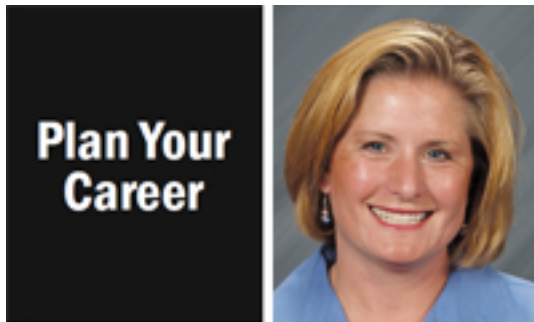


Pants on fire? Don't get burned

Written by Julie Desmond

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Recruiters often need to hire people with specific, technical knowledge. When I mention a skill to someone and he says, "I can do that," I feel encouraged. When she tells me where she learned that software or technique and how she applied that knowledge, I get jazzed. When he tells me more about the skill or requirement than I know myself, I send him in for an interview.

That puts the Expert in front of a manager who is willing to pay a good salary and trusts me to send qualified candidates. If, when the Manager shows the Expert the project she needs help with, the Expert looks quizzically at the computer screen and says, "Uh, I dunno anything about that," then it will be clear that he lied, and now we all know it.

Today, the only asset people have less of than money is time, and by misrepresenting her skills, the Expert has stolen a lot of it – the manager's, mine, and actually her own, as well. She said she knew something, and she did not have a clue. Maybe he googled the name of the software. Maybe he had a chapter on it at school seven years ago. Did they think they could fake their way through an interview? Maybe they could. But on the job... what then? Would anyone prefer to be operated on by a surgeon who faked his way through medical school? How about riding in a plane with a pilot who was economical with the truth about having a pilot's license?

The Expert lied. And now I cannot hire him for this position. Worse, I cannot hire him for any position, because I cannot trust him. And now my friends won't hire him, either, because I am going to tell them what he did.

Think before you agree. If you don't know something, say so. The old rhyme says, "Liar, liar pants on fire." If those pants are yours, you might be burning bridges, too.

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