

3 MISTAKES TO AVOID

WHEN YOU WANT A ROLE
THAT YOU CAN THRIVE IN



A C-Suite Coach Shares Some Inside Tips
For Finding A “Good-Fit” Role

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EVEN if they haven't yet met
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What Is A “Bad-Fit” Role?

How do smart, talented people sometimes end up in bad-fit roles or companies?

You’ve seen this happen, right? Or maybe it’s already happened for you.

At first, the opportunity seems to be a dream job. It’s a name company or in an industry in which you’ve always wanted to work.

Or the role appears to give you the chance to make a difference or have an impact in the way you’ve always wanted.

But after the first heady month, some dark clouds start to appear.

Somehow, you’re finding it hard to align with the culture or a particular key stakeholder.

Or people are acting strangely reluctant about the changes you were asked to lead.

Or you realize that you’re lacking the resources required to deliver the results you’ve been asked to deliver.

It’s a bad-fit role or company. And the adverse consequences to you start to mount.

Stress well beyond your expectations, and a sense that for the first time in your career you’re unable to convince others of your value.

Struggle to achieve and deliver what has always come easily for you before.

And concern that, if you leave, you might find it hard to get your career trajectory back on track.

How Do You End Up In A “Bad-Fit” Role?

Some experts would say that a bad-fit role or opportunity means you should have done more due diligence during the interviewing process.

But after seeing several high-performing clients go through the pain of a bad-fit experience, I’m not so sure I agree.

They asked all the right questions and kicked all the right tires....and yet still ended up with a bad-fit experience. I suspect neither they nor the decision makers were negligent.

Instead, it’s more likely that the typical interview process is not designed to make it easy for anyone to see these issues clearly.

Wouldn’t it be a lot easier to be ATTRACTING more good-fit opportunities in the first place?

That’s the question that I asked myself when I started thinking about how to help future clients avoid bad-fit experiences.

And when I asked that question, I realized that there are 3 mistakes we’ve ALL made when we start to position ourselves as candidates for new roles.

If we avoid these mistakes, we can dramatically increase the likelihood of a dream job truly being a good fit.

MISTAKE #1: Relying On Your Resume To Tell Your Story

The Problem

A resume is a glorified list, not a story. It's standard format and language might be a good way to communicate your credentials. But your credentials only serve to get your foot in the door. They don't say anything about what makes you distinctive and special. And the only way you can be sure to attract right-fit opportunities is for others to know what makes you distinctive and special.

The Solution

Create a one-page story of your career, and share that with others whenever you share your resume.

Why?

- Stories are more compelling and interesting. They draw us in.
- Stories are “stickier”. They're easier to remember than a resume and they make you more memorable.
- You control the narrative. Instead of the resume reader creating a

possibly inaccurate story of who you are, you get to tell your own, more accurate, story.



How?

- ✓ Look at the entire arc of your career and identify the common themes as to who you are, what you do, and how you do it.
- ✓ Ask yourself questions like
 - Why did I make the decisions I made?
 - What motivates me?
 - What type of challenges appeal to me?
- ✓ Tell your story by talking about the themes. Use your actual credentials very little. Think of them merely as the illustrations for your themes.

MISTAKE #2: Emphasizing Your Experience More Than Your Value

The Problem

Yes, experience is important. But as we learned before, most of the time it's merely going to be the price of admission. Decision makers are likely to be considering candidates with similar experiences. The candidate who is the BEST fit who will be the one who delivers the value that is expected of the role. An interview process that over-emphasizes experience over value can make it difficult to ascertain good fit.

The Solution

Identify the 2 or 3 things of value that you consistently deliver in the workplace and include that in your one-page story.

Why?

- Value makes you a more likeable candidate. Decision makers can quickly and easily “see” your impact in their organization in a way that is attractive.
- Value is a subtle way of signaling strong leadership instincts. Senior leaders more frequently think and express themselves in terms of value.



How?

- ✓ The types of value that people can bring to an organization are infinite, and go from simple things to adding significant competitive advantage. Here are a few examples to get you started.
- ✓ Re-energizing a team that has lost its edge so it can contribute at a higher level.
- ✓ Providing greater insight and clarity so that the quality of decision-making increases.
- ✓ Creating greater alignment among various parts of the organization so that everyone is on the same page.
- ✓ Bringing focus and a sense of priority so that the pace of achieving goals is accelerated.

MISTAKE #3:

Positioning Yourself Solely In Terms Of What Decision Makers Are Asking For

The Problem

This mistake is the toughest one to overcome. Because we're high achievers and like to win, we're good at convincing others that we fit what they're asking for. Often our breadth of experience easily supports that position.

But think about it. Every other candidate is doing that as well, and that creates a lot of fog and confusion. Suddenly everyone starts looking similar with little basis to figure out the differences. It creates a perfect storm where decisions get made more on who is superficially appealing vs. who is a good fit.

The Solution

Don't ignore what decision-makers are looking for, but ALSO be clear as to what situations you thrive in.

Why?

- Expert marketers know that the clearer they are as to who the product or service fits, the more they attract those customers. The same holds true for you in attracting a greater number of good-fit opportunities.

- You will deflect the opportunities that really are a bad-fit, the kind that you could end up taking and later regretting.
- And what if it's unclear as to whether an opportunity is the kind you can thrive in? Decision-makers actually appreciate the added clarity that you provide them and find it attractive. In fact, they are often motivated to SHARE more insight with you as to why the right conditions may exist for you.



How?

- ✓ Look at your story. What were the types of work environments that allowed you to be successful and do your best work?
- ✓ Consider the flip side. What work conditions created undue challenge to your ability to be successful and do your best work?
- ✓ Create a simple sentence or two from these insights as to what is your best-fit environment, the kind that you thrive in.

BONUS TIP: Prepare Yourself Before You Look At New Roles.

The Problem

Too often we don't start thinking through the answers to these questions until AFTER we're in the running for a role, usually around the time we're preparing for interviews. But by that time you're

already competing against other candidates, and decision makers are getting locked into the role definition and requirements. Your ability to steer the process in a way that increases the odds of a good-fit role are beginning to evaporate.

The Solution

Timing matters. When you already have clarity as to what constitutes a good-fit role, you can more easily deflect bad-fit opportunities and steer conversations in a way that is to YOUR advantage. In other words, you've leveled the playing field so that search firms and decision makers are not the only ones shaping the process.

Even more importantly, you are far more likely to be (1) attracting good-fit opportunities and (2) becoming a favored candidate EARLY in the process. Having a compelling story as to who you are and the value that you offer creates immediate "know, like and trust" in the minds of decision makers...EVEN if they haven't yet met you in person.

So, if you want to create momentum during the process of considering new roles, be prepared ahead of time with your compelling story. Not only will it energize you; it will energize the RIGHT decision makers to put you at the front of the line.



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