

tough spot ?'s

Continuing Education



Career Development Services.

Answering difficult questions about your past...

Many job seekers with less-than-perfect personal or professional backgrounds or circumstances may be faced with explaining themselves to a potential employer. If you are not prepared to discuss your past you may find yourself in a “tough spot”. Your first reaction may be to provide more details than necessary or so little the interview doesn’t know what you are talking about.

If you evade the disclosure of something serious, you face the chance that the employer will find out later and you won’t be terminated because of the incident, but because you lied about it on the application or during the interview.

Many employers subscribe to on-line background checking services that allow them to access your work history, court proceedings, motor vehicle violations and financial activities. For this reason alone, you should be up-front about any issue that could be considered a barrier.

Give the employer a chance to hire you. Prepare a statement based on the following three steps to help you overcome objections the employer may have to hiring you.

Being open, honest and articulate is difficult if you are not prepared. You may not believe it can work, but consider it. How can you overcome any issue of the past without being straightforward now and in the future?

These three steps take approximately 1-2 minutes. The first step takes about 10-15 seconds and tells the interviewer what the issue is...the second step tells the interview what you have done to overcome or handle the issue and the third step is a personal sales pitch or commercial about your interests, skills and abilities.

STEP ONE

Time: 10-20 seconds

Focus: The “issue”

Neutralize the wording...do not blurt out your problems using legal, street or complex medical terms or slang. Explain it with “softer” language...present your response with an upbeat attitude vs. an embarrassed, overly humble presentation.

STEP TWO

Time: 20-40 seconds

Focus: What steps you've taken to being where you are now.

Emphasize what you have done...entering and completing a recovery program, completing a training program...occupational therapy...physical therapy...developing job leads on your own and getting help from San Diego Continuing Education. If you can talk about actions, you will help convince the employer that you are serious about your future and willing, ready and able to "do the job".

Re-training
Re-entry

Responsibility
Rehabilitation

Re-evaluating
Recovery

Re-employment

STEP THREE

Time: 30-60 seconds

Focus: A personal sales pitch or commercial

Complete your answer by RE-DIRECTING the interviewer's attention away from the issue and toward your abilities...working as a valued employee for their business. Prepare a brief PERSONAL SALES PITCH that mentions the positive side of you...your skills, interests, abilities, potential to learn quickly and willingness to start at the bottom.
