

• XLIII •

“I” Is a Bad Word

“I” is a special word that in the job-getting process should be used sparingly, if at all. “I” should never appear on a resume. Minimize using “I” in your letters. Use “You” instead. (For example, instead of “I will send you ...” write “You will receive ...”) Overuse of “I” in your interviews can be disastrous. Hiring organizations and the hirers in the organizations care about *their* issues and challenges. They don’t care about you. There is little more off-putting to a hirer than the “I, I, I” candidate.

Hirers are looking for self-confidence, not self-centeredness. Hirers are looking for team players, not prima donnas. Hirers want credit makers, not credit takers.

The best salespeople say “you” instead of “I.” The Cornell School of Hotel and Restaurant Management found that waiters who say “you” instead of “I” earn 20 percent more in tips. As a job seeker, you must adopt the best practices of great salespeople. Great salespeople listen more than they talk. Listen to yourself. If you have it, break the habit of making yourself the focal point of every sentence.

Don’t start an answer with, “I think” or “It’s my opinion.” Just say what you think, or what your opinion is. Don’t say “what I would like to do.” What you would like to do is irrelevant. It is what the hirer would like to do that matters.

Using “I” about yourself and your past is boring. Using “I” about the future can be exciting. Hirers don’t want to hear “I did this” and “I did that.” Hirers do want to hear “I can do it.” Hirers do want to hear “I will do it.”

Optometrists use “I.” You use “you.”