

About a month ago, after years of designing in various industries, making websites for small-time clients, working at failed and debatably successful startups, and fiddling with random side projects, I had been offered an interview at Apple. I couldn't believe it. [I had just totally revamped my portfolio](#), and I was now actually good enough to be considered as a candidate at Apple. In my eyes, Apple is, hands down, the most highly-regarded company a designer could work for.

They set an interview date, and I started to brace myself for a bunch of gotcha questions and hard design problems that I would have to whiteboard in front of a design team. I had also assumed such a big company would take many rounds of interviews to make a final decision. I was pleasantly surprised when I only had to interview with three people for less than an hour, and the interview was pretty standard. I drove back to SF from Cupertino, and I replayed the interview in my head. It seemed like it went well, but I didn't want to get ahead of myself. I didn't want to be disappointed if they rejected me.

It turned out it did go well. I received a call the same day, and they told me I knocked it out of the park. They offered me a contract position as a mobile designer. Wow! I was so ecstatic that I had screamed when I got off the phone. My parents and family were super excited when I told them the news. I had posted the news to Facebook, and I had never gotten so many likes and congratulations on anything before. I got more likes when I announced that I got a job at Apple than when my daughter was born. People that I friended years ago and never talked to since were sending me messages. I changed my title on [Twitter](#), and suddenly people started following me that probably never would have a week before. People were so excited for me that I decided to celebrate with drinks one night, and the turnout was amazing. It felt so great to have people want to celebrate this achievement with me.

I couldn't sleep the on the nights leading up to my start date. I was nervous and excited. I felt like getting an offer from Apple had validated my talent as a designer. I thought about the long, [unorthodox journey](#) that lead me to Apple. I wondered, "What does this mean for my career? What will I be working on? Where will this take me? Will I ever finish the [iPhone app I've been working on on the side](#)?" I had so many questions.

Then I started. I immediately was uneasy about the rigid hours and long commute, but at least I could be one of those notorious tech people whizzing to and from San Francisco on a private bus with wifi (I'm especially intrigued by the bus thing because I grew up in San Francisco and have seen the cultural and economic shift that's resulted from this tech boom and the last. Now ironically I was one of the techies who some people think is ruining the city.) I hardly (hardly meaning never) saw my daughter during the week because the hours were so inflexible. I had also taken a substantial pay cut, but I figured I was making a long-term career investment by working for such a prestigious company. On boarding was super bumpy, and they had so many passwords, accounts, and logins that it took nearly a month just for me to get on the server. There were meetings all the time which were disruptive to everyone's productivity, but they seemed to be a necessary evil in a company that's so large with such high-quality products. It was all a bit bothersome, but nothing that would be a big problem in the long-term I thought.

Then my immediate boss (known at Apple as a producer), who had a habit of making personal insults shrouded as jokes to anyone below him, started making direct and indirect insults to me. He started reminding me that my contract wouldn't be renewed if I did or didn't do certain things. He would hover over my back (literally) like a boss out of Dilbert and press me to finish some mundane design task that he felt urgently needed to be examined. He was democratic about his patronizing and rude comments, but it didn't make me feel any better when he directed them towards my team members. I felt more like I was a teenager working at a crappy retail job than a professional working at one of the greatest tech companies in the world.

I tried to tough it out and look at the bright side of things. I was working at Apple with world-class designers on a world-class product. My coworkers had super sharp eyes for design, better than I had ever encountered before. I loved the attention to detail that Apple put into its design process. Every single pixel, screen, feature, and interaction is considered and then reconsidered. The food in the cafe was great, and I

liked my new iPad Air. But the jokes, insults, and negativity from my boss started distracting me from getting work done. My coworkers that stood their ground and set boundaries seemed to end up on a shit list of sorts and were out of the inner circle of people that kissed the producer's ass. I started to become one of those people that desperately wanted Friday evening to arrive, and I dreaded Sunday nights. Few of my friends or family wanted to hear that working at Apple actually wasn't so great. They loved to say, "Just do it for your resume." or "You have to be the bigger man." or "You just started. You can't leave yet."

This morning I got up a bit later than usual, and I missed the one Apple bus that stops by my house. I ended up driving to work in slow traffic. I was thankful I didn't have to drive every day. But I was still thinking that I'd rather be taking my daughter to her preschool like I did on some mornings before I started at Apple. I got into work and immediately had to go to another meeting. It went fine, and then I got back to my desk. Without so much as a hello, my boss hit me with another weird low-blow insult wrapped up nicely as a joke. I tried to ignore it and get back to work, and I realized I just couldn't focus at all on my job. I was too caught up thinking about how I should deal with the situation. Should I put in my notice? Could I make it to the end of my contract? Could I switch to a different team? How could I find a new job if I was always stuck in Cupertino? Maybe I should bop my punk boss in his nose? No don't do that, Jordan.

Then at lunch time I wiped the iPad data clean, put the files I had been working on neatly on the server, left all their belongings on my desk, and I got in my car and drove home. I left a message for my boss and told him he's the worst boss I had ever encountered in my entire professional career and that I could no longer work under him no matter how good Apple might look on my resume. The third party company that contracted me is furious because I've jeopardized their relationship with Apple, and of course they feel that I've acted highly unprofessionally by walking out. I'm not really proud of myself for doing that, and I do feel terrible for destroying the long relationship I had with the recruiter who helped me land the interview. This is all an especially difficult pill to swallow because I was so excited to work for Apple. I'm not sure if this will haunt me or not, but all I know is that I wanted to work at Apple really bad, and now not so much.

*Edit. Many people have noted that I should have reached out to HR. It's debatable if it would have helped the situation, but I didn't feel there was anyone to turn to. It was unclear who exactly I even worked for or who I should share my grievances with. I was contracted by one company, yet paid by another contracting company, and then I worked at Apple. To this day, I never once encountered anyone from HR while at Apple, as I wasn't technically employed by them. Also, as I stated, the coworkers who spoke out against my boss seemed to be ostracized from his inner circle. I didn't want to be on his shit list too. Furthermore, I mistakenly believed that I should just suck it up and take it one day at a time. But I reached a breaking point and ended up leaving in a way that I did not plan on.