



## Six Reality Checks

*This article was originally published at the beginning of 2015. The points are just as valid, perhaps even more so in 2021. I've added a few comments to connect this to the "Talking Addiction and Recovery Podcast" episode I did with Andrew J. Schreier.*

The beginning of a New Year is a good place to take a stronger look at some of the issues facing today's job seekers. While many try to provide good insights into different parts of the process, perhaps there are some realities that should be addressed. Here are six that I think are important.

### #1 Getting a Job Isn't Easy!

Too many job seekers think that finding a job is – or should be – easy. In addition many think that it's easy for an organization to make hiring decisions. The reality is that it's not easy. Maybe at one time, or for some industries, or for some people, it was (or still is). The truth is that for the overwhelming majority of people, this is a complicated process – even for organizations that may have sophisticated processes and trained hiring managers.

For most job seekers it's a rare event, occurring only every 5-7 years. For some, it might be more frequent – for many it's even longer. And face another reality – a very small percentage of job seekers are in the running as the #1 draft candidate in the NFL – or are LeBron James.

And the overwhelming majority of job seekers are not skilled (or trained). ***The solution for this reality is to admit that it isn't going to be easy. Take time, focus, and learn skills you may not have.*** You likely need to learn how to write a quality resume and how to interview effectively. It requires learning and practice (<http://www.careerealism.com/interview-preparation-practice/>)!

***A Recovery Point:*** AJ makes the point on the podcast that someone in recovery may think "You fired me for...;" "Now you should hire because I'm..." It points to the key role attitude plays in the job search process. I've highlighted the key point above that everyone needs to recognize!



## #2 Nobody “Owes You” a Job or an Interview

There are too many people in the job market who clearly display an attitude that they are “owed” a particular job or an interview. This is more than confidence, different than “practiced” statements of your accomplishments – it’s an arrogance sometimes revealed in the superlatives of resumes or interview responses. A simple response for this – constantly show your appreciation for being considered – even if you feel an organization is not responding the way you’d like them to.

*A Recovery Point: The same key points about your attitude during recovery apply here, humility and honesty.*

## #3 You Aren’t Powerless – But It’s Close

In today’s market – with a lot more candidates for most positions, the power is clearly in the hands of potential employers. They can afford to be choosier now than ever before because they are likely to have more candidates, more options for efficiencies, more options for automation. But you do have some power. ***It’s repetitive, but your power lies in the preparation and practice you put into your job search. It represents the work you expend to really understand your strengths and your accomplishments.***

*A Recovery Point: You might think that given all the “Help Wanted” signs you’re seeing right now (2021), that it should be easier. But you still might be asked to apply “online,” and you still might be 1 of 100’s that are in a database. Again, the key point is highlighted above. We discussed a key point in the podcast: You do have accomplishments! One of them is your recovery. But it’s also likely you have some other accomplishments from school, family, community, hobbies, etc. There’s a lot of information on this website that talks about accomplishments and strengths.*



## #4 You're Unique but You're Not

You are a unique individual – we all hear and read that a lot. And it's true – but it's not much of a valued card to play as part of the job search. To the computer program scanning your qualifications and the hiring manager scanning 100's of resumes, you are a lot like every other candidate with "x" years of experience in "y" field, with "z" number of solid references. Again this is an attitude piece – and again it's your preparation and practice that can really distinguish you from a crowded field.

*A Recovery Point: We discussed a key point on this one. It's not about what the company can do for you. It's about what you can do for the company. Any business has some they need done – can you do it? Are you will to do it?*

## #5 You're on a Stage

Maybe that's uncomfortable – and you're not the producer or the director. You're auditioning without a script – often not even knowing the part you may play. The job posting you read online may not accurately describe what's really expected – the job description may be nothing more than basic, routine task. And you're not in control – you really are auditioning on a stage for one or multiple observers. But that's the good news. For many auditions, performers initially get to choose the song they'll perform first. Only later are they challenged (and given the opportunity to rehearse) with a song from the show. I've trained 1000's of interviewers and I train them to ask candidates about their "most significant accomplishment" first. It's your chance to shine. So be prepared by having well prepared, specific stories that represent your accomplishments – whether in your current, or previous, or school experiences.

*A Recovery Point: Again, a good discussion on this. Right now (2021) there are a lot of opportunities to "walk in" to a business that's advertising "Help Wanted." Walk in with a positive attitude, properly dressed (something that's easy to check out), with a pleasant greeting. You WANT to get a job – don't act with the attitude that you "HAVE" to get a job.*



## #6 “I Don’t Have Time” Is the Worst Excuse

When I’m counseling or speaking to a group of students or job seekers, I frequently hear the “It takes too much time” or “I don’t have the time” excuses. I know that the excuse often masks uncertainty of what to do or fear of what really is for many people a scary process. I’ve also heard from job seekers who spend hours submitting resumes, even weekly attending meetings with fellow job seekers – yet they’re still pursuing an unrealistic goal or repeating the same mistakes again and again and again. I’ve had multiple people challenge me after one of my presentations on resumes with their (awful!) resume that they “know” is great.

You have the time! Get up 15 minutes early each day and work on your resume – or practice your interview responses – or read another article on 212-careers for new advice. Watch one less television show this week and spend an hour improving your job hunting skills. If it is fear, admit it and work with someone who can improve your performance at that audition. I repeat:

***You have the time – quit procrastinating – quit the excuses!***

*A Recovery Point: Read that last sentence again!*

## About the author

Jim Schreier is a management consultant with a focus on management, leadership, including performance-based hiring and interviewing skills. Visit the [www.212-careers.com](http://www.212-careers.com) site for information on all aspects of job hunting plus the “Grand Assessment Station” section where you can find information on different assessments (several with no cost) that can help in the preparation process.