

Four Ways to Get Hired Faster

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Article Published in MSN Careers – CareerBuilder.com

The difference between being proactive and reactive is time. Reactive people wait for things to happen to them, while proactive people go out and make things happen. Timing is key in any career move, so it is up to you to make things happen. Be proactive and professional, and you will find yourself in the mix come decision time. A typical hiring process takes anywhere from three to eight weeks, depending on the policies of the company and the scheduling that must take place to get all of the decision-makers aligned. A key to keeping to the shorter end of this three to eight week time frame is to have a thorough picture of the company's hiring process. If you are working with a recruiter, get the details from him or her. If you are going it alone, ask the following questions during the initial telephone interview: "When do you need this position filled?" "Can you describe for me your last successful hire?" "What is the process and time between each step, so I can get a clear picture of what to expect going forward?" Once you are aware of the process, you can set your expectations accordingly. If you want the job, you must be certain they know it. Let's explore four sure-fire ways to move a hiring process forward as quickly as the company will allow:

1. Provide detailed information & professional references up front.

- Supply all required information.
- Be aware of the common candidate red flags and answer the questions before they're asked.
- Have three to five professional references up front to validate your background and experience.
- Whenever possible, provide a recent manager, peer and subordinate to give the most complete picture of your abilities to the new company.

2. Attitude is everything.

- Bring a positive, high energy attitude on every interview. There is no room for a negative presence in an organization. Once you have given that impression, it most likely will not go away.
- Be positive and proactive, and close each step of the process with enthusiasm. "I'm very interested in learning more about this exciting opportunity. What's the next step?"

3. Research the company & prepare for the interview.

- Get your facts and figures straight. Nothing is more impressive than knowing the inner workings, products, people, mission, vision and goals of an organization.
- Realize that your interviewing skills and your ability to perform the job are two very different things. You'll need both to get the offer.
- Write out questions that you need answers to before accepting an offer.

- Role-play your responses to standard and behavioral-based interview questions.
- Thoroughly review the company's Web site and any recent articles written by its leaders.

4. Immediate, professional follow up.

- Be certain they know you're interested. As soon as it is possible, send a handwritten thank-you note and a personalized e-mail message to every person with whom you interviewed.
- The written word has somehow gotten lost in the electronic age. Differentiate yourself and send a note card in the mail either that same day or the next day.
- Avoid a "cookie-cutter" e-mail, and take the time to personalize each message to the team that interviewed you.

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