

WHAT TO DO IF YOU'VE BEEN CAREER GHOSTED

Pick yourself up, dust yourself off and move on to the next, says Lori Milner, co-author of *Own Your Own Space* (Pan MacMillan).

Never react in anger or when emotional. Instead, give it a day to work through your frustration. Once you are in a better space, send an email or pick up the phone – but ensure your tone comes across in a professional way. Remember, you never know – circumstances may change, or a position may become available. You want to be top of mind and to have acted with integrity.

An interview is a two-way street and you need to show you have done your homework. Always research the company and the person who is interviewing you. Lastly, the surest way to nail that interview is attitude. When a potential employer sees someone with a “go-getter” attitude and who is a problem-solver, they will want to hire that person.

“Then I saw on a Facebook group that the position I applied for was filled by a fellow blogger and everyone was congratulating her. I was shocked. I would have appreciated a simple courtesy mail.

“Then a few months later, I got a call from the HR from the same company asking me whether I was still looking for a job, as they had other positions they thought I’d be suited for. I said I was interested and was upfront about the fact that I was pregnant now. I was assured that this wasn’t a problem.

“This time, I went for an interview with the two heads/editors of the company. Since they called me to fulfil a specific position, I assumed they were keen to employ me. The interview was great – they even offered me a freelance position. So I thought I would be working for them until my due date at least, and I was so happy about that.

“But there were no emails or courtesy calls afterwards. I

was ghosted again by the same company! I couldn’t believe it. It’s made me question whether I’m even employable nowadays...”

According to Johannesburg-based recruitment specialist Roxanne Uberstein, director of Rubicon Resourcing (Rubiconresourcing.co.za), career “ghosting” is all too common in the South African job market.

“I’m dealing with a similar situation at the moment,” says Roxanne. “We’ve sent a candidate to an interview and the company refuse to offer any feedback.

“The unemployment rate in South Africa at the moment is frightening,” adds Roxanne. “The number of CVs and applications we get means we can only get back to so many people with job opportunities. But if they are interviewed, they should be given the courtesy of being notified if they are on the shortlist or if their application has been declined.”

The likelihood of being ghosted increases with the size of the company you’re interviewing for, says Roxanne. “Large corporates have a lot more interviews and CVs to go through when hiring, so if it didn’t work out with a corporate, try applying at a smaller company.”

And it seems like social media may be to blame. With the limitless number of potential candidates to be found on LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook and Instagram, employers aren’t necessarily that fazed about hurting a potential employee’s feelings when a replacement can so easily be found with a scroll in the right direction.

“Unfortunately, there’s always going to be a lot of rejection when looking for a job these days,” says Roxanne. “Ambiguous rejection is the worst kind, because you don’t know where you went wrong and you need that information to better yourself and be prepared for the next interview.” ■

interviewer didn’t know how to let me down easily, because they really led me to believe that I was in the running. I just never heard back from them. I ended up having to take a different job.”

“It’s very disheartening to not know why I didn’t hear back from them in the end,” Jessica adds.

She’s not alone. Brand strategist and former freelance writer Gugu Maduna has gone through a very similar experience.

“I applied for a job at a magazine, went through three rounds of interviews and met the publisher and editor for breakfast where we discussed all sorts – including my new role and responsibilities, salary and benefits,” says Gugu. “Then nothing. I found out on *Facebook* that someone else had got the job that was pretty much promised to me. The level of unprofessionalism I experienced there still makes my blood boil.”

Natalie*, an online content curator, has experienced career ghosting not once, but twice – by the exact same company.

“I went for a job interview with a web-based marketing company. I went to the interview and thought

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I had the job in the bag. They were impressed and told me I was what they were looking for, plus I was recommended for the position by a friend,” Natalie reveals.

“But after a month-and-a-half, I still hadn’t heard back from them. I had followed up and gave it about three weeks for HR or the company to get back to me. I heard nothing.