



Opinion

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Say no to drug tests

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I am a hard-working employee with a good work ethic. But if you require a drug test as a condition of employment, you will never have the opportunity to hire me.

My refusal to provide a sample has already cost me two employment opportunities. One was for a receptionist job, the other to register with a temp agency. I realize such a stance makes me instantly suspect. I couldn't just be standing up for what I believe in; I must be doing something wrong. But I'm not actually writing this to make sure my name appears before hundreds of potential employers as a suspected drug user. In fact, I don't use drugs.

I would pass a drug test with flying colors. In fact, I did once. For a hostessing job, years ago. But I promised myself I would never submit to one again. It's demeaning and an invasion of privacy. As far as I'm concerned, it's my prospective employer's job to size me up, not to use rubber gloves to learn what I do on my own time.

Sure, there are exceptions. Security jobs, truck-driving, law enforcement. Under certain circumstances, perhaps I would give you some of my bodily fluids. But if I seem to act normal, assume I'm drug-free until you have reason to believe otherwise and give me the job. Or don't give me the job because you just aren't sure about me. Isn't that the foundation of human resource departments, to judge people through references, interviews and instinct? When did the motto become "In specimens we trust"?

Friends and relatives say, what's the big deal? Take the test and get the job. Will my actions even change anything? Probably not. But letting my future employers know that they can check my urine instead of my reputation would change me. And insisting on such a humiliating requirement is going to change their business. Because, over time, they'll have "weeded out" all the people who ever stood up for something. Good people like me.

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