

The First 60 Seconds: Win the Interview Before It Even Begins

Dan Burns

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Many job seekers agonize over their resumé and spend a lot of time making sure it effectively presents their background and experience. But how many spend sufficient time truly preparing for a job interview? Dan Burns book helps readers do just that, and it offers some strategies that are especially relevant in tough economic times.

Burns indeed discusses “the first 60 seconds”-the period of time when the interviewer “will make a decisive qualification” of the interviewee. Burns says three things are critical: the “first look” (the interviewees appearance), the greeting, and the personal connection the prospective employee develops with the interviewer.

Burns goes much further than sixty seconds, however; he counsels the job seeker on a sixty-day plan that should precede the interview. In a practical and methodical approach, Burns leads the reader through the process of assessing the job market, preparing a company profile, creating a job profile, and structuring a personal profile and credentials. He also offers advice on communicating with a prospective company before and after an interview, and preparing for the interview itself.

*The First 60 Seconds** has a hidden benefit as well. While the books primary objective is to prepare the reader for an interview, Burns offers a bonus section: “Your 60-Month Career Plan.” This section goes a considerable step further than conventional job-seeking books; the author makes the point that no one should get too comfortable in any position, and that establishing a long-term career goal is as important as securing a job.

The overall message of the book is that resumé and job interviews are only part of the process-the real challenge is for the job seeker to use these tools, along with other techniques, to achieve differentiation, or as Burns says, “[to make] a focused and concerted effort to surpass what is normally expected.” In addition to well-written text, the book offers a wealth of forms, checklists, and worksheets, including templates for rsums, submission tracking, pre- and post-interview letters, and acceptance letters. In short, Burns covers all the bases. The reader who uses *The First 60 Seconds** as a step-by-step guidebook is likely to successfully differentiate him- or herself from the competition and, as a result, stand out as the best candidate for an appropriate position.

BARRY SILVERSTEIN (July / August 2009)

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