

Randstad Employment Tips

**A “Behind-the-Scenes”  
Look at How Hiring  
Decisions Are Made**



# A “Behind-the-Scenes” Look at How Hiring Decisions Are Made

When it comes to the hiring process, employers and candidates often differ in their thinking. Sometimes jobseekers are so busy thinking about “What’s in it for me?” that they forget employers have their own agendas, too. Let’s review examples from each perspective:

## Different perspectives

You think...	They think...
My job experience comes close to what you’re looking for.	How quickly will you really be able to do this job?
I know exactly what should be done to make this place run right!	How well are you going to fit in with the culture?
You’re only asking for five years of experience—I have ten!	Will you be bored in six months?
I don’t have industry experience, but I’m a fast learner.	How much is it going to cost me to bring you up to speed?
I’m worth a higher salary.	Is your higher salary justified by what you’ll earn the company?
I want a job.	My company needs the best people to succeed!

From the employer’s point of view, hiring talent is a costly, time-consuming task that holds huge potential for errors. After all, hiring the wrong person can affect employee morale, productivity, and company success overall. It is, therefore, important for you, the jobseeker, to:

- Shift from a “What’s in it for me?” perspective
- Understand the “psychology” behind hiring decisions
- Consider what employers really look for in potential hires and focus on how you can meet those needs

Employers evaluate candidates for an open position at several checkpoints along the way—resume and cover letter, interview, follow up and reference check—and each plays a critical role in the screening process. Let’s review both parties’ approach to the process and what you can do to prepare.

What employers do	How you can prepare
Use the hiring process to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weed out candidates who are unqualified</li> <li>• Identify and hire the candidate most likely to be immediately productive and contribute to the bottom line</li> </ul>	Conduct an honest self-audit of work history, skills, education, strengths, and weaknesses.
Use the resume and cover letter to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Determine if a candidate meets qualifications</li> <li>• Identify red flags</li> <li>• Launch a discussion with candidates who land an interview</li> </ul>	Create a resume that can be customized for each job opening to include past accomplishments that reflect the kind of results you could potentially achieve for the employer. Address any gaps in employment or history of job hopping by emphasizing additional training or volunteer work you did during that time period. Review the resume from an employer's viewpoint and mentally prepare yourself to explain such things as frequent career changes and any indication of a lack of career progress or accomplishment.
Use the interview to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confirm facts about work history</li> <li>• Pinpoint strengths and challenges</li> <li>• Predict future behavior</li> <li>• Assess professionalism</li> <li>• Assess verbal and non-verbal communication skills</li> <li>• Determine whether your personality will fit into the company</li> <li>• Further narrow the list of candidates overall</li> </ul>	Do your homework and practice interviewing. Spin your job history for the position. If your career reflects a history of job-hopping, spin it by discussing your ability to easily adapt to different environments and situations. Prepare a short, compelling sales pitch to sell yourself for each job. Be ready to give examples that highlight your capabilities and the skills you bring to the position. Project enthusiasm, confidence, and professionalism.
Look for indications that candidates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are motivated</li> <li>• Are persistent</li> <li>• Are confident</li> <li>• Complete what they start</li> </ul>	Follow up your interview by promptly sending a thank-you note to the interviewer, subtly reinforcing why you are perfect for the job.

The bottom line is that employers will choose the best candidate for the money they have to spend. That means someone who has the right amount of experience (not more, not less) and requires minimal training to be productive immediately. Your goal is to convince the employer at each step in the process that you are the person they should select.

Knowledge is power. Use this information today to determine how you'd score at each checkpoint in the hiring process. Make adjustments in your job-search strategy to win the right job.

## **Other resources**

Local bookstores, libraries, and the Internet have extensive information on the hiring process and how to conduct a successful job search. Look in the careers section, or do online searches using keywords such as "interviewing," "hiring," and "job search."

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