

Could this be you?

In response to my recent newsletter, (Vol. 4 No 24, "Have You Landed?"), Howard Weiner sent in this reply and it is quite compelling. Howard recently joined Idea Integration, a national mid-tier consulting firm in New York City. Shortly after commencing employment, Howard referred some well-qualified colleagues to his company to interview for critical positions. The outcomes of their meetings and his reactions are worthy of your attention. Members who wish to contact Howard will find his contact information at the end of this article.

Ed Pospesil

Ed:

As you know, I've just landed after 19 months, 13 of them unpaid. It was a sobering experience to say the least.

I put the time to the reasonably good use. I guess if I had utilized it perfectly, I might have gotten a job somewhat sooner, but I'm not perfect and I had to balance my life to preserve my sanity in such a difficult situation. I did a fair amount of networking, which I had to push myself to do, and some pro-bono work. We leaned heavily on my and my wife's family for support. I met some good people, learned some new things and relearned some old things.

I have a number of friends and colleagues who took a step back when the internet bubble burst in 2000 and who haven't recovered fully yet. All of us know a number of people who have been beaten up pretty badly over the past few years. My heart goes out to each and every one of them. We're all good people (at least most of us are) and we didn't deserve this, but it happened anyway.

In this season, the dislocation of unemployment is more severe than any other time of the year. You don't need me to tell you that. The reason I am writing is this: I have recently gotten a couple of my colleagues opportunities to interview at my firm for positions for which they were eminently qualified and they never made it past the first interview. When I was able to inquire about why, the reason was eerily similar in both cases-- their body language, lack of focus and inability to connect with the interviewer was indicative of people with low energy, ambition and drive! In short, they acted like victims.

Needless to say, I was shocked, embarrassed and a little frightened. After all, I have only been with my employer about a month myself. But more importantly, I was disappointed for them. I think there's a lesson here--you can't simply run around hoping that a job will happen. If you're not ready to stand up and sell yourself as a solution, you're only going to be viewed as a potential problem. If you've been getting first interviews but not getting any farther, an attitude check may be in order.

Unfortunately, while I may have seen symptoms of a syndrome, I don't have a prescription for it and I don't have a strategy for getting around it. I can only observe and relate what I've seen and advise one and all not to waste opportunities by not being emotionally and mentally prepared to capitalize on them. In this environment, the race may go not to the swiftest, but to the most resilient.

I wish you all the best of luck, peace of mind, a joyous holiday season and a short search for a new situation, whatever it may be.

Yours truly,

Howard Wiener

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Howard Wiener is a senior IT Executive with diverse technical background and experience in Investment Banking, Entertainment, Law, Mutual Fund Management and Computer Hardware. Prior to joining Idea Integrations, he worked for the Publicis Group as a Regional Vice President. Howard is a Co-Chair of the TENG Westchester County, NY Chapter. Members wishing to contact him may do so at hmwiener@pipeline.com and 914-723-1406

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