses don't need another government program. Maybe it needs less government. Fewer forms. Lower taxes. Simpler rules. Keep the regulations that protect people. Get rid of the ones that accomplish little except creating another form. We're not asking the government to run the bakery. We're asking the government to give the baker a fighting chance to open it. Canada needs government workers. We need nurses, teachers, police officers, firefighters and people delivering public services. But government employment cannot replace private economic growth. Public services require tax revenue. Canada needs a private economy strong enough to help pay for the services we expect. We need factories, manufacturing, oil and gas, exports and international investment. But those things alone don't create a local economy. A billion dollar investment doesn't necessarily reopen an empty downtown storefront. Local economies grow differently. Someone opens a business and hires three people. Those workers spend money nearby. The restaurant calls a local plumber. The plumber buys parts from another local business. Nobody announces it. Money simply starts moving around town. And here is the contradiction governments need to answer. Canada says it desperately needs jobs, investment and affordable communities. Then somebody tries to create three jobs using their own money, and we make it expensive and complicated for them to do it. How does that make sense? We're also spending enormous energy building housing. We need homes. But a community isn't fifty new houses. It's fifty houses surrounded by jobs, stores, restaurants, garages and bakeries. Without that, we haven't built a community. We've built a subdivision. This matters to younger Canadians. Your first business might be one oven. One sewing machine. One toolbox. One market table. One food truck. One good idea. Government doesn't have to hold that person's hand. But it doesn't need to have its hand constantly in their pocket either. Look seriously at lower taxes for genuinely small businesses. Make municipal fees reasonable. Make permits understandable. Give people room to grow. We keep hearing two words lately. Buy Canadian. Fine. But buy Canadian from whom? If the bakery never opens, the manufacturer cannot afford to expand and the young entrepreneur gives up before getting through the paperwork, there won't be much Canadian left to buy. Maybe Canada's next great business isn't sitting in a corporate boardroom. Maybe it's sitting at a kitchen table tonight. Someone has a coffee beside them, a calculator on the table and an idea that could someday employ five people. They're deciding whether Canada is still a good place to take that chance. So when politicians tell us Canada needs more jobs, investment and stronger communities, perhaps we should ask them one question: When a Canadian is ready to risk their own money and create those jobs, are we giving them a reason to say yes?



10 Job Search-Related Questions I'm Asked Most Often (Part 2 of 2)

By Nick Kossovan

In Part 1, I answered five of the ten most common job search questions readers ask me. I discussed how to get noticed, why finding your tribe is better than applying online, how entitlement turns off employers, and why a cover letter is essential. This final installment focuses on real-world execution. Here are my pragmatic answers to the remaining five of the 10 most common questions from readers wondering why recruiters and hiring managers are ignoring them.

6. "I keep updating my resume and LinkedIn profile, but I'm still not getting interviews. What else can I do?" No amount of tweaking your resume and LinkedIn profile will get you interviews unless you refine your value proposition and audit your digital footprint. First, ensure every statement on your resume and LinkedIn profile answers: How does this save or make money? If your accomplishments aren't directly tied to bottom-line impact, rewrite them until they are. Second, check your digital footprint. Google your name, audit your social media and forum comments, and review your online presence. Address damaging posts, risky comments, or a total lack of online visibility, which can be equally damaging, by:

- Deleting inflammatory, political, or unprofessional posts.
- Publishing high-value LinkedIn posts twice daily that analyze current trends in your industry and profession.
- Asking former colleagues for LinkedIn recommendations highlighting your work ethic.
- Investing in a privacy or data-removal service such as DeleteMe, Incogni, or Optery.

7. "Is there such a thing as an ATS-friendly resume?" No. The persistent belief in an "ATS-friendly" resume is a self-serving myth perpetuated by predatory resume writers and self-proclaimed career coaches who sell resume templates to desperate job seekers. Essentially, an ATS (Applicant Tracking System) is a digital filing cabinet. Here's how ATSs are set up and used:

- Information filing: When you submit your resume, the ATS reads it and organizes your information into digital folders.
- Customization rules: Every company uses its ATS differently. Company A might program its ATS to hide anyone with less than 10 years of experience, while Company B might program its ATS to rank applicants by how often certain keywords appear.
- Human decision: Real people—recruiters and hiring managers—review the sorted files, scan your resume, and decide if you're worth interviewing.

Regarding instant auto-rejections, those aren't algorithmic cruelty; they're knockout questions. A rapid rejection email means you said "no" to a baseline requirement, such as work status, travel, or a required licence. Learn how ATS software works on Jobscan.co. Don't waste time trying to outsmart a basic database. Connecting with hiring decision-makers is a far better strategy than uploading your resume into an overflowing ATS.

8. "I'm an introvert who hates small talk. How can I network without feeling fake?" Labelling yourself an "introvert" is a self-imposed limiting belief. Business is a contact sport. Avoiding human interaction by hiding behind a psychological label guarantees career stagnation. Reframe your interactions so they feel like a reverse transaction. When meeting someone for the first time, ask yourself: How can I help this person? Instead of pitching yourself, uncover where you can add value by asking low-pressure questions such as · "What's keeping you busy these days?" · "What are you working on right now that you're excited about?" · "What's the trickiest thing on your radar right now?" · "What's sucking up all your time right now?" · "What's the biggest topic everyone in your field is arguing about right now?"

9. "What does having a personal brand mean? How important is it to have one?" When hiring, the easiest "Yes!"s are when you know and understand the person. Your personal brand is what people know and assume about your credibility, reliability, and track record. In today's hyper-connected world, word of mouth spreads instantly, and reference checks are used to verify your reputation. Additionally, you need to consider your visibility. Exceptional skills and experience are useless if nobody knows you exist. Doing great work in isolation is like screaming your qualifications into a pillow. Never underestimate this truth: Networking and visibility are how you bridge the gap between being accomplished and being hired. Trust is the ultimate currency, but it only pays off if people know you exist. You can't fake a personal brand, nor can you build one in the shadows. You establish it by staying visible in professional communities, delivering above-average results, sharing your expertise, and proving you get sh*t done.

10. "Employers have become extremely picky about hiring. What the f*ck do they want?" Employers aim to reduce hiring risks. Bad hires entail financial and morale costs, including wasted salary and training, as well as the need to start over. Generative AI has amplified hiring risk, with fraudsters flooding the job market with fake candidates and applicants inflating their qualifications. Today, most job seekers submit polished, slick resumes and cover letters filled with inflated claims that collapse during an interview. Understandably, employers are hesitant to hire someone who talks a good game but fails in practice; hiring managers and recruiters no longer believe "hype." Employers are looking for candidates who can demonstrate their competence and how they will increase profitability, not smooth talkers.

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