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You send out resume after resume, maybe you even go to several interviews. But you never seem to get the job offer you're looking for.

Why not? According to career coaches and experts, there are several common mistakes that job hunters make over and over, often unknowingly, that inevitably prevent them from getting the [jobs](#) they want. Below are four of the mistakes most often made by job applicants. To be successful in your search, make sure you're avoiding them.

1. You don't prepare for the interview (or you prepare inadequately). "In a competitive market, you can't afford to wing it," says [Roy Cohen](#), a career coach and author of *The Wall Street Professional's Survival Guide*. "That means rigorously [researching the company](#), the position, and any relevant information that will provide context for the [interview](#). You also need to consider why you want the position, what qualifies you, and how the company will benefit. [The] bottom line [is that] it's about being smarter and better qualified, even against candidates who have [more experience](#) than you."



2. You don't follow up — or you follow up ineffectively. "The devil is in the details," Cohen says. "If [a hiring manager] has two equally qualified candidates, who gets the offer? The candidate who follows up thoughtfully. That candidate conveys gratitude for the opportunity to interview, an awareness of the issues and challenges facing the organization and the hiring manager, and some insight into how to address these issues and challenges. It's not just a perfunctory 'thank you.' That's a start but it's never enough." Anne Angerman, a career coach and president of [Career Matters](#), recommends sending a thank-you email immediately after the interview and then following up with a handwritten note. Try to convey not just your gratitude, but also your understanding of the position and what you could bring to it.

3. You don't exhibit a confident image. Rather than appearing nervous or unsure of yourself, you want to appear enthusiastic and confident. "Practice your interview with a friend or tape record yourself in advance," Angerman says. "Practice articulating short, concise answers and smiling. Exude enthusiasm and confidence; look great! Memorize a few stories [about times when] you have made a change in your company. Talk about ideas you have for your position." While appearing confident is a must, don't overdo it: Nobody wants to hire an egotistical maniac.

4. You make assumptions. Some job candidates assume they have the job "in the bag" just because the interview went well, Cohen says. Others assume they don't have a chance because they haven't heard back after a certain number of days or weeks. Instead of making assumptions about the process, "you need to manage every step in the process from initial contact to offer," Cohen continues. "At any point, it can break down. When you take your eye off the ball, you lose the potential to intervene quickly and objectively. Nothing less than flawless execution is acceptable." And if you haven't heard back, "never, ever read into radio silence," he says. "Find a reason to stay in touch."



Nancy Mann Jackson is an award-winning journalist and corporate communicator who writes regularly about small business, parenting and workplace issues. Since 2001, she has worked as a freelance writer and has written hundreds of articles for publications including Working Mother, CNNMoney.com, Entrepreneur.com, MyBusiness and dozens of others. She also writes and edits annual reports, blogs, and newsletters for companies in industries including finance, technology and construction. Nancy is also a member of the American Society of Journalists and Authors.

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