Is it ever OK to lie in a job interview?

YES!

Yes, it’s OK to lie in a job interview. Everyone lies. The last US administration lied to justify its attack on Iraq. Companies lie to employees. Politicians lie to the public. There’s nothing wrong with lying to get a job you know you can do.

People often tell kids that the only way to get ahead in the world

is to get a college education. But there are many waiters and

gardeners with college degrees. And some of the world’s most

successful people never finished college or even high school.

Bill Gates is the richest man alive, and he’s a college dropout.

In most cases, you’re more likely to get a job by lying than you

are by telling the truth. Most people lie in job interviews about

things they think won’t be checked: the length of time they

spent at a job, their education, and achievements. And in the

middle of a recession, you can count on people lying more than

ever. It’s got to the point where you’re almost forced to lie. The

only alternative is to remain unemployed.

I think it’s OK to lie in an interview if you’re confident that you can do the job.

It’s OK to lie about your education up to a certain point.

It’s not OK to lie about your qualifications if other people’s futures or

lives depend on your competence (for example, to get a job as

a doctor, a lawyer, or an airline pilot). Lying in such professions

is inexcusable.

If you’re clever about the lies you tell, you will be OK. I get

emails from people telling me that they landed six-figure jobs

with blatant lies on their résumés. Employers expect people to

lie in job interviews. Most hiring managers will disregard about

a third of your résumé as embellishment, anyway. So imagine

what would happen if you’ve only told the truth. I’ve heard that,

because companies are cutting costs, they aren’t as thorough in

fact-checking résumés and doing background checks as they

once were. Of course, companies that are well-known and want

to avoid a negligent-hiring lawsuit are generally more careful.

It’s OK not to lie in a job interview if you’ve done a great job

at other companies, and you already have a good reputation. If

you don’t have a reputation in the area you’re trying to get hired

in, it would probably be better to lie because you can be sure

that your competitors will lie, too. My advice to job seekers is

to get outside your comfort zone and do what your competitors

won’t do to get the job. People find work by any means.

Is it ever OK to lie in a job interview?

NO!

No, it’s really not OK to lie in a job interview.

Your lies can stop you from getting the job you want and come back to haunt you. I know some people lie because they are nervous or because they really want the job.

But it’s never good to lie, although you don’t have to tell the whole story.

For example, if you left your last job because you didn’t get along with your boss, you

don’t have to say this, because it might not put you in the best light. So ask yourself why you didn’t get along with your boss. Perhaps he refused to consider you for promotion. Then you could say that you left your last job because it didn’t offer you

an opportunity to develop your career.

I don’t think employers expect people to lie or find it acceptable

when they do, although they might expect some embellishment.

But skilled employers will use an interview to find out the truth.

And if they find out that you lied, they will probably give the

job to someone else and keep a copy of your résumé with a

note saying that you lied. This will likely prevent the firm from

considering you for future positions. Also, if, after hiring you,

an employer finds out that you lied, there’s a good chance you

will get fired. If you lied about a qualification you didn’t have

and caused any risk as a result, the company may also take legal

action against you.

Instead of trying to find ways to lie at an interview, focus on

finding a means to answer questions truthfully, but in such a

way that it makes you look good. Find out about the firm and

the position you want. Then, when you go for the interview, talk

about your strengths and what you can bring to the company.

If you are not right for a job, it’s better to be honest about this

than it is to lie and end up in trouble. Employers are likely to be

impressed by your honesty and remember you in a favorable light.

And if a job becomes available that matches your skills,

they may offer it to you.

You may or may not get away with lying at a job interview, but

it’s never worth the risk. In this weak economy, there are more

competitors than ever for every job. Employers are doing more

thorough background checks and interviews to find the perfect employee. They are under a lot of pressure, because if they hire someone who lied about their qualifications, they could later be accused of negligent hiring and get in trouble. Some people say that everyone lies on a résumé. I don’t believe this, but even if it were true, only one person can get the job. Companies value integrity. Clever candidates will use this to their advantage by telling the truth and landing the jobs they want.

**The case against self-employment**

Employed or self-employed: there’s something to be said for both options.

Marty Nemko explains what the advantages of a contract of employment are:

My wife, Barbara, can’t understand why on earth I’d want to be self-employed. She says:

• Employers take care of a million details: they lease the

workplace, maintain it, buy insurance, and provide health

benefits, retirement plans, and so on.

• Employers provide infrastructure: computer support,

printing services, etc. at no cost to the employees.

• Employers often provide free training, frequently on company time.

• Many people’s favorite part of the job is the social aspect:

conversations over coffee, little celebrations, for example. Most self-employed people are one- or two-person businesses. It’s hard to do much celebrating by yourself!

• To be self-employed,

you must be very self-motivated because there’s no boss to make you do your work.

• To be self-employed ,you must be able to develop strategies, implement your plans, troubleshoot, and solve problems – usually quickly, and by yourself. Most people need

a team to make all of that happen.

• You have to be willing and able to market your

business. You must be easily likable, not afraid to ask people for business,

and, above all, you must not procrastinate.

Well, I tell my wife, self-employment has advantages. I can be

my own boss. I set my own hours, the way I work, and which

clients I’ll work with. If I want to buy something for my office,

I don’t need three signatures. I don’t have to work on teams –

that drives me crazy.

But I have to admit that many of those advantages are more

fantasy than reality: for example, the bit about setting your own

hours. In fact, most self-employed people work very long hours,

and, even when they are away from their work, they continue to

worry about it. So, think very carefully before you change your

job status from employee to self-employed.

Advice I’d give my child

Here’s what I’d tell my daughter if she were thinking of starting

a business:

If you’re intelligent, driven, business-savvy, and dying to be

self-employed, develop a business plan and then see if you’re

still excited. But I believe that most people should forget the

“romance” of self-employment and instead look for a job. Do

a thorough search, making all your inquiries in just one or two

weeks to increase your chances of getting multiple offers so

you can choose the best one available. Treat that search like a

job – most successful job-seekers spend 20 to 30 hours a week

answering advertisements, as well as calling or writing potential

employers, even if a job has not been advertised.

Don’t forget to talk to everyone in your personal network so

that as many people as possible know you are looking for work.