

Don't Blow It

Master the 5 Stages of the Interview Process

Increase your odds of getting the job offer you want by becoming a Master of the 5 Stages of the Interview Process.

It's time to put your best foot forward!

“**Success is a journey,
not a destination.**”

- Arthur Ashe



Your main goal may be to land the job, but don't get frustrated if you find that it is a longer process than you anticipated.

This e-book is designed to help you figure out where you are in the process and keep you on the path to landing a great job.

Stage #1:

Know Your Motivators

Pinpoint Your “Why”

Your “why” is the compass that will guide you down the most relevant path for your success. Without knowing *why* you are looking, you won’t be clear on your true motivators for getting a new job. If you aren’t clear, then you may be tempted to take the wrong job, or you may find yourself in the same situation you were trying to escape.

Be honest with yourself and don’t get distracted by a higher salary or fancy title if the role doesn’t actually align with your career goals.

Top 6 reasons for changing jobs: CLAMPS

Challenge: Have you accomplished everything you can in your current role or hit a wall professionally?

Location: Do you want to relocate to be closer to family, or need to shorten your commute?

Advancement: Do you have limited growth potential in your current company? What does your career path look like?

Money: We are all motivated by money but it is not usually a good idea to move *just* for a higher salary. Are you being compensated in a way that reflects the value you bring to your company?

People: This is the number one reason people make job changes. Do you have leaders that enable you and believe in your career development?

Security: Security is a relative term, but markets change quickly (think Blockbuster or selling the Sunday Paper) and you want to be ahead of the curve. If you can tolerate higher risk, there will likely be opportunity for higher reward. Know your risk tolerance and be realistic about when it’s time to explore other options.

Stage #2:

Get the Phone Interview

It Starts With Your Resume

The purpose of your resume is to pique the manager's interest and get them to want to call you. It shouldn't tell your whole life story!



The average resume is only looked at for 6 seconds before a decision is made!

The most common reasons people don't get a call:

- **It was too long:** Your resume should highlight your strengths and generate interest. If your resume is more than 2 pages long, you will put them to sleep.
- **You didn't proofread it:** Even if you think it looks finished, take a closer look. Better yet, have a friend review it for you. Spelling and grammatical errors can be enough to take you out of the running.
- **No contact info:** Make it easy for them to reach you. Also, make sure you have a professional email. While studmuffin@hotmail.com might be cute, it won't get you an interview. Usually.
- **It doesn't share your results:** Your resume should do more than outline what you were responsible for. Highlight some actual results and accomplishments that you've achieved.
- **Too much fluff:** More often than not, pictures, borders, and bright colors can be too distracting. Many HR professionals won't even consider you if your resume has a picture on it.

Stage #3:

Get the Face-to-Face Interview

Phone Interview: Gain Insight

Despite what you may think, the phone interview is NOT about you. Your main objective here is to gain a little insight on the company, and make them want to continue the conversation in person. They want to get an idea of who you are and if you will be a cultural fit for the company.

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- **The obvious:** Make sure your phone is charged and you have a distraction free zone.
- **Share relevant successes:** Make sure that you have some understanding of the role and company prior to the call, so that you can talk about relevant successes that you have and convey the value you can bring.
- **Ask for the job:** Since they can't see the excitement on your face, be sure to express your interest verbally. Be direct, with a statement like, "I am very interested in moving forward in the process." If you're interested, there should be no question as to whether or not you want to move forward.
- **Ask great questions:** Ask about their challenges, growth plans, or other business questions. Do not ask about money or vacation time in the first interview..



Stage #4:

Seal the Deal

Congratulations, you've made it to the face-to-face interview!

Remember the following DO's and DON'TS to seal the deal.



Interview Do's

- Research the company, culture, history, and people you will be meeting with.
- Be prepared to discuss the value you can bring and why you are an incredible fit for that particular role.
- Dress professionally.
- Have a few solid questions in mind that will help shed light on whether this is the right opportunity for you.
- Always bring a copy of your resume.

Interview Don'ts

- Underdress: even if you know the company culture is somewhat casual, you are there to stand out, not to fit in. Iron your shirt and wear a jacket if appropriate.
- Swear: Sometimes the interviewer will use informal language and/or throw out a curse word just to test your reaction.
- Drink: If your interview is at dinner and the interviewer orders a drink, you may be acceptable to have one too. Just don't get *too* comfortable. When in doubt, order coffee.



Let's Talk Money! ...or not...

Whatever you do, don't bring up salary expectations in the first interview. That is much too early, and doing so may lead an interviewer to believing that you care much more about money than you do about finding a meaningful career opportunity.

If they asks about a desired salary you can say something like:

"Compensation is definitely an important factor, but it isn't the most important part of my decision. I am looking for an opportunity where I can do x, y, and z."

Know what you're worth and what you're looking for, but wait until after you have established your value before getting into a detailed conversation about salary, benefits, etc.

Stage #5:

Resign Gracefully

Saying Goodbye

- Once you've accepted your new job, you will want to exit your current position without burning any bridges.
- **Be prepared for the counteroffer.** For some a great read on counteroffers and exit strategies, [check out our blog post "Resign Gracefully."](#)





There can be a lot of moving parts when it comes to landing that job. That's why it's so important to understand what part of the process you are in and what your goal is for that particular stage.

Remembering the 5 Stages will keep you focused and clear on what expectations the hiring manager has at every stage.

If you want to be the first to get great content on making successful career moves, [sign up for our Job & Blog Alerts.](#)

“The only way to do great work is to love what you do. If you haven't found it yet, keep looking. Don't settle.”

-Steve Jobs