



## Job Interview Objectives



**Let's start from the beginning.** Why is this interview happening? What are the objectives of the interviewer and what goals should you set for yourself?

The hiring manager has a job opening and wants to find someone who can step in and excel, a star performer who is also a team player.

You, the job seeker, are looking for a position that is a perfect fit -- challenging, financially rewarding and a significant step forward in achieving your career goals.

The two of you will come together for one brief meeting to decide: Is the chemistry right? Are you meant for each other?

That's a lot of pressure for a 30-60 minute job interview. How do you make the best possible impression during this short, often uncomfortable, discussion with a complete stranger?

It helps to know your audience – who is this person across the desk from you and what is he or she looking for?

## **What the employer wants**

Most job candidates fail to think much about the employer's perspective. They're too busy obsessing about their own qualifications, resume gaps, strengths, and weaknesses.

You can stand out from the crowd by taking some time to consider the situation from the employer's point of view.

The company has a job opening and the person interviewing you wants to hire someone who meets the qualifications for the job and will perform well in the role, as well as being pleasant to work with.

If you're lucky enough to make it past the first interview (often with a recruiter or human resources representative), you are likely to meet with multiple people in different roles within the organization who all have different criteria in determining who to hire.

### **External Recruiter**

An external recruiter wants to make sure that you're worth sending in to meet his client. If you blow the interview, the recruiter looks bad and that may jeopardize future recruiting assignments and the recruiter's income.

The recruiter only makes money if you get hired, so he wants you to do well. Don't be afraid to ask the external recruiter questions to better understand the job description and what the company is looking for.

### **Internal Company Recruiter**

The internal company recruiter or human resources representative usually acts as a screener. Is this particular candidate worth the time of the hiring manager(s)? She

wants to make sure that you meet the minimum qualifications and that there aren't any potential deal breakers in your background.

Her job is to pick potential winners and she doesn't want to waste time – hers or her colleagues'. Once this gatekeeper has interviewed you and approved you to meet others, she can be a valuable contact and your main resource for asking questions and following up.

### **Hiring Manager**

The hiring manager will be your boss if you take the position and is likely the primary decision maker regarding who gets hired.

This interviewer will be focused on hiring someone who can make his life easier -- someone who can meet his deadlines, deliver quality work, get along with the team, and make him look good to his bosses.

Naturally, he wants someone qualified to do the job. But he will also be wondering: Can he see himself working well with you? Are you trustworthy and dependable? Will you stick around and perform if he takes the time to hire and train you?

### **Hiring Manager's Boss**

If you are invited to meet the hiring manager's boss, you'll know you're doing well. Your hiring manager's boss will have an important vote on who's hired. She may also be a hands-on manager who will be working directly with you if you're hired.

Her questions are likely to be similar to the hiring manager's, perhaps a bit more big-picture.

### **Potential Direct Report**

You may be asked to meet a potential direct report, someone who will work for you if you're hired. The goal here is to make sure there are no obvious personality conflicts.

This type of meeting can be awkward if the interviewer feels that he has been passed over for the job or has a strong loyalty to another candidate.

Focus on building rapport and showing respect for the current team.

## Other Interviewers

Other interviewers may include managers and peers from other teams and departments.

If these people have been asked to participate in the job interview process, it's likely that you will be working closely with them. Perhaps they represent internal clients or frequent collaborators.

Can they get along with you? Can they count on you to deliver what they need?

## What You Want

You want a job offer or, at the very least, an invitation for another interview. At this stage, that's the #1 goal.

Later, you'll worry about the pros and cons of the position, the benefits, the commute, and the vacation time. Later, there will be time to express doubts about aspects of the position and ask challenging questions.

However, during the initial interviews, it's all about making them love you. You are the perfect fit for this job and you are 100% excited about the opportunity.

Remember that you are the pursuer at this point in the relationship. They are interviewing other candidates and looking for any reason to eliminate contenders. Once a job offer is on the table, you will have the power to negotiate and debate.

That's not to say that you shouldn't take note of potential negatives or concerns. It's true that you will want to interview THEM at a later stage and get all of the information you will need to make an informed decision. Just wait for the right time.