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## Don't Conduct A Job Search, Conduct A Company Search

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This is probably going to sound like pretty weird career advice, but if you're looking for a new job, don't conduct a job search. Instead, conduct a company search. Let me explain.

The best companies out there, the kinds of organizations you really want to work for, hire people that are great fits for their culture. That's why they are so great to work for; you're surrounded by people who like to work just like you do. These companies are looking at their candidates' skills, but they're also hiring for attitude. They want people who share their organizational values and mindset, and their hiring managers are trained in selecting high performers with the right attitudes for the organization. (If you want to see how you would fare against the kinds of job interview questions getting asked these days, take the free quiz "[Could You Pass This Job Interview?](#)")

Every organization's high performers are unique. Someone who is a high performer at Southwest has a totally different attitude from someone who is a high performer at The Four Seasons. Both organizations and their people are fantastic, and that's why both organizations have world famous customer service. But there are very different cultural environments in these two companies. Southwest employees sing the seatbelt instructions (sometimes in an off-key voice) while The Four Seasons' employees serve you afternoon tea. Even within the same industry, high performer attitudes remain unique from company to company. Google and Apple are both great companies with great people, but their high performers have really different attitudes. And the same goes for Wal-Mart and Target, and so on.

When you're conducting a job search, what you're trying to impress upon the hiring company is not just how much past experience you've had or how great your skills are. That stuff is important in a job interview, and they are going to be looking at it. But what you really want the hiring managers (and anyone else you meet with) to know is that you're one of them. That you're attitudinally a great fit.



Herb Kelleher, the former CEO of Southwest, said, “More than anything else, we draft great attitudes. If you don’t have a good attitude we don’t want you, no matter how skilled you are. We can change skill levels through training. We can’t change attitude.” Of course, the attitude Southwest wants is “fun,” and the organization is so great at hiring for the attitude of fun that it was part of what inspired me to write the book [Hiring for Attitude](#).

Southwest is not alone in hiring for attitude. These days you can’t just have a great set of skills; you also need the right attitude. (And you should make sure your job interview skills are up-to-date on the free quiz [“Could You Pass This Job Interview?”](#)).

So instead of doing the typical job search, try conducting a company search. Do your research, reach out on LinkedIn, or wherever, and talk to the people who actually work at the organization. With the way social media works, saying “but I don’t know anyone there” doesn’t fly anymore. Find out if the company has message boards or chat rooms. Do employees post on Facebook? These days it’s not very hard to connect with the people who work at the company you want to be a part of. Besides, don’t you owe it to yourself to make sure you’re devoting your time to pursuing the right job for you? If you’ve ever been hired into a company that was a bad attitudinal match for you, you should answer “yes” here.

When you evidence that you’re seeking a company and not just a job, the company you’re interviewing with starts look at you a lot differently. They say “You know what, this candidate seems to understand a lot about who we are. They’re different from the other hundred people we’ve had job interviews with.” And that means you go to the top of the list. You’re not just any old programmer, or accountant, or nurse, you’re one of them. You’re part of the “in crowd.”

The best companies are hiring for attitude. That’s what makes them the best companies. They don’t want someone doing a generic job search. You can have all the skills in the world, but if you don’t pass the attitude test and make it over that cultural hurdle, you won’t get in.

*Mark Murphy is NY Times bestseller, author of [Hiring for Attitude](#), Founder of [Leadership IQ](#), a sought-after speaker, and creator of the quiz [What’s Your Leadership Style?](#)*

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