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Uncommon Sense

Providing Clarity, Promoting Intelligence

In This Issue

[Job Interviews, Part 2](#)
[Gender Wars Continue](#)

[Ara's Journal](#)
[World of Words](#)

Quick Links

[Ara's Web Site](#)
[Facebook Page](#)

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Issue: # 015

November 15, 2011

Greetings!

A warm welcome to the many new subscribers who have joined us from Cal State Northridge. It was a pleasure meeting you and I hope you will find much value in this bi-monthly publication.

As you (and my long-time subscribers) read and digest the contents of *Uncommon Sense*, feel free to write to me and tell me how these ideas are impacting you.

OK, let's get started!

Warm regards,

Ara Norwood

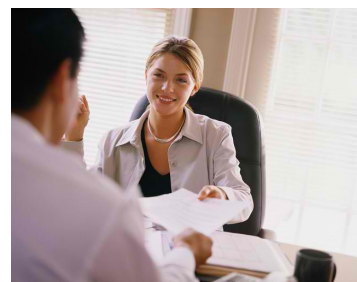


Job Interviews, Part 2

Our last issue discussed the types of questions you should have asked and answered for yourself prior to a job interview. Now I want to make some suggestions with respect to the interview itself.

First, some preliminaries:

- Always ask about a day in advance of the interview who will be involved in the interview on their end. You want names and titles.



You also should be clear on reporting relationships. If someone who is interviewing you reports to someone else who is interviewing you, it would be wise to know who is senior and who is junior. Also, you want to find out in advance if you are meeting several different people in one-on-one interviews or if you will be sitting in front of several people who will interview you simultaneously. Again, all of these questions should be asked - and answered - prior to the day of your interview. (Bear in mind that no matter what you are told, there is a fairly good chance that things won't play out quite as planned, so be flexible.)

- Also, make very sure you know where this interview is to be held. Know the address. Repeat it back to the person giving it to you and verify without ambiguity that you have the correct location. Find out about parking (i.e., where to park, is there a cost to park, do you have to deal with a Security Guard, etc.) MapQuest the address and leave plenty of time to arrive. Assume you will hit bad traffic so build in that extra time. It is much better to arrive an hour early than to arrive even one minute late. Plan on walking into the lobby of the location where your interview is to be held about 7 to 10 minutes prior to your scheduled time, and inform the receptionist that you are here to meet with whoever your contact person is for your 9:00 AM (or whatever time) interview. Then pay attention and make sure you hear or see the receptionist place that call and make actual contact with someone letting them know you are here. Don't allow a busy receptionist to sink your ship simply because he or she spaced it and forgot to inform the interviewers of your arrival.
- Find out what they want you to bring. Do they want samples of your work? Do they want to see reference letters? Do they intend to have you bring in a completed Employment Application? Do they want additional copies of your resume? (Always bring multiple copies with you regardless; if they tell you that you'll be meeting with five different people, bring at least six or seven resumes with you - better to have two too many than one too few.)
- Finally, find out, if you're unsure, what the appropriate attire would be. And remember, it is very difficult to show up overdressed. So aim high.

OK, with those preliminaries aside, here are some questions that you may wish to add to your repertoire of questions to ask at the appropriate time during the

interview. Usually there will come a time when they will ask you if you have any questions for them. It would be bad form to reply that you do not. So try out some of these:

- How would you describe the culture here?
- Of the Core Values, do some seem to carry more than others?
- How do people get ahead here?
- Tell me about your boss? What's it like working for him/her?
- Can you describe for me the typical tasks you are paying the person in this job to accomplish on a daily basis?
- What caused this job opening (termination; growth needs; new position)?
- Who (name and title) will this person report to?
- Will this position require much travel? If so, how much and where?
- Does this position have any direct reports?
- What can you tell me about the orientation training you provide new hires?
- When do you plan on making a hiring decision and how soon do you want this person to start?

As the interview winds down, it's often smart to ask a question along these lines:

- I know you cannot at this moment give any indications as to what decisions you will make about this job opening, but in general terms (and without any sort of commitment on your part) what is your reaction to my candidacy?
- How many other candidates have you interviewed so far? How many more candidates do you plan to interview?
- What is the process and the timeline for next steps?

Furthermore, try very hard to obtain the business cards of all parties who interviewed you. If they do not give you their card for whatever reason, ask the receptionist for the correct spelling of the names of all those who interviewed you for whom you did not receive a business card. (If the interviewer escorts you into the lobby, go to your car, wait a couple of minutes, then come back and get the correct spelling from the receptionist.)

And finally, my last bit of advice for you is to bring with you Thank You cards, postage, and return address labels. For each person who interviewed you, write them a quick note, address it, put a stamp on it, put your return address label

on it, and drop it in the mail immediately. Don't do anything else before you take care of that. Doing so will make a positive impression and give you an edge.

Now go get 'em!

The War Against Gender Continues

Lest anyone assume for a moment that my article in the last issue about Gender Wars was merely my imagination at work, [a story](#) broke at the end of October that Patrick Henry High School, located in the San Diego area, had crowned a lesbian couple Homecoming Queen and King.



Now, let me get this *straight*: lesbianism is supposedly about females being sexually attracted to other females. So why is one of these two females wanting to be seen in a male role? Is there something else going on here besides another victory for the gay rights movement?

And the answer is, as I described in Issue #14, a war not only for gay rights, but a war against gender itself. I leave it to my readers to decide if obliterating distinctions in male-ness and female-ness is a wise idea or a foolish idea.

Shamless Plug: CSUN Speech a Big Success!

Last Saturday it was my privilege to deliver the keynote address at the annual conference of the Beta Alpha Psi chapter at Cal State Northridge. Just under 100 students gathered to hear my talk titled "Succeeding in a World Drowning in Mediocrity". I discussed the Boiled Frog syndrome and applied it to various areas of one's life,



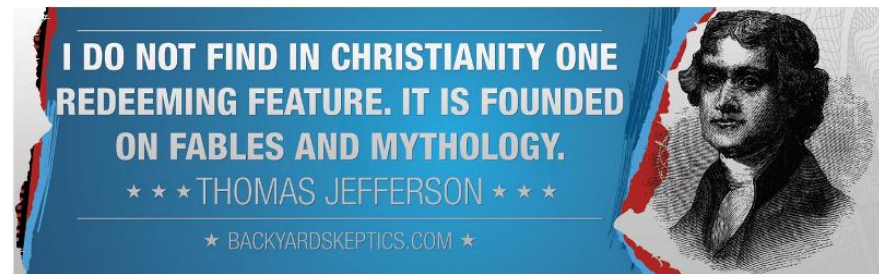
including the physical, mental, social/emotional, economic, and spiritual dimensions. The reception of these young

professionals was very positive and I was very impressed with their desires for achievement.

From Ara's Journal

Misquoting the Authorities

It was delightful to see that atheist groups such as Backyard Skeptics would have the temerity to put up a [billboard](#) advocating their faith in faithlessness by attributing to Thomas Jefferson something he never actually said. Made my day! We can all thank Mr. Bruce Gleason, the founder of this militant atheist group, for allowing his zeal to quash his judgment.



When the error was pointed out to Mr. Gleason, he remained undeterred. His basic reaction was along the lines of, "Well, if he didn't say it, it's something he *would have* said."

Priceless!

The World of Words

Building Your Power of Expression

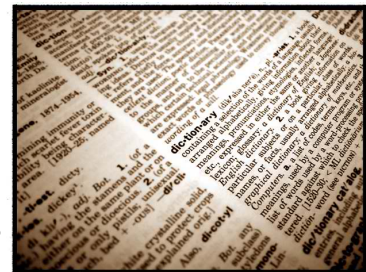
Preponderance, n.

Pronunciation: pri'pändərəns

Meaning: The quality of being greater in number, quantity, or importance. Superiority in weight, power, numbers.

Usage:

- *The city's outer suburbs are eerily quiet, thanks to the*



preponderance of unsold and foreclosed homes.

- *Based on the preponderance of the evidence, in this circumstance we tend to see the subject as guilty.*
- *We base our decision on the clear preponderance of women among the elderly.*

Subscribers, the Special Report "11 Ways to Beat the Odds" is now complete and has been sent out. If you have not received it, please communicate that to me via email (ara@aranorwood.com).

For more information on my work, follow me on Twitter ("Ara Norwood"), or on Facebook (keyword "Leadership Development Systems") or via my website: www.aranorwood.com

Sincerely,

Ara Norwood
Leadership Development Systems