

Work Daze: Lights! Camera! Resume!

by *Bob_Goldman*

It's happened again! Just when you thought you had mastered every new technique to screw up your career, technology has stuck out its big fat foot and tripped you up again. Now, you not only have to craft a winning resume on paper and in e-mail, but you also have to provide your potential employer with a sizzling video that will sell you as effectively as Velveeta cheese or Oscar Meyer bologna.

Are you ready for your close-up? I hope so. Welcome, chump, to the age of the video resume.

The concept of the video resume was to be expected, I expect, with all the kafuffle about YouTube, vlogs and video dating. We live in a multi-input society, and you can't escape a video screen no matter where you go. Even Big Brother didn't put video in elevators and bathrooms, nor did it take a totalitarian regime to erect 60-inch plasma at the end of your bed.

Our sudden pain at making our video debuts is nothing but pleasure for the folks at www.workblast.com, a newly hatched Web site designed to foster video-based job searching.

"We live in an on-demand world where people want the most detailed information to make a decision, as well as the ability to make that decision quickly," said Nicholas Murphy, one of WorkBlast's highly photogenic founders.

Though I am not 100 percent convinced that we do live in an "on-demand world" - I wished for a jelly doughnut a half hour ago and it has still not appeared - I have no doubt that given the opportunity to make us look silly and vulnerable, hiring managers will jump on the video resume bandwagon.

"I'm giving you two thumbs up for your qualifications," some human resources flunky will someday inform you. "But that camera move in your job history was a complete cliché, and I just didn't feel your emotion when you talked about your marketing experience between June 2003 and December 2005."

Hey, our managers can't do their own jobs without major blunders. How do we expect them to make the right decisions as movie critics?

If you must make a video resume, rest assured there are professional coaches to assist you - for a fee. In fact, using video as a teaching tool has a long history in the coaching business.

Consider Bill McGowan, a former anchor for ABC News and now the founder of Clarity Media Group.

"Many people don't have the proper experience in being engaging and welcoming in this piece of technology," the executive coach told The New York Times. "How do they engage a piece of metal with the same kind of warmth that they might engage someone individually?"

Speaking personally, my managers relate much better to pieces of metal than to my flabby flesh, but that's beside the point. For a measly few thousand a day, a media coach can teach you how to make love to the camera. Or you can simply spend \$20 on a bottle of Old Overcoat and drink yourself silly before the shoot. You know how relaxed and irresistible you are when you're blitzed.

I suppose the best part of the video resume is that you gain control over the job interview. If you can psych out the culture of the company to which you are applying, you could craft a video that will show that you are, indeed, the face of the company. For example, if you are looking for a job in the booming field of health care, why not prepare a Quentin Tarantino-type epic, complete with a blood-spurting scream of loyalty to your potential employer, and a severed limb or two? Or prove, graphically, how you would "cut off your arm" to make your sales goals.

On the other (severed) hand, when applying to a more conservative company, like a bank or a brokerage firm, you might want to star in a more refined costume drama. Film your resume in the drawing room of an English castle, surrounded by leather-bound volumes and leather-clad wenches. Oops! Save the wenches for resumes targeted to government employment.

If there is anything that could stop the rush to video, it's a feature of the www.workblast.com site in which employers are also invited to make their own videos, the better to attract future employees.

Think about it - if you could have previewed your present supervisor in high-def would you taken the job?

Nah. You'd have probably taken the day off and gone to the movies.

Bob Goldman has been an advertising executive at a Fortune 500 company in the San Francisco Bay area. He offers a virtual shoulder to cry on at bob@funnybusiness.com.

Â© Copley News Service

Work Daze: Lights! Camera! Resume! by Bob_Goldman