

THE FINAL INTERVIEW

POWER INTERVIEWING

PROFESSOR P



Preparing People for a Competitive Workforce.



The final interview establishes that the company is interested in you and that you are likely their top choice. However, while congratulations are definitely in order, you still have a few hurdles to jump before you get the job offer. That includes the background check, the personality test, doing your due diligence, and most importantly, the “Come to Jesus” conversation. In other words, you still have a long way to go, but the finish line is in sight.

There are four things you must accomplish before taking the job

When you fill out the employment application, assuming the company will conduct a background check is safe. Please ensure the hiring manager or human resource executive has your complete resume, and confirm that all the information you sent them is accurate. Today, background checks are becoming more and more stringent, and companies are running them earlier in the interview process.

Disclose any background issues before the company finds them

If you have any background issues, disclose that before the firm runs the background check. This goes for bankruptcy, bad credit issues, DUIs, DWIs, or even being fired from a previous job. Call the hiring manager or human resources manager before you apply. Explain the issue that they might find as they conduct their background check. Tell them you can also provide a written summary and documentation surrounding the incident. You will be shocked at how forgiving hiring managers and human resources professionals can be.

We *all* make mistakes. In most cases, the firm will appreciate your honesty and ignore the issue. However, assuming they will not find what you are trying to hide, you are wrong!

If you need to fill out an application before you even interview, you provide a written summary of the issue and attach it to your application. Some will argue that doing this will eliminate your candidacy from the start. This might be true, but taking the time to fill out the application and conduct lengthy interviews while simultaneously hoping you outsmarted the firm is a fool's errand.

The background checks used today are more sophisticated than ever. For example, it used to be standard procedure for a firm to ask you to provide personal and professional references. Today, you need to be prepared for the company to source references *on its own*.

Do a background check on the company.

When you fill out the employment application, it's safe to assume the company will conduct a background check. If the company is willing to do an extensive background check on you, why not do the same on the company? You would be shocked at how many people go to work for a company and do little to no due diligence.



Researching them on LinkedIn is a great way to get intel on a firm. Find people who worked for the company or held the same position you are pursuing. Go to your LinkedIn account and hit the search bar. Hit the “search people” button and the “all filters” option. Enter the name of the company where you are applying to the “past companies” option. Try to find employees who worked for the firm and held the same position for which you are applying. Send them a LinkedIn invite and ask what they experienced while working for the firm. Ask them about the hiring manager and the firm’s culture. Do your homework! Just as you would hire a home inspector to ensure the house you are about to buy does not have a leaky roof, you want to make sure the manager you are about to go to work for is not so overbearing that you end up regretting taking the job.

In addition to doing your due diligence, you must be sure you understand the firm’s policies. From email to social networking, to outside business activities, you don’t want to go to work for a firm and then come to find out you got fired for violating a rule you didn’t even know existed.

The Personality Test. One trend that has become ubiquitous throughout the final stages of the interview process is the “personality test.” Companies are using them more and more. While personality tests have been a part of the hiring process for many years, an unsettling trend has developed. Companies are *eliminating* candidates based on test results! It used to be that you could have a great series of interviews, and the personality test was just a formality. Now the tests can determine if you get the job or not. The candidate who has successfully navigated the interview process and has all the right skills and qualifications is no longer assured of getting the job.



***You can have a great series of interviews
and still get eliminated by the personality test***

Conversely, if you get asked to take the personality test, it's a clear sign that the firm views you as a top prospect. Companies typically only ask a select group of candidates to complete the test.

When a company decides to use a personality test, they go through a long process of gearing the tests around the key traits they seek. Still, overall, they are measuring the natural competencies of each of us. For example, everyone believes that they have a high level of dependability and responsibility. In addition, every employer wants to hire a candidate with a sense of ambition and, ultimately, an individual who will follow through. Finding the traits distinguishing a natural match requires generating and analyzing a behavioral profile.

***The assessment will determine
your core competencies.***

The personality test is designed to highlight your core competencies. The test will quickly determine how you operate both personally and professionally. For example, the assessment will identify if you're naturally more cerebral versus noncerebral.

In addition, the assessment may identify if you are motivated by money, knowledge, human interaction, results, etc. Meanwhile, the company has gone through a lengthy process with the firm that runs the assessment. They have geared the test to see if your skill sets and motivations match those they believe will be needed to be successful at the job. There is no right or wrong answer, yet the test has been predetermined.

For example, let's say the company has one sales position that has a short sales cycle and allows for buyers to make fast decisions. In another position, the sales cycle might be as long as six to eight months. The right set of attributes for the first position will be different than the temperament necessary for the second. For the company, the personality test is a way to identify these traits.



ACTIVITY 5.1

TIME: 10 MINUTES (SELF-DIRECTED)

Now there are many behavioral assessments out there. One popular one is the behavior assessment from [The Predicative Index](#). Using [ProssessorP](#), you can take a free assessment and receive feedback during your interview coaching. In total, it takes approximately [six minutes](#) to complete the assessment.

**TAKE THE
ASSESSMENT**

So how should you prepare for the personality test? First of all, don't think of it as a test. Think of it as an assessment. Take the questions thoughtfully and be honest. Nobody knows you better than you know yourself. Often, the most significant mistake people make is overlooking the importance of the test. They rush through it and fail to think through the answers. Ensure you are well-rested and set aside enough time to complete the test.

Manage the expectations of the job right from the start.

Before you work for a company, please ensure you are on the same page as the hiring manager. What goals are they expecting you to hit? How achievable are these goals? Unfortunately, it's not uncommon for a hiring manager to somehow believe you have an "S" for "Superman" tattooed on your chest and possessed the unique ability to stack BB pellets on top of each other. Managing the hiring manager's expectations before taking the job would be best. You might like everyone at the firm and they feel the same, but that's not enough. Have the "Come to Jesus" conversation with the hiring manager, manage expectations, and get on the same page from the beginning. You don't want to be six months into the job and find out things are much different than how they were portrayed in the interview.

Manage the expectations of the job right from the start your core competencies.

You must also beware of the firm that offers you the "Kiss and a Promise." The company might offer to pay you "X," but promise that if you hit all your sales goals and accomplish other various tasks, you will make an additional large sum of money and get promoted. Or, when George retires next year, you will take over some of his responsibilities, leading to more money and a promotion. The fact is, George isn't retired yet. Are you going to take the job because he is retiring? That would be a big mistake.

The bottom line is this: Have the "Come to Jesus" conversation before accepting the job, and watch for the "Kiss and a Promise." Getting off on the right foot is crucial to having a longlasting career with the firm where you choose to be employed.

Before you sign a non-compete, consult your attorney

Just as personality assessments have become more common, so have non-compete contracts. In today's world, non-competes are becoming the norm throughout many industries. Before you sign a non-compete, understand your local state laws and consult your attorney.

In addition to consulting your attorney before you sign a non-compete, try to speak with other employees at the firm to get a read on how the company handles this contract. Some firms will make you sign a non-compete, but they have a track record of not enforcing it. Other firms have a strict policy and will enforce the non-compete to the fullest extent! Do your homework and talk to as many current and former employees as possible. As stated before, be sure also to consult your attorney.

Another issue is that firms are often reluctant to hire a candidate with any active non-compete. Even if the hiring firm is not at risk of litigation, they want to avoid hiring a candidate tied up in litigation. As a result, many firms will ask you upon hire whether you have a non-compete. Be sure to disclose this.

Manage the expectations of the job right from the start.

What are your long-term goals?

Once you are given a job offer, put pen to paper. First, list how this position is a good fit for you. Then list the negatives. Too often, candidates spend most of their time focused solely on the first year's compensation page. Although first year compensation is essential, you must also consider how the job will position your long term. Ask yourself questions like:

- Does the job strengthen your existing client base, expertise, relationships, or "brand"?
- How will the role position you three to five years out? Does this coincide with your long-term career goals?
- If the position does not work out, can you leverage the experience you gained with this position to get another job?

If the position allows you to hit all your subjective goals, the money will likely follow.

