



HAL KRAUSE INTERVIEW "PLAYBOOK"

BEFORE THE INTERVIEW

- 1. Outline the skills, experience/characteristics you would like to find in the recruit you hire.

- 2. Outline the responsibilities and functions of the position you seek to fill.

- 3. Review applications (if possible).

- 4. Review resumes and identify resume-related questions.

- 5. If aptitude testing is a part of your hiring process, make plans for it to occur after the interview.

- 6. Encourage applicants to bring a list of references to the interview.

- 7. Schedule an office or conference room where interviews will be conducted, so you have full control over the interview environment.

- 8. Outline all interview questions in advance (see Determination Phase, page 2).

- 9. Consider any personnel success stories that you can use during the Presentation Phase. Who has joined your company recently? What was their background? What impact have they had on the company? How do they feel about the company?

- 10. Do you foresee any significant objections that you should be prepared to address before they are raised by the recruit (e.g. low beginning compensation, new company, unstable industry)?



IN A SURVEY OF INTERVIEW PARTICIPANTS CONDUCTED BY MANAGEMENT REVIEW MAGAZINE, THE #1 PROBLEM WITH THE HIRING PROCESS, AS IDENTIFIED BY JOB APPLICANTS, WAS THAT THE, "INTERVIEWER WAS NOT PREPARED OR FOCUSED."

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THE INITIAL FORMAL INTERVIEW - DETERMINATION PHASE

NOTE:

*Your objective during this phase is to determine whether the recruit is the right person for the job. Use this time to ask questions and listen to the answers you receive. This is **NOT** the time to be talking.*

1. Ask questions that relate to qualifications and experience:

- A. "Tell me about your background."
- B. Ask what, where, when, why and how questions.
- C. Ask best and worst questions.
- D. Ask about best and worst former employers.

2. Ask questions that relate to personal characteristics:

- A. **Important to ask:** "Tell me about your goals and objectives. What do you hope to accomplish in the next 2-5 years?" (Write down their answer. You'll address this later.)
- B. "What is your strongest attribute? Weakest attribute?"
- C. "How would you describe yourself?"
- D. What has been your greatest success?"
- E. What has been your greatest failure?"

3. Ask questions that relate to the recruit's resume or application. One aim of this step is to identify whether there were any problems with the employee in their previous jobs.

If you determine that the recruit **is not** a good fit for the company or the position, terminate the interview now.

"I'm grateful that we've had a chance to get acquainted. The facts are that we have other candidates or applicants whose qualifications and experience are more in line for the job for which we're hiring than your own. If we don't find the person we're looking for, and if we determine it would be mutually beneficial for us to get back together, we'll give you a call. Thank you for your time."

If you determine that the recruit **could be a good fit**, continue to the Presentation Phase of the Initial Formal Interview.



"NEVER HIRE SOMEONE DURING THE INITIAL FORMAL INTERVIEW. YOU WANT THEM TO COMPETE FOR THE JOB, TO THINK ABOUT IT, AND TO WORRY ABOUT GETTING IT."

- HAL KRAUSE

THE INITIAL FORMAL INTERVIEW - PRESENTATION PHASE

Explain the “We sell you, you sell us” philosophy

[INSERT NAME], we work on a basis where we’re going to be trying very hard to sell you on us, on the benefits of being involved with us, on why this might be a great move for you. But then we turn things around, and if you’re sold on us, it becomes your responsibility to sell us on you, to sell us that you are the right person for the job and that we should hire you instead of one of the other people that you’re competing with for this position.”



If the issue of compensation is raised before you’re ready to address it:

“NAME, the reason we haven’t talked about compensation yet is because we know our compensation package is heavy enough that if everything else is right, it’s more than right. But if everything else isn’t right, it really doesn’t make much difference, does it?”

NOTE:

Answer questions honestly and directly when they arise to preserve credibility.

- 1. Explain your company background and history (stress the company’s future and stability).

- 2. Talk about employee success stories (these were identified before the interview).

- 3. Outline the reasons for your company’s success

- A. Talk about the strength of your management team (local, national, international)
- B. What makes your products or service special? What sets you apart from the competition?
- C. Explain your company’s training process and how it helps employees to be successful.
- D. Communicate why this job is the right opportunity for someone in a hurry to succeed.

- 4. Explain exactly what is expected of people who join your company.

- 5. Ask for questions (questions raised may reveal areas where they have questions or concerns).

- 6. Address compensation in detail, including such things as pay, medical benefits, profit sharing plan, retirement savings plans, vacation, and travel.

Before you end the Initial Formal Interview, these three objectives must be met:

- 1. All of the recruit’s questions and objections have been answered.
- 2. You have shown how this job opportunity meets the recruit’s objectives for the next 2-5 years (remember you asked this question earlier).
- 3. Confirm that you will be able to hire this person (if you choose) during the next meeting.

To see whether you can hire them during your next meeting, use one of these Trial Closes:

- 1. “Would you like me to tell the manager you’d be reporting to, that you want to be considered for the position?”
- 2. “From what you’ve seen thus far, can you see where you would fit in?”
- 3. “Have you sold yourself on the fact that this would be a good opportunity for you?”

OVERCOMING RECRUITING OBJECTIONS

“I WANT TO THINK IT OVER.” If a recruit is sincere about wanting to think it over, allow them to do so with three provisions: **1.** Establish a definite time frame; **2.** Create a sense of urgency (remind them that others are competing for the job). **3.** Be sure they understand the ground rules (if they don’t provide a positive response by the deadline, they eliminate themselves from further consideration).

“WHY SHOULD I JOIN YOUR NEWER COMPANY, INSTEAD OF A MORE ESTABLISHED FIRM?” *“One of the great things about our company is that we have more big jobs than we have big people. In many of the old established organizations you are going to have to wait around until someone dies or retires to move one more rung up the corporate ladder. We’re interested in someone who wants to move faster than that. Someone who wants to fill a big job in the near term, not years and years down the road.”*

“WHY IS YOUR ENTRY-LEVEL PAY SO LOW?” *“When we structured our compensation program, we made it a little lighter for newcomers and a little top heavy for those who have been with us for a while - those who have shown they are the kind of people we want to build with for the long-run. Now, our approach to compensation might work to your disadvantage for a few months ... but it will work to your great advantage in the long haul. I think the question you need to ask yourself is this - are you making your decision on a short-term or a long-range basis?”*

“YOUR BENEFITS PACKAGE SEEMS LIGHT.” *“There are some organizations that believe in taking care of people from the womb to the tomb. Where do they get the money? They reduce your overall compensation package. They reduce your overall compensation package and they take the money out before you ever get a paycheck, and then they use that money to buy fringe benefits, which they spoon-feed back to you and other employees. Now that is probably acceptable for the average person. But we are not trying to hire average people - we are looking for above-average people; someone who has above-average ability to look after his or her own income. Take yourself, for example. Let me ask you a question. Would you prefer maximum compensation, a program where you receive as much as possible and then choose your own benefit package, or would you rather have the company cut back on your income and make those decisions for you?”*



REMEMBER:
You never hire during the Initial Formal Interview

CLOSE THE RECRUITING SALE

1. Remind the recruit of the “We sell you, you sell us” philosophy you mentioned earlier.
2. Try an **INITIAL CLOSE** (SEE PAGE 3): “Why do you think that joining our organization would be a good move and not just for you, but for us?”
3. Respond to questions, overcome objections and then try a **FOLLOW-UP CLOSE**:
“You’ve sold us, are you sold on the job or do you need to hear more about it?”
4. Address their questions and then use one of these **WRAP-UP CLOSES**:

THREE-QUESTION WRAP-UP CLOSE: *“I’d like to ask you three questions. First, have I now answered all of your questions? Second, can you see where you would profit from and grow through an association with us? Third, doesn’t it make sense to start now?”*

CAMERA CLOSE: *“We have a company policy that we always take a picture of new employees for our personnel department. Would you like me to call in the people who take the picture?”*

MINOR DECISION CLOSE: *“We issue new people a policies & procedures manual. Shall I get one for you?”*

WINSTON CHURCHILL CLOSE (for dealing with procrastinators): *“Winston Churchill once said, ‘just as the sun never sets on the British Empire, the sun is never going to set on the decision which I have the knowledge and ability to make.’ I’d like to suggest that we are in a similar situation. If you have any unanswered questions, let’s answer them. One of the reasons for Churchill’s greatness is that he was decisive. I think you’ll agree that it’s time that we also come to a decision, isn’t it?”*

WALTER CHRYSLER CLOSE: *“Walter Chrysler once said there is far more profit lost by indecision than wrong decision. He said, ‘When I have the information, I decide.’ Now, my question to you is, do you have the information? And if the answer is yes, I think you’ll agree it’s time to decide.”*

OUT-OF-TOWN RECRUIT CLOSE: *“What you are saying is that you want to get away from these circumstances where everything and everyone has been so positive, and you’d like to get back in the sort of environment that you’ve been in, so you can think about it. Is that right? I know that seems logical, but it’s totally illogical. Why? When you get back home, you are going to be around the same old people and the same old circumstances that you have been around so much in the past. On the other hand, if you join us, these are the kind of people and circumstances you are going to be involved in, in the future. And if these are the kind of people, and these are the kind of circumstances that you are going to be involved in, doesn’t it make sense to make your decision when you’re in this kind of an environment?”*

NOTE:
“While many people are afraid to verbally say ‘Yes,’ they are willing to take the job if you can find a way to help them do it, without having to verbalize their response.”
Hal Krause