



Job Seeking Resource: Discerning Supremacy Culture in the Hiring Process

Why This Resource?

Employee retention has been a core concern of Higher Education and Student Affairs (HESA), particularly the retention entre-level professional. To create a future of sustainable employment, we must enact change in our hiring practices and work cultures to ensure a strong future. ACPA's Report On 21st Century Employment In Higher Education Offered "A Call To Action Meant To Serve As A Guiding Framework For A Sustainable Future For The Profession." to do just that. Members of ACPA's Commission for Career Services developed a suite of supplemental resources intended to support HESA practitioners as they, "work, lead, and support their career and the careers of those around them" and examined central themes of supremacy culture from Okun's (2021) scholarship, as it relates to sustainable careers.

Résumés & Cover Letters

Key **résumé** problems through Okun's (2021) seven-domains: perfectionism, and quantity over quality emerge as problems for job-seekers when creating résumés. For too long, résumés have served as a gatekeeping mechanism.

Key **cover letter** problems through Okun's (2021) seven-domain: paternalism is deeply embedded in cover letter documents. Paternalism is, "those in power are assumed qualified and entitled to define standards and the one right way, and decision maker for the interests of those without power."

Antidote Concepts:

- *Focus on valuing transferrable skills over prestige of institutions or directly related roles.*
- *Workplace accomplishments aren't the only valuable narratives for candidates to share in a cover letter—and many relevant skills are gained outside of the workplace.*
- *Share mistakes and lessons learned that may be related to a position, along with skills gathered through "non-traditional" work including:*
 - *Volunteer Work*
 - *Family Duties*
 - *Household Responsibilities*

Interviews

Key **interview** problems through Okun's (2021) seven-domains: urgency, or the "disconnection from the need to breath, pause and reflect" and paternalism, or when "those in power are assumed qualified and entitled to

define standards and the one right way, and decision maker for the interests of those without power,” are the most salient.

Antidote Concepts:

- Ask deep, clarifying questions
- Can you contact the last employee in the role to gather honest insight into salary prior to negotiations?
- Consult with a network to determine if the offer is competitive for industry and research on Glassdoor’s Know Your Worth, Payscale, Fishbowl, etc.
- Assess your offer holistically: Salary, time off, professional development funds, remote work, sponsorship, health coverage, retirement savings, etc.
- Reflect on your experience of the process: Do you feel aligned with the job and organization?

Okun, T. (2021). White Supremacy Culture-- Still Here.

https://www.dismantlingracism.org/uploads/4/3/5/7/43579015/white_supremacy_culture_-_still_here.pdf