



HOW TO INTERVIEW TO CULTIVATE AN OFFER

COMPANY STAGES OF INTERVIEWS

- Recruiters select resumes using key word search (mostly)
- Screening calls for ~ 20 applicants
- Choose 5-10 for in person interviews
- Multiple layers of interviews
- (HR, HM, technical, team, peers, blessing)
- Narrow down to 2-3 candidates
- Reference checks
- Offer made and negotiated (No. 2 held in limbo)

PREPARE, PREPARE, PREPARE

- Prepare to answer 3 key positioning statements:
 - Tell me about yourself
 - Exit question (Why'd you leave your company? Why are you in the marketplace?)
 - 2 part answer – short why and then a sales pitch
 - Salary question
 - salary.com, payscale.com (free report), internet search, salary reports
 - salary: give and get
- Prepare 30-40 Accomplishment Stories to support your resume and the job ad
 - PARM = Problem, Action, Result, Means to employer)
- Prepare a Goodness of Fit document

WHEN CALLED FOR A VIRTUAL OR IN-PERSON INTERVIEW

Gather important information

- Outshine your competition: position yourself in the “best” time – late in the process
- Name, title, relationship to hiring process for each interviewer
- Look up people on LI
- Duration of each interview, especially for HM
- Stages and deadlines for hiring process
- Behavioral interview?
- Copy of job description?

Virtual Interviews

- Be sure to have a professional background or blur your background (on Zoom, video, drop down menu)
- No squeaky chairs
- No kids, noise, barking dogs
- Look at the camera at the top of your screen, not the screen
- Have your face well lit from the front
- Practice beforehand

In-Person Interviews

- Be professionally dressed for your role
- Arrive early to settle in and eaves drop in on the culture
- Offer a fresh copy of your resume on nice resume paper
- Bring a stocked lap portfolio:
 - Company info
 - Copies of resume that got you the interview
 - Up to 2 Cheat Sheets
 - References (**don't** offer them)
 - Business cards
 - Work samples?

Behavioral Interviews - Structured questions to confirm your competencies

- Non-friendly, non-rapport building interview
- Often conducted by HR (or questions embedded by others) with check list of questions and prescribed answers
- Questions often focus on personal competencies not just professional: problem solving, conflict resolution, stress management, decision making, goal setting
- Backward looking - answer in past tense (PARM stories will help)
- "Describe a situation when you disagreed with your boss. What did you do and what was the result?"

Launching the Interview

As you're settling in:

- Confirm time available for interview
- Chat a little to develop rapport
- Do a little gift giving – "I brought you a fresh copy of my resume" (on nice paper)
- Position your Cheat Sheets
- Put HM's name and A, B, C and Ds of the job on your portfolio pad
- Don't talk about yourself much until the Hiring Manager has described job to you "Bill, before we proceed could you tell me how *you* see the job? What are my **key duties**, what **challenges** will I face, and what do you **want me to accomplish** in the first 3 to 6 months?"
- **Ask for the job for the first time** – "That's great Bill, that's the kind of work that I find exciting."

Navigating the Interview

- Focus on the A, B, Cs and Ds to cultivate an offer
 - A and Bs vs A, B, C, D, E and F
- Answer **all** questions positively:
“I bring a solid 3 years . . .”
- Weakness: small business issue, learned how to handle it, but could benefit from getting more practice to improve
- **Be prepared** for the possibilities:
 - Why should I hire you?
 - What’s your ideal job?
 - Where do you want to be in . . .
- Managing Group/Team interviews
- Handling Irrelevant Questions
- **Ask for the job again midway** – “The more I hear Bill, the more exciting this gets. This is the kind of work that I excel at.”

Closing the Interview

In last 10-15 minutes of interview

- Summarize how well you fit their job
- Ask how he/she sees your fit
- Overcome objections
- **Ask for next step or for the job** – “This is the kind of work that I excel at and I have a sense that you and I will work well together. (Choose your ending: I understand that the next step is to meet with the team, when can I do that? or I hope that you’ll chose me as your final candidate. Just let me know when I can start.”)
- Closing a Team Interview - Once I’m hired, what can I do to make your job easier?”
- Send thank you note 36 hours later – tell A, B, Cs and Ds you’ll help with and ask for the job

Blessing Interview

- May be short or an interrogation
- **Ask for the job**
- Report back to the HM
- Manage work samples carefully

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I make my workbook, *The Road to Job Search Success*, available to job seekers at a discount for only \$30 including shipping for job seekers. Come to **ME** for it as it is NOT available online.

Feel free to connect with me on LinkedIn, I have millions of contacts to share, and feel free to ask for a free resume review and I’ll tell you how to strengthen your resume.

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