

Second Interview Strategy

Rarely, if ever, will employers base hiring decisions on a single encounter with prospective candidates. Second meetings are usually held to obtain clarifying information, secure additional staff input and to make sure the "personality" match is appropriate.

- Generally, the same principles that apply to the initial interviews apply to all subsequent meetings. *You should, however, have gleaned sufficient information from your first meeting to enable you to make the match an even stronger one.* Therefore you're your first interview you must be certain that you understand the problems and issues the hiring manager is facing. Questions like "**What business problems keep you awake at night?** or **What will be the measurements of my success in this position?**" will provide you with information to understand the real issues the manager is facing. Armed with this information, you then plan to respond specifically in the second interview with illustrations of a) how your qualifications will contribute to solutions, b) use illustrations (S-T-A-R) as to how you have successfully faced similar issues in your working history.
- Show with your portfolio of past work accomplishments illustrations of your success with similar or related issues.
- Prepare a draft of a work plan that you would undertake to deal with these issues in your first six months on the job. Read further the article "Start Work after the Interview" and review the "Interview Presentation."

Additionally, it is far more likely that serious discussions about money, time frames, relocation, references, etc., will be discussed. Consequently, you should be prepared to handle these questions. Once again, planning and preparation are the keys.

If you've been successful in your interview efforts there will come a point when the interviewer will attempt to "sell" the job and the company to you. At this point, as the buyer, you're in the driver's seat. You need to be absolutely sure that you're making an intelligent decision in your best interests, both short and long term. One way to do that is by asking protective questions.

Sample Protective Questions

Protective questions are designed to:

1. Give you the information you need to make an informed decision.

2. Keep you from making a bad decision.

Here are some protective questions:

What happened to the last person who held this position?

Who must approve my decisions?

To whom does the position report?

How and when is performance evaluated?

To what position might I progress based on successful performance in this assignment?

What is the career track within the company?

What is the company's termination policy?

What is the company's policy with respect to tuition assistance, military leave, maternity leave, etc.?

The answers to many of these questions may be provided during the course of the interview.