

A bad job history can mean a number of things. You may be changing careers and your job history does not reflect the kind of experience or industry that you are hoping to move into. When changing fields, this type of "bad" job history is very common. Another common circumstance is that of the new job hunter. You may have no experience at all. Alternatively, you may only have experience with volunteer work, family employment, or work that involves school projects. Often, college graduates find themselves in this position, applying for jobs that require experience, but not being able to get the experience. Alternatively, you may just be unlucky and have a string of lay-offs in your past. If you work in an industry that is especially volatile or subject to economic fluctuations, lay-offs are beyond your control. Some people go for long periods without working, say to have a child or to recover from an accident. These long gaps in work experience might be considered bad job history.

Whatever your circumstance, rest assured that your work history is not the only thing that employers look at when hiring for a new position. Employers consider a number of factors when evaluating your profile for their company. Here are some things that employers look for:

- Work history that reflects experience in the same industry or field
- Work history that reflects the skills necessary to do the job, even those gained outside the chosen field
- Examples of strong work ethic
- Accomplishments, both career and academic
- Personality that meshes with the office culture
- Willingness to learn the company's ways of operation
- Honesty and integrity

This list is by no means exhaustive, but it does show you that if you have what might be considered a bad work history, you can compensate for this by emphasizing other areas. For instance, if you do not have experience as a credit clerk, but are applying for that position, you should emphasize the skills you possess that are necessary for that job. These are called transferable skills, and they include accounting and customer service skills that would apply to the job of credit clerk, even if you acquired them in another position, such as receptionist or office manager.

In the interview process, it is important to downplay your job history and highlight the skills, experience, and work ethic that you know will get you the position. You can request an opportunity to prove your skills in a working interview or audition. You can also demonstrate your willingness to learn, proving that you would be a good asset. Often, a company will look for someone with little to no experience in a specific field in order to train them to that company's way of doing things. If you lack experience, you do not have to un-learn old habits in order to assume the new ones.

Remember that a bad job history is only as bad as you make it out to be. Do not refer to it as "bad" or "lacking" or "poor." Instead, answer the interviewer's questions with positive statements about what you do have to offer.