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From Past to Potential: Flipping the Popular Narrative

1. Identifying & Describing Employer Objections (15 minutes)

- **Objective:** Help delegates recognize and describe typical employer objections to hiring candidates like Chan.
- **Group Activity:**
 - Discuss common employer objections they've encountered or believe might come up (e.g., concerns about reliability, past criminal records, skills gaps).
 - Use flip charts or sticky notes to map out these objections.
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- **Examples of objections:**
- - "They'll be too much of a risk to our business."
 - "They don't have the right skills for the role."
 - "They'll disrupt the company culture."
 - "We don't have policies in place for hiring ex-offenders."

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2. Objection Handling – Carving Out Solutions (15 minutes)

- **Objective:** Turn objections into opportunities by using design thinking to develop practical solutions to employer concerns.
- **Activity:** Each group picks one objection they mapped in the previous session and follows these steps:
 - **Problem Definition:** Clearly define why this particular objection might be raised.
 - **Ideation:** Brainstorm possible solutions that flip the narrative from weakness to strength. Focus on reframing objections and identifying systemic changes that need to happen.
 - **Guiding Questions:**
 - Is this objection really about the candidate, or is it rooted in bias or outdated hiring policies?
 - What hidden strengths might someone like Chan have because of her past challenges?
 - How can we showcase these strengths in a way that aligns with the employer's needs?

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Role Play: Pitching Chan (10 minutes)

Objective: Practice handling employer objections with real-time feedback from peers.

Activity: Role-play as recruiters or hiring managers pitching Chan for a role she's clearly qualified for. Your task is to present her to an employer who has doubts, despite the fact that Chan could do the job - with her eyes closed!

Using the strategies you developed during the design thinking session, volunteers will tackle common objections head-on, flipping the narrative and showing why Chan is not just a good hire, but the best choice.

Group Feedback: The rest of the delegates act as critical friends, offering constructive feedback on how well the volunteer handled the objection.

Consider:

- Did the volunteer reframe the objection effectively?
- Did they highlight Chan's strengths?
- How could they improve the pitch?

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Key Takeaways for Objection Handling:

1. **Identify the Root Cause:** Objections often stem from fear or bias, not the candidate's actual ability. Recognize where the real concern lies.
1. **Reframe the Narrative:** Turn perceived weaknesses into strengths—highlight resilience, adaptability, and real-world experience gained through adversity.
1. **Showcase Value:** Align the candidate's skills and experiences with the employer's needs, emphasizing their unique ability to handle challenges and bring fresh perspectives.
1. **Provide Solutions:** Address concerns with practical solutions, such as offering support, training, or mentorship to bridge any perceived gaps.
1. **Kill Them with Patience, Logic, Empathy, and Kindness:** Approach every objection with calm, thoughtful responses, using logic and empathy to break down resistance and show why hiring is a win-win.
1. **Stay Confident and Assertive:** Approach objections with confidence, reinforcing that hiring candidates like Chan isn't just acceptable—it's a smart, strategic decision.

