What interviews foretell

"Oh, you're a Virgo. That means you're hard working and easy to manipulate." - Tiffany Beames

"Talking star signs in an interview were a real warning sign," says Tiffany Beames, who wished she had noted when she handed in her resignation nine months after starting her dream role as an office manager. "I was standing for 20 minutes in reception waiting for my interview. During the interview, my manager darted out twice. She kept changing her mind about what she needed. It turned out the job was just as disastrous on the job," says Beames.

While recruitment by the stars is not common, unless you happen to be an astrologer, a job is usually pear-shaped within the first few months of employment. "I've seen this too often. The organisation seems critical to an employee's long-term career satisfaction, how do do candidates desire the role? Both Begg and Olivier find this a hard question to answer. Olivier suggests that candidates need to recognize that a company's marketing brand is different from its employment brand. Candidates thrive at the prospect of working for an exciting company like Nike, they can be influenced by the culture and potential employer. Begg and Olivier suggest companies should search for the employee's "skeletons in the closet." With questions around the role has been created, why the last person left, the likely difficulties in the role, the reasons behind the role, and how and why the promotion has eventuated.

They stress the importance of questioning staff turnover, particularly turnover in the last six months. Questions on turnover can be confronting for the interviewer. Begg agrees these questions need to be couched carefully. He suggests candidates say, "I don't want to offend you, but I do believe this is important, can you please tell me why people have left?"

"Due diligence" works many ways. There are critical questions a job hunter needs to ask themselves, the role and potential employer. Begg and Olivier suggest asking people who have been promoted and the likely difficulties in the role, the reasons behind the role, and how and why the promotion has eventuated.

Due diligence: Candidates must ask probing questions at interviews, says Steven Begg. He recommends a reality check. "Do not be overwhelmed by the description of the job and the prestige and get lured into taking the role for the wrong reasons," he says. "Get real about it. Recognise the role for what it is." If the job goes pear-shaped, resigning shouldn't be a hasty decision — especially given that many jobs have teething pains. If you have problems, both Begg and Olivier recommend you should communicate openly with your employer, directly identifying your concerns.

Olivier suggests thinking constructively, comparing what was offered in the interview to the reality on the ground. Use a third party, such as human resources, but as a sounding board rather than as an intermediary.

If talking the problem through does not resolve it, by all means resign. Olivier believes that you need to take responsibility for what happened, and to talk about it as a one-off and as something out of character. You need to discuss what you learned, how you would behave differently in the future and to consider how you will handle your references.

And how do you handle this in your next interview? Olivier also addresses the issue of job offers. He suggests bringing up the question of the job offer, "What will you do if you receive a job offer?"

"If you receive a job offer, you must respond to it. If you have a good reason not to accept it, you must explain why. If you don't have a good reason, you must accept the offer." Olivier also suggests that if the candidate is tempted to take the job, they must do the role, then blame the candidate. Olivier also states that if the candidate is tempted to take the job, they must do the role, then blame the candidate.

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