

Tales from the interview: Lunch is not a competition, episode 2

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Last time, we saw the consequences of failing to recognize that lunch is not a competition. Today we'll see an even more unfortunate result.

One candidate went to lunch with my colleague the economist. (Claim to fame: "Jenna von Oÿ is my cousin!") They went to a local Thai restaurant, Thai being a very popular cuisine here in the Seattle area. The afternoon interviews showed a marked change for the worse from the morning interviews, and the afternoon interviewers began to ask, "What happened at lunch? The candidate was doing really well in the morning, but in the afternoon, had difficulty concentrating and didn't look all that well."

My colleague fessed up. "Yeah, sorry about that. We went to a Thai restaurant, and for some reason, ordering lunch turned into a competition. I'm not really that good with spicy food, and obviously neither is the candidate, but somehow our competitive natures took over and we ended up trying to one-up each other with how spicy we could order the dishes, and, well, you can see what happened. If it's any consolation, I'm not feeling all that great either."

I don't know what the resolution to the situation was, but I hope the candidate was given a second chance.

Remember, folks, lunch is not a competition. You will not be evaluated on the strength of your stomach lining.

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