

# Interview Tips for a Hiring Manager



There are dozens of articles on the internet on how to prepare job candidates for an interview. On the other hand, conducting an interview is just as important. Hiring managers should be just as prepared with questions, research, and a positive outlook. Doing so, could help hiring managers achieve a better examination of their candidate.

The following techniques are essential to prepare yourself for conducting an interview:

## Lack of Preparation

Be prepared for your interviews. This includes:

1. Knowledge of the candidate's job history.
2. Customized interview questions that are focused on what you need the candidate to be able to accomplish in the first year to be considered successful.
3. Make sure the interview team is on the same page about the expectations of the successful candidate.

You can't always rely on "what you see is what you'll get.", or just "winging it" to attract the best talent. In-person interviews should be at least 45 minutes but ideally 60 minutes. While this may seem long, you are only viewing your candidate on their best behavior. If you research their job history and historical data before interviewing, you may be able to ask more specific questions to understand the qualities of your candidate.

# Arriving Late

Arriving late is one of the worst things that you can do for a job interview. You are not respecting the candidate's time or effort to apply for the job, not to mention that they are using their earned time off from their current employer to come and meet with you. You may also be cutting into the time for the other members of the interview team.

Remember, the candidate is also deciding if they want to work for your company. If you do not show them respect before they even start the position, then it is unlikely that they will accept your job offer.

Tardiness does not make you seem more important. It makes you seem rude and unorganized.

# Not Asking Relevant Questions

Cater your questions toward the job that you are hiring for and focused on the main duties you need performed. There is no need to dig into areas that will only be 10% of the job when time is limited, and instead focus on the areas that make up the more relevant aspects. You may want to ask them how they would approach a problem they may deal with on the job to learn their thought process.

## **Consider These Question Methods:**

1. Asking a question according to their previous job history or significant achievements.
2. Ask a question that doesn't tell a story but helps you understand their way of thinking.
3. Ask what motivates them in their work.
4. Problem-solving skills or thought process in evaluating a problem or project.
5. How do they prefer to be managed and their expectations for feedback.

Make sure each interview question is catered toward their potential position.

# Acting Cold or Impolite

It is surprisingly common for employers to treat interviews like an interrogation. The employer may think that they become more important when they are intimidating. In reality, acting impolite can prevent your candidate from accepting a position with your company, especially if that candidate is employed and was recruited to consider your opportunity, and if the candidate has other offers, these types of actions can push them to accept the other offer, even if yours is better.

Think of it this way. Do you have friends that are cold and impolite? Probably not. Most of us avoid rude people. If we avoid impolite people in our personal lives then your candidate will most likely also avoid that quality in their professional life.

# Not Selling the Company

Candidates with strong experience are in demand and they are interviewing you to see if you are a company/team they would want to join. Sell your company so candidates accept your job offer.

## **Characteristics to Sell:**

1. Interesting or unique products to work on
2. Milestones the company has accomplished and what's next
3. Opportunities for growth and mentoring
4. Supporting continuing education and training
5. Incentive programs and benefits

# Rushing to Conclusions

First impressions can be lasting. Nevertheless, when a hiring manager is performing a job interview, it is important to keep an open mind. It only takes seven seconds to make a first impression. Most of us probably don't even realize that we made the quick judgement, or that any follow up questions tend to be asked in a manner to support our first impression. You should note your first

impression, but don't draw a conclusion about the candidate until the end of the interview.

The following are characteristics that influence the candidate's impressions of you:

1. Failing to Smile
2. Strength of Handshake
3. Introduction
4. Clarity of Speech
5. Eye Contact
6. Attire

These tips require some prior thought, but if you do it right you will have a more effective and consistent interview process and help you end up with a superior employee.

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## **How to Write a Resume that Gets Attention**



### **THE PURPOSE OF YOUR RESUME**

Your resume is your first chance to make an impression on a potential employer. Careful thought should be put into this very important document. Your resume not only informs the employer about your background, but also your

communication style, writing (and spelling) ability, organizational skills, and ability to briefly and concisely convey information.

It is also important to be truthful on your resume. Your industry is smaller than you might think and you may run into people with whom you have worked at other companies. They might even be someone with whom you worked on a project and knows your contributions, or knows someone that has worked with you in the past. Either way, if you have lied or exaggerated about your level of contribution, you will be found out and your reputation ruined. Also, with the number of companies doing background and education verification checks, it isn't worth the humiliation of being caught in a lie and ruining your reputation for solid, quality work. Be proud of your accomplishments and state them honestly.

## **SETTING UP YOUR RESUME FOR MORE IMPACT**

Now, about the layout of your resume: I'm sure you have been told that your resume should only be 1 or 2 pages. That is only partially true. If you have 5 years or less of experience, yes, it should only be a 1-2-pager. If you have more experience than that, you may short-change yourself by trying to keep it to 2 pages. It is better to give your potential employer (or Recruiter) a good idea of what you have done, and are capable of doing, than to have a short resume. Under no circumstances should you go over 4 pages. Beyond that and you risk having your resume find the bottom of the pile to be read "when they have time". The key is to make sure EVERYTHING on your resume sells you to a potential employer, and gives them a clear picture of what you are capable of doing for them.

If you are someone who has done a number of publications or presentations, you can simply state on your resume: "Extensive publication and presentations experience. A detailed list is available upon request", and place it under a heading of "Publications and Presentations".

Most hiring managers and recruiters focus on your most recent 3-5 years of experience. For positions held within that time period, you should make sure to put your most relevant bullet points to describe what you've done. For position beyond the 5 year mark, try to pick the most important 3-5 bullet points to list.

This will help keep your resume more concise without filling it with information that is not as relevant to the reader.

Also try to eliminate any date gaps in your resume. If you have taken an extended leave, or have been unemployed for more than 6 months, you may need to list this time gap on your resume. Many employers become suspicious of big time gaps and may wonder what you are hiding. If they are wondering about these gaps, they are not concentrating on your accomplishments. If what they remember about your resume is that it had “curious” time gaps, you may not fare too well against your competition.

I have collected thousands of resumes during my Recruiting career. Some layouts are very difficult to follow and read, and leave the reader confused about what the job candidate has done, or can do. A chronological resume layout is easier to follow as it uses bullet points to highlight accomplishments and responsibilities. This is the format used by a majority of the people in the market, and is very good, but there are options to help you stand out as well.

A key component to any effective resume is having a “Skills Summary” or “Significant Accomplishments” section at the very top of the first page. This is your chance to shine and get your reader’s attention right off the bat. Most people write their resumes like a job description; listing how they spent time during their days. Employers don’t hire people to come in and spend time, they hire them to get things done and accomplish something. That’s what your resume needs to list.

Anything you can list that had a big impact on your group or company should be listed in your Skills Summary or Significant Accomplishments section. If you streamlined a process, completed a project ahead of schedule, or got a submission in and approved quickly, those are the kind of things a hiring manager wants to know about. You may be uncomfortable bragging about your accomplishments, but if you don’t brag a little, the reader of your resume will never know how good you are.

## **A SLIGHTLY DIFFERENT RESUME**

Using the same chronological layout, you can take it one step further to really give your resume some impact. This extra step is the information we can use as recruiters to really get the attention of the hiring manager, and will set you way

ahead of other resumes/job candidates they are considering.

This is a step using the PPR approach. PPR stands for Project, Participation, and Results. The Projects portion is simply facts about significant projects you've worked on. This part should be pretty easy since that is what resumes are made up of anyway. The Participation portion lists significant, measurable results you personally achieved on these projects in your previous positions, and the Results portion specifies what this project achieved for the company, and let's the potential employer know what you think you can do for them if they hire you, based on what you've done in the past. Here's an example of how that might look.

2007-2010

**Senior Manager, Regulatory/Clinical Affairs, 123 Surgical, San Jose, CA**

Provide leadership for regulatory policy and strategy through example, guidance, internal communication, follow-up and verification for corporate operations and operations of corporate partners. Formulate global clinical development plans, monitor clinical trials and manage the Clinical Research Department.

*Project*

*My Role*

*Results*

Develop content for regulatory filings, ensuring quality of content, approving minor or routine submissions and meeting predetermined timelines for all submissions.

Consistently met all deadlines

*Project*

*My Role*

*Results*

Manage Clinical Trials

Responsible for all facets of development including discovery, development and clinical trials

CTrial approved by the FDA on the first pass, including 25 sites in the US and 5 in

Europe; enrollment completed 9 months ahead of schedule.

By doing this you are answering the basic question of the hiring manager that is at the core of the entire interviewing process: What's in it for me? The potential employer is looking at your resume to decide what's in it for them to bring you on board. The hiring manager is trying to fill a position to solve a problem they have, and they are looking at your background and capabilities to see if you are someone that can help them accomplish the goals they have for their department. That's what's in it for them.

As the process continues, and you learn more about the opportunity, you can determine what's in it for you. Once you get in the door to interview, you can learn a lot more about the company, culture, and people you would be working with. This information can turn a pretty good opportunity into a great one, or let you know it might not be quite right for you. But unless you can get in the door to interview, and eventually get an offer, you will never know what's in it for you.

As Recruiters, it is our job to present you in the best possible light, and to do a first stage screening to make sure you have the background the employer is looking for. That is a service we provide our client companies, and they have come to expect from us. Your resume is still a very key component. We can give our contacts within the company a lot of detailed information about you to entice them to look further at your background, but resumes get passed internally to other members of the interviewing team to see if it's worth bringing you in. Since we are not part of these conversations, your resume needs to stand on its own.

One last note. You should also review your social media accounts to make sure there is nothing on them that a potential employer may see and get a negative impression of you. You can either delete the material that may give a bad impression, or change your settings as to who has access to view your account. Employers are increasingly checking social media pages of job applicants to get a better idea of the individual.

We hope this information and the following sample resume is helpful in giving you the best resume possible to help you advance in your career. If you ever have any questions, please feel free to contact us.



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# Interview Preparation: Don't Talk Yourself Out of a Job



It can be difficult in an interview to determine how much information the interviewer is looking for when they ask a question. If you talk too much, that can work against you. If you talk too little, they feel they really have to pry information out of you, and that reflects badly on you as well.

There are two ways to answer interview questions: the short version and the long version. When a question is open-ended, I always suggest to job candidates that they say, "Let me give you the short version. If we need to explore some aspect of the answer more fully, I'd be happy to go into greater depth, and give you the long version."

The reason you should respond this way is because it's often difficult to know what type of answer each question will need. A question like, "What was your most difficult assignment?" might take anywhere from thirty seconds to thirty minutes to answer, depending on the detail you choose to give.

Therefore, you must always remember that the interviewer is the one who asked the question. So you should tailor your answer to what he or she needs to know, without a lot of extraneous rambling or superfluous explanation. Why waste time and create a negative impression by giving a sermon when a short prayer would do just fine?

Let's suppose you were interviewing for a regulatory management position, and

the interviewer asked you, “What sort of regulatory experience have you had in the past?”

Well, that’s exactly the sort of question that can get you into trouble if you don’t use the short version/long version method. Most people would just start rattling off everything in their memory that relates to their regulatory experience. Though the information might be useful to the interviewer, your answer could get pretty complicated and long-winded unless it’s neatly packaged.

One way to answer the question might be, “I’ve held regulatory positions with three different medical device companies over a nine-year period. Where would you like me to start?”

Or, you might simply say, “Let me give you the short version first, and you can tell me where you want to go into more depth. I’ve had nine years experience in regulatory affairs with three different companies that had three very different types of medical devices, and held the titles of Specialist, Senior Specialist, and Manager. What aspect of my background would you like to concentrate on?”

By using this method, you convey to the interviewer that your thoughts are well organized, and that you want to understand the intent of the question before you travel too far in a direction neither of you wants to go. After you get the green light, you can spend your interviewing time discussing in detail the things that are important, not whatever happens to pop into your mind.