

OPINION

Why managers should respect job applicants

I've been a victim of rude human resource (HR) managers several times. It's discouraging taking a leave of absence from my current job to suffer the indignity of answering irrelevant job interview questions and be shooed away after less than 15 minutes of a face-to-face interview. Worse, some managers did were late. Aren't managers supposed to have good manners? - Pissed Off.

Meeting rude hiring managers is one of the reasons why you should not jump right away into every job interview opportunity without first doing your homework. Investigate the background of the manager and the company they're representing. These days, it is easy given the availability of information on social media. If the manager concerned is not on social media, Google their name and organization.

Do your due diligence. Why take chances on changing employers if you're not in a hurry to get another job?

I agree that irrelevant questions should not be asked. They're a waste of time. Why ask about the applicant's employment history when it's already stated in the curriculum vitae (CV)? Any questions asked must not be immediately apparent from the CV. Hiring managers must focus on asking questions about job situations, such as — how would you manage an irate customer, if you're applying for a customer service job.

Equally important, if your interviewer is late for more than five minutes, abandon the interview right away. It's not worth it. A tardy interviewer is a red flag. If they're interested in you, they will move heaven and earth to meet you. Try it. You'll feel good about leaving.

SELF-RESPECT

Most books and articles on employment are for the benefit of job applicants. They're geared towards giving the best answers to killer job interview questions, but not much is said about how job interviewers and HR managers should conduct themselves in interviewing applicants. Why is this so? Some interviewers take the opportunity to power-trip. But what for?

Whatever an interviewer does with applicants is a reflection on the organization they're representing. If an applicant is disrespected, it could lead the applicant to no longer patronize the company's products or services. Worse, the applicant may write a complaint to the chief executive officer (CEO) about how the job interview went.

IN THE WORKPLACE REY ELBO

ELBONOMICS: Be cordial to everyone even if they don't deserve it.

Former US First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt (1884-1962) was right: "No one can make you feel inferior without your consent." Even if the CEO fails to reply, it doesn't matter as long as you're sure that it was received.

Therefore, hiring managers must conduct every job interview with utmost decency and professionalism towards all applicants. To do this, HR managers and interviewers must do the following:

One, express genuine interest in dealing with applicants. Every manager must know how to handle interviews professionally. Be on time. Offer a firm handshake. Break the ice with small talk. Smile. Make eye-to-eye contact. Put the applicant at ease. And so on.

Two, spend at least 30 minutes with each applicant. Don't decide based on a single mistake they make. By asking all applicants questions about job situations, you will be able to identify your best candidates. Try asking questions that have significant bearing on the job description.

Three, ask for the applicant's value proposition. As soon as you've completed the interview, allow applicants to elaborate on his or her value statements. Discover characteristics that would make them unique. Expect to hear a brief but powerful summation of the skill and experience that person can bring to the organization.

Four, allow applicants to ask questions after the interview. A job interview is not a one-way street. In fact, applicants must be judged not only by the quality of their answers but on the questions they ask. These may include: "Why can't you fill this position internally? How strategic is your succession plan?"

Five, provide a clear roadmap on how to go forward. "Please don't call us" is discourteous. If you don't want to be bothered with follow-ups, be clear about it in your job vacancy ad with a statement like: "Due to the numerous job applications that we're receiving every day, we regret to inform you that only shortlisted candidates will be notified of the result of our hiring process."

Last, offer a sincere 'thank you'. Professional courtesy is one thing you mustn't ignore. Being considerate can enhance your image. Again, imagine the amount of time, effort and little money applicants spend to show up for a job interview. Take some time to appreciate the opportunity to meet them.

Have a chat with REY ELBO via Facebook, LinkedIn or Twitter or send your workplace questions to elbonomics@gmail.com or via <https://reyelbo.consulting>



Court upholds payout to illegally dismissed worker under PSALM

THE Supreme Court has ruled against the Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp. (PSALM), which had been seeking to avoid making a P750,750 payout to a dismissed employee.

The ruling rejected a PSALM petition to overturn a finding by the Commission on Audit (CoA) that Alfonso Fianza, a former employee of the Binga Hydroelectric Power Plant, was entitled to the payout due to illegal dismissal.

In an 8-page resolution dated Nov. 9 and made public on June 8, the court, sitting en banc, found that the CoA did not abuse its discretion in granting the award to Mr. Fianza, whose company was under PSALM management.

The court also found that PSALM did not file its administrative claim within the 30-day period allowed.

"Worse, PSALM did not offer any explanation, or justification for the belated filing of the petition and simply ignored the rules. Thus, the petition was filed out of time and must be dismissed," the court said.

PSALM rejects responsibility for Mr. Fianza's claim, saying that it did not arise from loans, issuances of bonds, and other instruments of indebtedness.

It added that it was not a party to the proceedings between the employee and the labor

arbitrator, which should not make it liable to pay Mr. Fianza's claim.

"Even if PSALM was not a party to the labor proceedings in which the money claim was awarded, the law requires PSALM to settle the judgement award," the court ruled.

"As the CoA aptly ruled, Mr. Fianza's claim should be considered a standing obligation of National Power Corp. (NPC) upon the transfer of its assets and liabilities to PSALM, which is only reasonable, considering that NPC's corporate funds are now within PSALM's control."

The CoA had ruled PSALM to be responsible for settling outstanding liabilities of the hydroelectric plant, which included Mr. Fianza's claim.

In 1998, the Binga Hydroelectric Power Plant dismissed Mr. Fianza after its contract with the NPC was terminated.

The plant was placed under corporate rehabilitation by the Securities and Exchange Commission the following year.

He then filed an illegal dismissal complaint before the labor arbitrator, whose award was affirmed by the CoA.

PSALM was created to manage the orderly sale and privatization of the government's power generation assets. — **John Victor D. Ordoñez**

Qantas is so stretched it needs office staff to work as ground crew

AUSTRALIA'S Qantas Airways Ltd. is appealing to head-office employees to help the airline's overworked ground handling staff as the pandemic-hit sector struggles to cope with a rebound in air travel.

Workers at the headquarters of Sydney-based Qantas and its Melbourne-based low-cost airline Jetstar have been asked to step in and assist during the peak July vacation period, according to an internal e-mail sent by Jetstar's airport operations.

"We need your help," the note says, describing the operation as the "Airports Peak Contingency Plan."

Operations in Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane are the most stretched, though office staff could be deployed anywhere, according to the memo. Workers might have to track

down lost baggage, hand out water to queuing passengers or speed travelers through security if they're running late.

Around the world, from the US to Europe and Australia, there's been mayhem as a stronger-than-expected recovery in passenger traffic overwhelms airlines and airports. After laying off thousands of pilots, flight crew, ground handlers and other staff during the pandemic, the aviation industry now can't hire fast enough as families and friends reunite.

A similar appeal by Qantas for help during the Easter holiday period drummed up about 200 head-office volunteers, according to a representative at the airline. Air passenger traffic in Australia is almost back to pre-COVID levels, the competition regulator said on Wednesday. — **Bloomberg**

Wage, from SI/1

in March estimated that a P1.25 increase in jeepney fares would increase inflation by 0.4 percentage point. A P39 increase in the daily wage in Metro Manila would lead to a one percentage point increase in inflation, it added.

"Given that the fare hike is limited to NCR (National Capital Region) and Regions 3 and 4 so far, the impact might currently be less than (the NEDA's earlier estimates). However, we think that transport fare hikes in other regions might similarly be approved soon as pump prices remain elevated," China Banking Corp. Chief Economist Domini S. Velasquez said.

Security Bank Corp. Chief Economist Robert Dan J. Roces said higher fares increase the risk of price hikes this year.

"The projection is that inflation is already poised to remain above target for the rest of the year. There may be shifts to consumption nonetheless, for instance less of selected foods in favor of higher transport costs as the Filipino's budget shrinks," he said.

Incoming BSP chief Felipe M. Medalla has signaled at least two more rate hikes to curb inflation.

The Monetary Board is set to review policy settings on June 23.

WAGE HIKE

Meanwhile, the Zamboanga Peninsula Regional Tripartite Wages and Productivity Board has approved a new daily minimum wage for the region.

In a statement, the Department of Labor and Employment (DoLE) said the Zamboanga wage board had ordered a P35 daily minimum wage increase for nonagricultural workers, and a P20 hike for agricultural workers.

If approved by the National Wages and Productivity Commission, the daily minimum wage for nonagricultural workers will rise to P351 from P316.



A JEEPNEY DRIVER collects payment from passengers. The Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) has approved a P1 fare hike for jeepneys in Metro Manila and Regions 3 and 4.

The daily pay of agricultural workers employed by an establishment with more than 10 workers will rise to P338 from P303. The daily wage for those who work in agricultural enterprises and establishments with fewer than 10 workers will rise to P223 from P203.

Domestic workers in the region will also get a P500 hike, bringing the monthly wage to P4,000 for first-class municipalities.

The DoLE said about 30,513 workers in private establishments and 18,984 domestic workers are expected to benefit from the minimum wage increases.

In a separate statement, DoLE said it had ratified the 1986 Instrument of Amendments to the Constitution of the International Labor Organization (ILO). The amendment calls for increasing the number of nonobserver countries in the global labor body.

"This is a step closer to its entry into force towards democratization in the organization with the end in view of realizing our shared vision of leaving no one behind in the world of work," Labor chief Silvestre H. Bello III said at the ILO conference held in Geneva, Switzerland. — **John Victor D. Ordoñez**

Manufacturing, from SI/1

Capacity utilization rate — the extent to which industry resources are used in producing goods — averaged 69.2% in April, slowing from the revised 70.9% in the previous month.

Eighteen of 22 manufacturing subsectors reached an average capacity utilization of at least 60%.

Manufacturing output could fall in the coming months should fuel costs continue to increase, Mr. Rivera said.

Mr. Asuncion said factory output growth is expected to continue at a slower pace.

"We're expecting it to be sustained but a slowdown may be expected. We have sensed this from the PMI data of late where it was marginally softer than the previous month. We still have manufacturing slightly above the expansion area by the end of this year," he said. — **Abigail Marie P. Yraola**

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June 15, 2022 | Wednesday | 10:30 a.m.

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