

## Is It Ever a Good Idea to Lie or Exaggerate about Your Qualifications on a Resume or in an Interview? (Part II)

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In my prior article, I described several reasons why being truthful in your resume and interviews about your qualifications is not only the right thing to do, but it is in your best interest. I will provide several more reasons in this article, as well as additional examples of effective (and still truthful) presentation.

Some attorneys believe they are unlikely to get caught. And they may be right. But they may be wrong as well. [One should remember that law firm partners are not normally a bunch of clueless suckers.](#) They are intelligent, highly sophisticated, and very much on guard for a candidate to try to misstate their qualifications. Any discrepancy or inconsistency in the candidate's overall presentation will, at a minimum, create a question regarding credibility that alone will be fatal to the candidate's chances.

**See [Interviewing Tips](#) for more information**

Another reason to play it straight is that firms are also checking the candidate's story against the statements of their references. In addition, law firms have been known to call former colleagues and friends at the current or prior firms of the candidate as well to serve as "unofficial references." Firms will not hesitate to use any discrepancies they find against the candidate.

**See [6 Things Attorneys and Law Students Need to Remove from Their Resumes ASAP If They Want to Get Jobs with the Most Prestigious Law Firms](#) for more information.**

In my prior article, I emphasized that there is a careful distinction should be made between smart editing and effective presentation versus misrepresenting one's qualifications. [The following are a couple more examples of the importance of this distinction.](#) I recently worked with a partner who had a five page resume. With careful editing, we took out much of the boring detail of his litigation experience. The result was a much more readable and effective [one page resume](#) that [highlighted key aspects of his resume](#), including his stellar prior firm (Kirkland & Ellis) and prestigious law school (University of Chicago). Everything was just as accurate - it was just better organized and presented.

**See [Top Ten Interview Questions](#) for more information**

Smart editing and presentation is not just limited to the good facts, however. Even when there is a bad (or very bad) fact, there are ways of presenting it more effectively so as to minimize its harm without compromising on truthfulness. For example, I once worked with a young partner from a top tier firm who actually had a criminal record. After the candidate got an interview at a very large and prestigious firm, the firm presented him with a standard "due diligence" questionnaire. It was here - with a direct question seeking information regarding any criminal convictions - that we were clearly obligated to disclose this fact. But we were careful, as well as forthright, in presenting it. Basically, the candidate had been convicted of breaking& entering and several similar crimes in a small county largely controlled by his ex-wife's wealthy family. In other words, the criminal action was purely a farce done as part of an acrimonious divorce action. We provided the documents and phone numbers of key witnesses that would establish the truth. After careful consideration, the firm gave him an offer, which he accepted.

**Learn why attorneys usually fail law firm phone-screening interviews in this article:**  
**[Why Most Attorneys Fail Telephone-Screening Interviews](#)**

**See the following articles for more information:**

**[Top 23 Law Firm Interview Tips: How to Excel in Law Firm Interviews](#)**

**[21 Major Interview Mistakes to Avoid at All Costs](#)**

**[The Best Way to Prepare for a Job Search and Interviews](#)**

**[How to Talk About Other Interviews in Your Interviews](#)**

**[How to Answer the Tell Me About Yourself Interview Question](#)**

**[How to Answer the Do You Have Any Questions for Me Interview Question](#)**

**[Had a Great Interview But Have Got No Response to My Thank-You Emails](#)**

**[What Does It Mean if I Haven't Heard Anything Back from an Application/Interview in a Couple Weeks?](#)**

**[What to Wear to a Lunch Interview?](#)**

**[How to Effectively Interview Lateral Candidates: Pointers for Law Firms](#)**

**[The Interview Post-Mortem: Don't Forget Your Thank You Notes!](#)**

**[The Secret to Effectively Sharing Concerns about Your Current Employer without Committing the Most Common Interview Blunder](#)**

**[How to Conduct Yourself During a Lunch Interview](#)**