

## Ask the Employment Experts

Dear Steve and Jon,

I was somewhat over my head in my last job, resulting in a termination for poor performance. How do I shake loose of that stigma to have a chance at a more suitable position I can perform well in.

Signed, Terminated.

*Steve Hines, consultant, career coach and author of [Atlanta Jobs](#).*

Dear Terminated,

All interviewers will ask, "Why are you no longer with your last employer"? You must answer truthfully, but add a positive "spin." Admit you made a bad decision, and have learned and grown from it. Have letters of recommendation from former supervisors and/or clients to show. Make your answer short, then conclude by emphasizing your previous achievements and accomplishments and how you fit this position. If the interviewer continues to probe, discuss how this additional experience adds to your value.

*Jon Harvill CPC, consultant and recruiter with [Professional Search of Atlanta](#).*

Dear Terminated,

Make sure the positions you are considering is a better match to your talents. Find individuals from within your old employers, who are willing to talk about your strong attributes, particularly as they might directly relate to this targeted position. Several of these forward- projecting references may make checking with your past supervisor seem redundant, or at least it will keep that reference in proper perspective. Be very honest about the past learning experience. Practice your answer enough so that you can avoid becoming defensive. By taking your emotion out of the subject, it becomes less important to the interviewer.