Handling the Unexpected in a Recruitment Process

A full recruitment process through which a candidate has to move has several parts and each part is equally important since they progress consecutively towards the objective in a systematic manner.

However, few candidates recognize and address each part of the recruitment process with equal seriousness, their approach being largely controlled by misperception or anxiety about certain parts of the process and overconfidence regarding the other parts. The result is that in spite of preparing thoroughly for physical interviews, knowing the ins and outs of negotiating for salaries, or updating resumes every alternate day, candidates fail to clear recruitment processes and land a job. A big reason for such failures is the neglect of seemingly minor parts of the recruitment process by otherwise fully competent candidates.

The fact that even serious candidates make such slips is not really their mistake but the fact that most companies do not employ all known parts of a **recruitment process** always while going for candidates. However, it is necessary to be aware of these parts of an interview process and even those parts which are usually reserved for certain candidates.

For example, a part of an interview process that tests the candidate's ability to keep the cool and think logically during heated conversations or pointed insults will usually be part of the recruitment process of an HR employee, but not that of a software engineer. However, nothing precludes a company from deciding to include such a part in the recruitment process of a software engineer and if a candidate is not prepared for such unexpected situations, he or she will fail to get the job.

We can hardly blame companies for trying to leverage the recession and making sure that they get the best candidates for their money, candidates who are competent under a variety of circumstances. And obviously a software engineer who can create software well, but also can manage social conflicts would be a better choice for a future team leader than a software engineer who knows his software, but breaks down under socially adverse situations.

That said, besides evidently routine parts of a recruitment process like resume submission, screening interviews, and regular informational interviews, the ones that a candidate has to watch out for are stress handling interviews and group discussions. These were usually employed while recruiting candidates in HR or administrative positions or in sales and marketing, but these are also being included more and more in the recruitment processes of hiring experts in other fields as well as fresh candidates.

While group discussions were usually parts of the on-campus recruitment process, they are becoming more popular in everyday recruitment processes for purposes of screening, since the number of candidates for each job in the market has exploded since the recession. Group discussions test leadership skills, problem solving skills, and both analytical as well as communication skills. They also effectively filter out humbugs or candidates on ego trips. One needs not only to research and understand the dynamics of group discussions for an recruitment process, but also expect a sudden group discussion to avoid being caught on the wrong foot.

The same mind frame of preparation applies to sudden questions or actions that test a candidate's reaction to words that seem to hurt his or her dignity or self-esteem. Just accepting with a smile is not the option, but the correct answers and the proper responses are what recruiters look for. If somebody tells you something obnoxious during a recruitment process, the answer obviously cannot be a smile, or a retort that expresses that the other person is obnoxious to begin with. The candidate has to recognize that a well-thought out stimulus is being placed to make him or her react, and the only proper reaction needs to be a balanced one. To do that, one needs to recognize the purpose behind the stimulus and act accordingly.