



TIP SHEET

RESEARCH YOUR INTERVIEWERS: UNDERSTAND THEIR NEEDS PART 1

When you step into the world of interviews as a business professional, it's essential to recognize that different interviewers come with unique needs and motivations. These needs influence their decisions, guiding them towards either advancing your candidacy or potentially rejecting it.

In your job search journey, you will typically encounter three primary types of interviewers:

- 1. The Recruiter (HR Professional):** Recruiters are gatekeepers. Their goal is to meet the needs of the hiring manager by identifying the best candidates to move forward in the hiring process. They aim to ensure that candidates align with the organization's culture, values, and basic qualifications. Recruiters look for professionalism, interpersonal skills, and a general sense of whether you'll be a harmonious addition to the team.
- 2. The Hiring Manager (Future Boss):** The hiring manager holds the key to the final hiring decision and is your potential future boss. Their motivation revolves around identifying candidates who not only meet the job requirements but also bring value and growth potential to the team. They seek individuals who can drive results, solve problems, and contribute to the company's goals. Hiring managers are also looking for positive attitudes, self-awareness, and culture fit.
- 3. Teammates or Peers:** Some interviews may involve interactions with future colleagues or team members. Their motivation centers on assessing your compatibility with the existing team dynamics. They want to ensure you can collaborate effectively, communicate well, and bring a positive dynamic to the group. When facing peer interviews, it's crucial to showcase your teamwork and interpersonal abilities.



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To understand the needs of each interviewer further, here are the key questions that each type of interviewer *really* wants to know, but won't always outright ask you.

The Recruiter (HR Professional):

1. Are you truly interested in this job?
2. Will you accept the job if offered?
3. Will you stay long term?
4. Do you understand what our culture is like, and will you like it?

The Hiring Manager (Future Boss):

1. Will you provide value to our team? or will you be a strain on our resources?
2. Will you grow with our company?
3. How will you adapt to change and unforeseen circumstances?
4. Can I trust you to get the job done well?
5. Can you self-manage? Are you self-motivated? Are you self-sufficient?

Teammates or Peers:

1. Will you get things done on your own? or will you need a lot of help?
2. Are you difficult to work with?
3. Are you communicative?
4. Will you be a good fit (work style, attitude, team player)?

Understanding the distinct needs of these interviewers is the key to making a lasting impression. Each individual is seeking something different when evaluating you, and by tailoring your responses and approach to these needs, you can increase your chances of interview



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RESEARCH YOUR INTERVIEWERS: ASK THE RIGHT QUESTIONS

You'll want to make sure that you're asking appropriate questions, based on who you are interviewing with. Here's an overview and some examples.

The Recruiter (HR Professional): Keep your questions high-level. Your questions can be focused on the company or future interviews.

1. What do you and other employees like about working at XYZ company?
2. What are the most critical skills that the hiring manager is looking for in this role?

The Hiring Manager (Future Boss): You can get more detailed with your questions with the hiring manager.

1. What will the first 30, 60, and 90 days of this role look like? What are the main goals to be achieved in each of these time periods?
2. What are the qualities of the most successful people in this role?

Teammates or Peers: You can get even MORE detailed with your peers, because they are the ones who know the MOST about what your day-to-day will look like.

1. What is something our department does really well?
2. Tell me about the most critical project the team is working on right now (*then stand out by offering your opinions and solutions*)

Important note about asking your own questions:

Don't become attached to your pre-determined list of interview questions. As the interview progresses, take notes and ask follow-up questions about the topics you discuss to show your interest and curiosity



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RESEARCH YOUR INTERVIEWERS: CONNECTING ON LINKEDIN

Once you know the name of your interviewer, find them on LinkedIn.

Review their profile. Take special note of their...

- **Career path** - how long they've been with the current company and where they've worked before.
- **Interests** - see if you have any interests in common. Bring these up during the interview to facilitate connection.
- **Activity** - any posts or comments made.

Then, send a connection request. Introduce yourself and state your purpose for sending the connection.

Keep it simple, and do not ask for anything at this point, we're just connecting. Let them take the over the conversation if they chose to do so.

Here's an example of a candidate named Emily reaching out to her interviewer, Sean:

"Hi Sean, my name is Emily and I am going to be interviewing with you next Wednesday for the Operations Manager role. Feel free to take a look over my profile and let me know if you have any questions. Thank you!"

Note that some companies have policies around connecting with candidates prior to them being hired. If they do not accept your connection request, do not take it personally.