

Tekst 5

Jobs for the jobless

Sir: Mike Ainscough (letter, 31 August) takes it on himself to lecture the jobless who have worked hard for qualifications. If you are in a comfortable berth, it is human nature to think that you got there by your own merits, but Mr Ainscough's apparently innocent platitudes can be unpacked in a different way by someone who has not had his good fortune.

"Abilities demonstrated as part of a sophisticated recruitment and selection process"? Studies show that interviewers make up their minds in the first minute or less as to whether to select the candidate, the rest of the time being window-dressing. And that's if you get as far as the interview, and haven't been previously weeded from the list on grounds of race, gender, age or not having gone to the right school. For "communication skills" read "willingness to talk management jargon instead of plain English". For "sensitivity to others" read "willingness to bootlick management, however dim, misguided or bullying".

I hope that your jobless correspondents will not lose hope. As long as they are still under 50, there still are employers out there prepared to give someone a chance to prove what they can do. It's just finding them that is the problem.

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- 1p 13 ■ What is the main point made by Jenny Tillyard in her letter?
- A Candidates for a job should take into account the employer's preferences.
 - B Employers are easily taken in by applicants with good communication skills.
 - C Employers are led by bias when selecting applicants.
 - D Recruitment should focus on jobless people rather than on people already in jobs.