

Double the work for recruiters and applicants

As in all interpersonal communication, subtle power relations always play a role in recruitment and application interviews. Recruiters and applicants need to keep an eye on these, otherwise wrong decisions can be made. The balance of power changes depending on the situation on the labour market, which is not always obvious or is not recognised early enough.

Peter Näf

As a headhunter in the financial services industry, I have experienced various phases in the labour market: there were times when the labour market dried up and I was desperately looking for suitable candidates for my corporate clients. In other periods, I had great difficulty finding a good position for excellent applicants. The different market phases also influenced the balance of power in negotiations between employers and employees.

The power of employers

During periods when there was little choice for jobseekers, the interviews were challenging: on the one hand, I checked for my corporate clients whether applicants fulfilled the job requirements and were a good personality fit for the company. As many applicants had already decided in favour of the position before our interview, they were not very critical of the position and environment during the interview. They did not ask any questions.

However, a job can only be filled successfully if both sides are satisfied in the end. As a recruiter, I therefore had to assess whether the position and company were of interest to the applicants in addition to assessing them. If not, they wouldn't

stay with the company for long. So, I had to do the work for both sides of the market.

The balance of power can change

The fact that times have changed, at least for certain applicants, was recently demonstrated by a young coachee with a specialised profile: I was coaching him for a job interview that took place between our two sessions. In the second meeting, he told me with disappointment that the recruiter and hiring manager had asked practically no questions. Instead, they presented the position and the environment in a very positive light. They seemed to be interested in filling an important vacancy as quickly as possible.

This was the opposite situation to the one described above: the power was on the candidate's side. I trained my client for the next round of interviews to find out whether he was a suitable candidate from the company's point of view. If not, he could be confronted with expectations after starting the job that were not discussed during the application process. Now he had to do the work for both sides.

Just as I had questioned the quality of uncritical applicants in the past, my client was also irritated. He wondered whether the job and the company were as great as described if the interviewer asked virtually no questions during the job interview.

[#application](#) [#jobinterview](#) [#outplacement](#)

Please find further articles on career topics on my homepage
<https://karrierecoaching.ch/en/articles/>

