

Ep #11: Opportunity Stacking



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Natalie Fisher

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Ep #11: Opportunity Stacking

Welcome to the *Get a Better Job in 30 Days* podcast, this is episode 11: Opportunity Stacking.

Welcome to the *Get a Better Job in 30 Days* podcast. I'm your host Natalie Fisher. I'm a certified career mindset coach who also happens to love dogs, lattes, and most importantly skipping the small talk and getting right to the conversations that matter. On this podcast, I will coach you on how to use your brain to build a wildly successful career and make a real impact in your industry. If you want to do more than just work for a living, you've got to start by making the right decisions now. Are you ready? Let's go.

Alright, so today I'm doing an episode on what I call opportunity stacking which is a concept and a tool that I use with my clients in order for them to get the job they want a lot faster. And skip a lot of the things that slow most people down when they're looking for their next better job.

So the problem that most people face when they embark on the journey of getting a better job, a promotion, a career change, etc. is that they're not aware of all their options. They're not aware that they can create opportunities for themselves. They think that they have to rely on whatever pops up on the job boards and they will post their résumé and they'll think that the job board kind of dictates what's available. And the problem with that is, is you don't see un-posted opportunities, because you don't take steps to look for them.

And so un-posted opportunities are just that, un-posted, so you can't know they're there unless you go looking for them to find them. And if you don't believe they're there or don't have an awareness of them then you're not going to actively go looking for them. Plus a lot of them don't actually exist right now, but they're going to exist in a few days, a week or a month. And for some of my clients they'll get reach-outs even a year later saying, "Hey,

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we'd love for you to come and do some contract work for us," just from the work that they've put in at the time.

But while you're on the job boards and waiting around for these things to be posted you don't give yourself a chance to find the ones that are not. So while you believe that the job boards are the only way or the best way, then you end up missing out on access to a lot of opportunities just because you're not really sure how to find them yet. So that's what I'm going to talk about in this episode.

So the pattern that this causes is you go and start applying, and either you don't hear back or when you do get one interview, you put all your eggs in one basket. And you kind of hedge all your emotional bets on that one interview. And if that doesn't work, then if it doesn't work out and you don't get that job then most likely you're going to spiral into disappointment and confusion.

So you wait a while and they get back to you, they say, "We've gone with someone else," and then you apply again. Then if you do get another interview then you will only have that going. And if that doesn't work out again then you're thrown off your game again. And this is a very slow way to do things. So if you are getting interviews from the job boards, great, you should keep doing that. But it's a very slow way to go through the process.

So as I work with my clients I am constantly asking them and seeing how can we move this along faster? And the way that we do that is we up the output of the work that we're doing and we get more strategic with it. So if you're going to get a better job in 30 days, it's not going to be from applying to one job on a job board, waiting, waiting, waiting, interviewing, waiting, waiting, waiting and then repeating. It's going to be a lot more to it than that.

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So to add to this you have a huge amount of pressure on you to perform in this one interview because it is your only interview at the moment. Because what if you mess that one up, then you know you have no other prospects. And you know that if you mess it up you're going to be starting at square one. So this puts automatic pressure on you whether you know it or not.

Then you put pressure on yourself and you feel more nervous because of the thoughts you have around the fact that this is your only opportunity. And it leads to the opposite effect of showing up confidently as you would like to. I've seen that happen time and time again.

Your brain automatically now has so much pressure to perform in this interview because you know that if you're going to be immediately having to start again then that's not going to be fun. So starting from scratch every time is not the ideal fastest way to get through this process. And expectations are high, which means the pressure's high and it's only pressure that you've put on yourself, because you haven't created the other opportunities that can help you kind of relax.

Imagine if you had this one interview and then you were also going to be going on two other interviews next week and then three others the week after. So imagine you had five interviews lined up over the next few weeks. How are you going to feel differently in that one interview? It takes the pressure off. It takes the pressure off completely.

So how do we break the pattern? How can you avoid this and navigate this process like a total pro? So I've walked hundreds of people through this process and I created this concept called opportunity stacking. And it's very simple. What is opportunity stacking? So basically it's intentionally creating multiple opportunities through a variety of means. So when we apply for jobs on job sites we are keeping ourselves in a very small area of what's possible.

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And you've probably heard this said before, 20% of jobs are posted, while 80% are found through conversations had through other channels. And while it's possible that your résumé gets picked up on a job board and that happens, or a recruiter contacts you from LinkedIn. And that's great if that's happening. Sure, keep posting and keep applying on the sites. If you're getting results from that, you're getting interviews from that, that's working. If you're getting calls from companies, then great. But notice that it's just one small possibility that you're open to by doing just that.

And if the only thing you're doing is applying on a job board and your applications are few and far between, it's going to be less likely that you get momentum going from this. So let's say you've got an interview through a job site, it went super well and you're feeling really positive about it. Great, awesome. But here's the thing I want to warn you about.

Even if you think for sure this is going to be it for you and you're 100% positive this opportunity is going to come through and this is going to be it. And I don't have anything against you believing that it's going to be it. I think you should believe it right up until you get the result. But until you have the offer in hand, your opportunity stacking is still just as important, if not more important than waiting or preparing for a second interview with the same company.

So I never want any of my clients to tell me, "I am waiting to hear back. I'm waiting for them to respond." Waiting is doing nothing. Waiting is passive. You always want to be moving.

If you want to get through this process quickly, you always need to be moving, never waiting. You don't ever want to be sitting there being like, "Well, I'm just waiting for them to respond." And I know that we just say that and we're like, "Well, I'm not really waiting, I'm doing all these other things." But just the sheer fact of saying that means that you've kind of filed them in

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your brain as like still a possibility. And while they still are, you want to focus all your attention on your other efforts if you're going to make sure that you move through this as fast as possible.

So you do your follow-ups, you do everything within your control and then you just move on as if they didn't exist, you just move on. Now, my clients always want to argue me on this. They find it very difficult to keep themselves motivated to continue to stack opportunities when they are pretty certain that the process they are going through right now is going to be the one.

However, the worst that happens is you have to turn someone down later. You say, "Thanks, but I already have another offer." Or you make a connection for your future career down the line that maybe you wouldn't have made. Or best case scenario, you get another offer and now you have multiple offers and you can leverage these offers against each other. That's how people get multiple offers, they keep going, which has happened with several of my clients and it's happened to me.

But you have to keep going down this path because otherwise you're just waiting for that one to come through and that's all you're doing. And even though you're saying, "I'm not just waiting, I am doing other things," you've kind of mentally checked out though, those other things. You're really just waiting, and hoping, and focusing your brain power on this one opportunity that we don't know if it's come through yet. So there's literally zero downside to keeping this going full speed ahead with your opportunity stacking.

So here's an analogy that illustrates this really well. So I teach how to get a better job in 30 days. And I fully know this is possible for anyone who's committed to doing it. The main factor that leads to this being possible for

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someone is exactly what I'm talking about here in this podcast. So here's the analogy that will help you drive this home.

So you're hiking up a mountain, your ideal position or your ideal pay is at the very top of the mountain, your offer, your signed offer, done deal is at the top of the mountain. Now, we know for sure that it is there. And you're just walking up to it and it can be a long hard climb sometimes. You can see over some of the rocks but you can't see over all of them. You can't see the top yet but you know it's there and you've got to keep walking, even when you're tired, even when you want to take a break.

So your fitness level's going to depend on how fast you can get there. What is your stamina? Are you pacing yourself? How are you going? How fast can you go? What are the effectiveness of your steps? I love hiking so this is probably why I love this analogy so much.

So if you're not a hiker, sometimes when you hike up a mountain it'll be kind of rocky and you'll have to use your hands, and sometimes I think that's called scrambling. You use your hands to kind of get up. And sometimes it's a little bit of a maneuver and you've got to climb. And sometimes you'll go one way and it won't work, and sometimes you have to come back down or go the other way. Sometimes there'll be some markers, like some little orange markers to kind of tell you which way to go and sometimes there won't be.

So I like to think of my dog, Carly, she comes with me on the hikes and she's relentless. She will go and she will keep going, even if she falls. So sometimes she'll go up a rock and she'll slide down, because she couldn't get a grip and then she'll be like, "Okay, that didn't work." So she'll go a different way, then she'll go around and then she'll get a grip on another area and then she'll try a different way until she does it. So how effective

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are your steps? How are you calculating each step to get the maximum distance covered in each step?

So I think she's just going for it and sometimes she falls or sometimes it doesn't work for her. But for me too, sometimes I'll go up a way and I'll have to come back down because I didn't get where I wanted to go, going that way. So how strategic are your steps? How effective are your steps? How many breaks do you need to take? And do you really need to take those breaks? Or could you keep going if you're really honest with yourself?

What happens when we take a break is, let's say you've focused on your only opportunity and you stop making those other connections. Then you're essentially sitting there waiting for a car or a gondola to come pick you up and take you up the mountain.

This is how I picture it. So every connection is a step, every conversation is a step, every interview is a step, every little decision that you make is a step towards the top. And when you mentally check out and are waiting for that opportunity to come through, when we don't know if it's going to, you're basically sitting there waiting and saying, "Okay, well, I'm going to wait for this one." And the gondola might not show up. And until the gondola is there in front of you saying, "Alright, come on, get on," you need to still be walking.

And so it might happen, it's great if it does. But then if it doesn't, you've wasted your time sitting there waiting, instead of continuing to walk because the walking is the thing you have full control over. And as always, taking steps up is the thing that is 100% in your control and you can always do. But so many of us choose not to because it's easier to say, "I'm going to sit and take a break and they're going to come pick me up." And then

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when they don't, you're just wasting time. You've just wasted your time sitting there.

So we don't want to set that expectation for ourselves or rely on a company that hasn't give us that offer yet. So when you choose to sit and wait for them you're essentially giving them your power and control, waiting for them to maybe get back to you and maybe give you a ride. But really they haven't promised that.

They haven't said, "I'm coming to give you a ride," unless you've got a verbal offer and you're just waiting for the written offer. Even if they did, until you have that written offer, until the gondola's literally there in front of you saying, "Alright, get in," you need to keep walking. It's the only way to guarantee your way to the top as quickly as you want to go.

So the benefits of opportunity stacking. You're always in control of your opportunities. You're always in control of how many interviews you can get and how much pressure you put on yourself for each one. You're in control of whether you wait around or not and what you do after one interview goes really well. You're the creator and the person who creates opportunities for yourself. There's a ton of strategies to do this. I cover them all inside my program with my coaching clients.

All of this is available to you. And it's when you get to the top of the mountain that you will understand why that was so important. This is what I help my clients with.

And one last thing I want to mention is that if you are struggling with your belief around these opportunities, because maybe you've tried to make some connections before and you haven't had a successful outcome yet. There are a lot of stats to back up what I'm saying here. So you can go and look for any study that will tell you networking is the way that people get

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jobs. Job boards are a whole bunch of people applying for the same thing, we don't know if they've seen your résumé. A lot of the time that's why it's so discouraging, but sometimes it does work.

So I'm not saying stop doing what's working, keep doing what's working for you. But definitely don't make it your only thing, especially if you want to move through this process quickly.

So any news publication you find, so there is PayScale, Forbes, LinkedIn has a couple of studies at least that I've seen. They will all tell you that networking is the primary way that anybody gets hired. And the study numbers will be slightly different because they will have done studies of different groups of people, so some will be students, some will be professionals. But any study that you go and find will prove to you that networking has been the main way that people get hired. So you might as well dig into it, learn how it works and master it.

If you want some more information on how to get started with networking, I have another podcast episode called Niche Networking. And it will show you an easy way for you to get started if you are intimidated by it. It's not scary, it's actually fun. It can be fun.

And then please listen to the latest interview that I did with my client, Carine, one of my clients who walked through this process and made it to the top successfully, and it wasn't easy for her. And it's not as easy as we think it's going to be. But she's an example of what's possible. And now she knows how to create opportunities for her entire career, and how to create the goals that she wants. And when I asked her, and this is what everybody says, all of my clients say this.

So you can listen to the latest two interviews, Carine and Bea. I asked them, "What would you have done if you look back now, now that you've

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got your successful up-leveled job, what would you have done to make this go faster?” They both said, “More consistent with their opportunity stacking.” So everybody says that.

And then the last thing is it's always going to take 10 times more than you expected. So check your expectations and consider this a heads up. It's always going to take 10 times more than you expected, at least. And so when you're prepared for that, you know what's coming but you're committed to the goal, you are going to be set up a lot more for success than if you didn't haven't any expectations or hadn't put any thought into it.

If you want some more help with this, you can start by checking my free training, it's called Get a Better Job in 30 Days. And I go deeper into opportunity stacking, how it works. And I give you an exact script template to use to get started. And you can check that out at www.nataliefisher.ca/getstarted. I will see you over there.

To celebrate the launch of the show I'm going to be giving away an amazing surprise gift basket with all my favorite things in it. It will have some headphones, some books that I love and some other fun things that I know you will love too. And I'm going to go all out on this one. So you'll want to get in on this. I'll be giving away three of these to three lucky listeners.

To get a chance to win one of these surprise gift baskets all you need to do is rate and review the show on iTunes. I want to create an awesome show that provides a ton of value. So please let me know if it's resonating with you. To learn more about the contest and how to enter go to nataliefisher.ca/podcastlaunch. I'll be announcing the winners on some upcoming episodes.

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Thank you so much for listening. I look forward to talking to you next week. Bye.

Thanks for listening to this episode of Get a Better Job in 30 Days. If you're ready to dive deeper into your career mindset and start making a serious impact in your industry, join me at nataliefisher.ca/getstarted. I will see you over there.