00:00 Welcome to the Deviant Thinking Podcast where we explore career advice that breaks the rules. I’m your host, Jennifer Thompson and welcome to our very first episode of the Deviant Thinking Podcast. I’m so excited to have you here. This has been a long time in the making and it is exciting to finally bring this content to all of you. So I wanted to take a few minutes and kind of share with you a little bit of where this idea has come from and Deviant Thinking. So Deviant Thinking for me is helping people stand out and be remarkably different versus just marginally better. So what makes me remarkably different and what makes this podcast remarkably different? Well, for me being remarkably different means looking at all of the rules we set for ourselves, all of those limiting beliefs and really challenging them. I bring to you years of corporate experience where I’ve learned personally that capping your voice, capping who you are does not work.

01:10 So I want my clients to stand out, to be themselves, to show up fully in their work, to be engaged and really flourish. I have a background in positive psychology and I bring that and the knowledge that I’ve gained there to this as well as corporate experience, entrepreneurial experience and working with some of the coolest companies around the world. And we will use all of that to explore how we can make your career remarkably different versus just marginally better than someone else’s. So that makes me just want to jump in to our very first episode and our first episode really happens because of the questions that I get from my clients on a regular basis. And

Transcript
See show notes at: www.deviantthinking.com/podcast/001
recently I’ve been getting the same question over and over again and I wanted to kind of jump right on it and share some of my thoughts on it.

02:09 The question I get is I keep applying for great jobs. They’re jobs that I’d be absolutely perfect for and I’m hearing crickets in response. I know I’m remarkably better than the other candidates and I’m still not hearing anything in return. So I want to share with you the advice that I give my clients because there is nothing worse than hanging out in that space, hitting the send button, knowing you could rock this position and not hearing a thing back. I feel ya. It’s not an easy place to be and it’s not an easy place for my clients, but unfortunately the systems are stacked against us. They don’t help us get the jobs that we could Excel at, but the jobs that we could flourish at. So let’s start right there. What I know is that Gallup has done some amazing work in this area. They are the folks who do lots of surveys and and so on.

03:13 And what they found is that if you apply online to a position, so you find that position, you find that role that you really could stand out in and be remarkably different. Well, if you just hit the apply button and apply online, the chances of you getting an offer from that position is just 2% no wonder we’re having issues. No wonder people are not feeling confident after hitting that apply button. You’ve got a 2% chance of getting an offer. And I personally think if you mix in the fact that there are corporations out there like McDonald’s and target and Walmart who will hire a tremendous number of people through these online applicant tracking systems, that number for professionals goes down to, Oh, just an an itsty bitsy piece. So don’t feel bad about it. Everyone I know has applied to applicant tracking systems and heard crickets.

04:13 You are not out there by yourself, but if you’re right for that role and you feel that passion, there are things that you can do. So that’s what I’m here to help you with today because the good news is is there are ways to raise those rates up to 39% so let’s talk about that. So how do you raise that ability to get an offer? Well, the first thing you do is you have passion for the role. And I really mean that. I see too many people who hit the apply button over and over and over again for any role that is out there, that’s not a successful way to get a job. That just creates and adds to the clutter that’s out there in the job space right now for even a small company, if they go forward and place an ad on indeed or or the glass door, all of those great sites that offer great jobs.

05:14 But if the small company puts an ad out there, they can be inundated with up to a thousand people applying for a simple position that’s overwhelming, which is part of what’s driving applicant tracking systems. So applicant tracking systems are supposed to help play, I call it keyword bingo and allow people to sort out folks that don’t exactly match their criteria. Unfortunately though the system is probably sorting you out too. It
is increasingly harder and harder to win at keyword bingo. So you need to look at other ways of getting around the system. Yes, I just said that I am breaking the rules, break the rules. The system's broke. Don't just rely on an applicant tracking system to get a job. And I'm sorry HR people who are freaking out at this moment, but this is all about our livelihood. We want jobs that we can love. And if we see a job out there that we feel like we are super qualified for, I promise you that company wants to know about us.

06:22 We just have to get in front of them. So how do we do that? Well, the first thing we do is we try to figure out who do we know at that corporation? Is there anybody who can refer us into this company? That is the number that moves us to the 39% so Gallup says, if we find someone to refer us to a role as opposed to just applying to an applicant tracking system. But if we find someone who will believe in us and say, Hey, you need to check out Mary, Mary could be awesome for this role. If we can get that small endorsement, our chances of getting that job go up to 39% those are the odds I want to play. I don't want to play the 2% so we need to think about what are we doing in our network? How are we finding people that can help us get a job?

07:19 As I say this, I often hear from my clients, Oh my goodness, this feels, this feels inauthentic. It feels kind of slimy. It feels kind of used car salesman like stop it. K. I used to feel that way too. But I want to share a couple perspectives with you. The first one is, I know that when people approach me and they say, Hey, do you have a contact at this company? Do you know about this job? Could you refer me? And they truly do great work. I love recommending them. I look like a hero because I've found someone who can fit this role. So I look like I've got great cache that I'm able to hand somebody off who could really make a difference. So that's one thing. So I want you to think about it that way. So if there's someone who does know you, they do think you do great work and they want to be able to hand you off to someone else.

08:11 There's a way to do that. So let them, the other thing which doesn't get talked about too often, but for many of us when I was in corporate life, if I referred someone to a role, I actually got a bonus for it. Yep. That's the secret. If I found someone who could work at the corporation I was at who was a great fit and I referred them for the role teaching, I got $1,000 in my pocket. Woo. Who doesn't want $1,000 and many companies are set up this way. There are referral bonuses for employees who can refer an employee.

08:51 I want to back up a step. So now you kind of know the trick. You want to get a referral, but I want to step back and say, Hey, what is it that you have to do just show up and really nail this? Well, one, you have to be the type of person that people want to refer and how do you do that? Absolutely. I'm making the assumption in this
conversation, you've got great experience, you're fully qualified for the role and you've got a great resume. So if those things aren't true, you got to kind of back up a little bit and there's fixes for them. Okay? If you don't have a great resume, we're going to talk about that in future episodes. If you need to find more contacts in the company, we're going to talk about that now of ways to do that.

09:38 So, but I want to make sure that you're thinking about applying for roles that you can be passionate about because passion counts. People who are passionate about the role, that's who I want to hire. So I want somebody who's referred to me, but then I want the person to also be enthusiastic about getting the role. Well, what happens though, if you don't have the referral. OK, if you don't have a referral, right. And all of us have been there. You know, when I went to my last corporate gig, I didn't know anyone there and I really wanted that role. So you've got to figure out other ways to get in front of people who can help to hire you. And that makes me want to share the story of Austin. Austin was a student that I hired into my department and she was amazing. And the whole time she was, she was under me and she is still there and totally rocking out her job.

10:39 She performed amazingly, but we wouldn't have found her if she didn't find us. So the story kind of goes, and this is totally a true story, I had the opportunity to go to a college to do some recruiting and while the college we were there and we were recruiting for interns, so not full-time positions but just for interns. And we were giving a talk the night before we did the interviews at that talk, you know, we shared about our company vision, what it was like working for us, you know, all of kind of the normal things we got done. There was some question and answer period. And then of course the, the crowd starts to wander out. Well, in that time period where the crowd started to wander out after we were completely done, Austin came up to myself and my colleague and she looked us dead in the eye and said, I want to work at your company.

11:36 I have offers from other companies and it doesn't matter. I want to work for you. What do I need to do to make that happen? I've applied to multiple roles and I've not gotten a call back, but I'm willing to do whatever it takes to get hired by your, because I know I'm a great fit and I know I will do great work for you. Well, Holy smokes. How can we not talk to this chick? Right? Like she was absolutely amazing. She had the guts to say what she wanted. She told us she'd be an amazing worker. Well, the next day, literally our schedule was packed. We had interviews scheduled every 15 minutes. They had only given us 15 minutes for lunch. I don't think I'd ever had such a packed schedule. Well, we said, all right, we're given up lunch and we told her that. We said, you can come.

12:29 We're going to be eating our sandwich. All we've got is 15 minutes. Show up, bring
us your resume, bring us your portfolio. It was a design position, so bring us your portfolio and tell us why we should hire you. She showed up and she knocked it out of the park. She was an amazing designer. She had great attitude and again, she had passion that she wanted to work with us. We had zero open positions, which to me is like unheard of in our organization, but we literally had zero open. We went back to corporate headquarters and myself and my colleague looked at each other and were like, what? What do we do with this? Like this girl rocks and we have nowhere to put her. There’s no positions open that fit her skillset. So I did the daring thing, the deviant thing, and I went straight to the, to our VP and I said, Hey, I got this girl, she’s amazing.

13:21 She would have literally laid in front of our car to get this job. I think we need to look at her. And he says, okay, why? And I, I, I gave him the reasons, I mean her passion, her ability, you know, she had it all and she managed to get in front of us and he said, okay, let me, let me think about it. Within 24 hours. He came back to me and say, I’ve got, I’ve got it set up. I think we can do a an ahead of need hire. I didn’t even know we had a category called that and he says, let's get her in here for an interview. He says, you know, I want other people to assess, make sure that you’re not the only one who thinks she’s awesome, but if we think she’s awesome, we’ll get her in here within two weeks.

14:02 She was in for an interview and she had an offer and she was going to be our employee. She is still there. She is still rocking it out. She is still happy cause it was exactly where she wanted to work and what she wanted to be doing. It was a success story for everyone. And I share that story not, not to discourage you, but just encourage you that bringing that passion and showing up in unique ways and getting yourself in front of people who can hire you really does breed success. That’s how you’re remarkably different. That’s how you stand out. That’s how you quit playing keyword bingo. And hoping your car to gets called you make it happen. It’s not easy, but it does drive great results. So how do you find these people? Right? Well, one, be aware, be on the lookout for people within the organization who can help refer you.

15:01 For me, there’s two great go to places that I look for this the first place I look very simply LinkedIn, right? Linkedin is the job hunting spot. Right now. Everyone's there. It is our current communication device for corporate communications. So make sure you're present on LinkedIn, make sure you have lots of contacts and make sure you’re using that network in a really savvy way. So if you find a job and you go to apply to it, I will say, here’s my, here’s my little plug. If you are in the job hunting mode, it is probably worth paying for LinkedIn premium. It does give you additional information. It does tell you where you rank in the job application. It does tell you how many people applied for this, this system, it tells you who at that company, you know or, or second connections. No, so it’s worth it.
So LinkedIn is a great tool for researching who else at that corporation you or someone else might know. So if you know someone or you know someone who knows someone, jump in there and connect with them and ask them about the company and ask them about the role and the division. You know, if it's all super large company, I'm thinking like Amazon or Google. Sometimes it's hard to hone in and find the exact department that you're looking for. But don't despair if you are in that industry, more than likely people within your network are also within the industry and, and are going to know industry contacts in that section of the company. You know, it's very rare that, you know, if you're a marketing person that your contacts and IT we'll get you there. You know, it's going to be your other marketing contacts that know someone in marketing at the company you want to go to.

So definitely start to mind that and utilize that network. The other thing that's really kind of cool about LinkedIn is it once you've put in your college information, so where you went to school, where you're an alum of it also suggests other alums who are at that organization. This can be huge because I know I want to help other people who graduated from my Alma mater. So if they contact me and say, even if they don't know me and say, Hey Jennifer, I see that, you know, a whole group of people from here, I'm an alum from the same school. Right? I can relate to who they are. I know the curriculum more than likely that they followed. I know they're more than likely qualified for the job. Why wouldn't I help them out? So using that alumni network is another great way. And your ultimate goal is to get around the system and get to a real person.

Cause again, it's getting to that real person that allows them to evaluate your resume, evaluate your credentials, and decide if you would be a great candidate. And again, I know there are HR professionals out there freaking out, but I will tell you my non HR friends, so those hiring managers, those CEOs, those directors that are out there say over and over again, they get frustrated because they know really good candidates get weeded out of the system and they want to meet those candidates. So have that optimism. Know that you're not bothering someone they want, they want somebody who can fill the job but also apply because you're passionate. Don't waste anyone's time. If you don't love the job, you don't think it's an amazing space for you to be. Stop, quit applying to 4,000 jobs and hoping something sticks. Pick one or two that you're passionate about and dig in deeper.

All right. The other way is, and I talked about the showing up and gave the example of, of Austin, but there's other ways to show up. You can show up at conferences, you can show up at trade shows where the company that you want to be at will be as a great way to have a have a great dialog. I had one client, Joe, senior, executive of sales for a computer companies and was moving across the world. He was
moving from the United States who’s moving to England, and Joe decided he wanted a rocking job. He showed up with his resume in hand. He showed up with a crazy ass business cards that made him stand out. He actually put on his resume and his business card, his title was dragon Slayer. Salespeople can get away with being that bold and audacious, and he showed up at a trade show because he knew he wanted to do sales and salespeople were at trade shows.

19:44 So he showed up and in that time period he talked with dozens of companies, said, I want a sales job in Europe. I’m moving here. How can you help me? By the time the show ended, he had five interviews set up. So he managed it. He did it. He showed up, he talked to the person. He could have applied to a thousand positions online and not gotten those five interviews. He ended up with four offers and got to choose exactly the job that he thought fit him best. So this isn’t just an entry level strategy. This is a strategy for higher level executives. Trust me, Joe makes plenty of money. This isn’t someone earning $35,000 a year. This is someone earning $300,000 a year. So there are ways that the strategy works at both levels. So show up, you know, I can go on, I have another story of a client who wanted to work for a smaller company and she showed up at the door after applying multiple times.

20:46 So she had kind exhausted her options, but she showed up at the door, resume in hand, and said, I want to work here. They were thrilled. They hadn’t had time to go through the pile of applicants. She showed up. She was absolutely qualified, she was convenient. She was there. She presented well. They had her back within days for a second interview because they interviewed her right on the spot, but they had her back within days for that second interview and within two weeks she was hired by that company because she showed up. So I’ve really encouraged that tactic. And again, it’s a little bit radical. It’s a little bit deviant but it really does work. All right. If you can’t get to the person though I do. This is kind of my like bonus nugget here. If you actually can’t get to the person, you don’t have the ability to walk in the door and show up, it’s not over for you.

21:40 Okay. There are other ways to get there and my new favorite tool is called Hunter and Hunter is a Chrome extension or a website that you can go to and type and someone’s name and the company they work for and it will give you the email address. I want to be a little cautious here as I say this and I’m totally, we’ll link the link to Hunter in the show notes so check that out there, but I want to be a little cautious here because this is not supposed to be used to stalk people, right? This is about jobs that you truly are passionate about. You know you would be the best candidate for the role and nobody’s listening to you. This is kind of like the last resort and I will tell you it works in the last
few weeks. My husband and I, we've run our business together and we really wanted contact at a corporation.

22:36 We'd been trying for months. We did all of the right things. We even in messaged people through LinkedIn, all of that stuff, and we couldn't get to the right person. We weren't getting the response. I met people at trade shows. I mean, I did it, I did everything I was supposed to do and no response. We'll finally through some digging, we found the exact right person, right? Because all of these other people were kind of the right person, but not exactly the right person. But we finally through LinkedIn, found the right person we needed to talk to and we use Hunter to come up with her email address, send her an email. She's actually thrilled to hear from us and we've got an appointment with her in a couple of weeks. So it does work. I'm giving you real strategies that I use on a daily basis to get things done and to help my clients be successful. Because what I know there's nothing worse than hitting that apply button and hearing crickets.

23:33 So kind of a quick wrap up to all of this is first of all, as you apply to a role, make sure you're applying to roles that you're passionate about. Don't waste your time or the time of others by applying to roles that aren't in your, in your lane, you know that you're not excited to have that waste everyone's time. And it creates that clutter which results in those really low results and applying to applicant tracking system. So really hone in, decide the roles that you would be thrilled to have in do, what ever it takes to get in front of the hiring manager, the people who can really make that decision, that includes contacting them, that link on LinkedIn. It includes finding them, stalking them at events that they're at. And again, I've said stalking of course in jest, but showing up where they are and meeting them and becoming part of their circle.

24:30 And then and kind of that last resort, if you have to, if they've not responded in any other way to you, jump in and hit that Hunter app and find their email address and send one last email because we all know at that point there's nothing to lose. So getting in front of them at any cost really does make a difference.

24:52 Now before you head out for today, I have some fun information to share. I recorded this entire podcast and realized that there was just something missing so I took the time to build a job hunting step by step guide just for you. This guide supports all of the information that I shared here today and gives you some step-by-step instructions of how to really get out there and find that job and break some rules so it is available and as a download in our show notes for today.

25:27 So definitely don't miss that because it's a great guide to help you along. Also just want to thank you for being here today. It has been so much fun to share some deviant
thoughts and career advice that breaks the rules. If you enjoyed today’s podcast, I would so love it. If you would go over to iTunes and give a quick review, tell them you’ve learned something new and interesting and that maybe it’s just a little bit remarkably different from other podcasts you’ve listened to. I’d be so honored if you would do that. Also, I have a request. I would love it if you would join me on my Facebook page and we’ll put the link below and I’d love to hear of the different ways that you’ve gotten a job over the years because I bet there’s a lot of you out there listening that have found jobs over the years that’s not through the conventional channels, not just from hitting the apply button, apply button works some of the time, but finding those really great, unique jobs that’s comes from getting in front of that hiring manager. That’s what nails a great job. I look forward to hearing some of your great stories.

26:31 Well, have a great day and join us on our next episode of Deviant Thinking.