



*"To care for him who shall have borne the battle and for his widow and orphan..."
- Abraham Lincoln*

WIN THE 2nd JOB YOU REALLY WANT

Since you volunteered your energy & time safeguarding our country; which by-the-by Strategic Consulting Alliances, LLC thanks you for your service; now its time to get you back into the saddle and into the marketplace. To win that job you must excel at presenting your marketable skills and experience to potential employers. In other words you have to be an effective interviewee.

A job interview is enough to make most people nervous; however, it is crucial to overcome any apprehension you may have PRIOR to the interview. Like it or not, the job interview is the primary way both employers and candidates judge each other. The interview process can often become frustrating due to poor selections from both sides of the table. But there are proven ways to get beyond the typical interview and that is what SCA will teach you in this guide to interviewing.

25 WAYS CANDIDATES STRIKE OUT WHEN INTERVIEWING:

A survey of one hundred and fifty-(150) companies, who were questioned as to why they did not hire a qualified applicant, revealed the following answers:

1. Poor personal appearance
2. Lack of interest and enthusiasm
3. Over-emphasis on money
4. Criticism of past employers
5. Failure to have good eye contact with interviewer
6. Limp, "dead fish" handshake
7. Late for the interview
8. Failure to express appreciation for interviewer's time
9. Does not ask enough detailed questions about position
10. Lacks sufficient detail when responding to questions asked by the interviewer
11. Overbearing, over-aggressive, conceited "know-it-all" complex
12. Inability to express oneself clearly
13. Lack of planning for career; no purpose or goals
14. Lack of confidence, ill at ease
15. Lack of factual information
16. Lack of manners, courtesy
17. Lack of maturity
18. Lack of vitality
19. Indecisive
20. Merely shopping around
21. Cynical
22. Lacks a strong work ethic
23. Intolerant

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24. Inability to take criticism / not open to being mentored
25. High pressure type

Prepare Like a Champion:

Unfortunately too many candidates are unprepared to talk about themselves and their accomplishments. You may be dressed for success on interview day but if you can't convince the interviewer "face-to-face" that you are the right person for the position; you won't win the job! It's that simple and that tough!

Practice Interviewing:

Selling yourself to a prospective employer in forty-five (45) minutes can make anyone a bit anxious; even for the most experienced interviewee. However there is a simple way to overcome nerves; just practice interviewing. Ask your spouse, speak with a friend, your recruiter or anyone you trust or call us to provide constructive criticism and conduct a realistic interview. Practice interviewing in a context as close to a real interview situation as you can; video taping the interview is the best because you can 'watch yourself' to see first hand your pro's and con's:

- Give the interviewers your resume.
- Tell them to assume they never met you.
- Play it straight
- After the interview is over, discuss your performance and ask for honest critiques
- Get suggestions on how to improve your presentation

Remember once you start doing real interviews, you will almost never receive candid feedback; other than 'hearing you did not get the job.' So take advantage of the opportunity during this practice stage.

Research the Company:

You know how to 'recon a position,' the same is true for interviewing. Find out as much about the company, history, competitive environment and its future as you can. Use all the intelligence you can muster - friends, associations, church, and most importantly the internet. Candidates who arrive at interviews completely unprepared are remembered for all the wrong reasons. Instead of showcasing their competence and thoroughness; they display a 'wing-it' mentality that doesn't bode well with prospective employers. Most good research begins on the internet. Go to a search engine and conduct a keyword search on the company name. You'll be surprised at the wealth of information you will uncover.

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Do your homework - on the company. Find out as much about the company, its history, its current situation and its future as you can. **Sources:** Your Executive Search Consultant and the Internet - for periodicals and trade journals, articles, annual reports and 10K reports; friends and business associates (keep the position confidential). Be prepared to ask good questions about the company and its direction.

Do your homework - on the position. Have a thorough understanding of the position, its key duties and primary responsibilities, and what is expected. Be prepared to ask good questions: Who has been successful and why? Who has failed and why? Who does the position report to? Who does the position supervise? What needs to be done in the first 6 months; in the first year? Your Executive Search Consultant will be able to provide insight in these areas prior to the interview.

Do your homework - on yourself. Review your career history thoroughly. Review dates, positions, duties and responsibilities, and accomplishments. Know your strengths and weaknesses. Be prepared to ***cite specific examples of accomplishments and how your specific experience can help the company*** solve some of its problems. Concentrate on your most recent positions, but don't neglect your early career. Reflect on your successes, so you can adequately impart your strengths when given the chance!

Rely on Intelligence:

Don't expect the internet to be your only resource; time permitting, you might also want to access the library, government offices, professional associations and especially your recruiter. Ask your representative for materials and resources available to you; many staffing firms can provide comprehensive information to help you prepare for interviews. Also don't be afraid to ask the potential employer to provide you with information that might prove helpful in preparing for the interview. Brochures, annual reports and other marketing materials can be enormously beneficial. Be prepared to ask good questions about the company and its direction:

- Have a thorough understanding of the position; its duties and responsibilities and what is expected.
- Who has been successful and why?
- Who has failed and why?
- Who does the position report to and who does it oversee?
- What needs to be done in the first six months?

A good recruiter will be able to provide insight in these areas prior to the interview.

Other Preparation Techniques:

Clear your mind of other matters before the interview; focus on being a **SEAL**

- ✚ Self-confident

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-  Energetic
-  Assertive
-  Likable

Have in mind what characteristics about yourself you would like to get across in the interview:

Review everything you've done in the past for evidence of these characteristics.

Review each item on your resume and consider whether an interviewer is likely to ask about it, and why:

Formulate messages and information you would want to convey for each entry. Be prepared to address weak spots or gaps in your resume if there are any.

Practice – Practice – Practice:

We did this while on active duty; Actors rehearse their lines/moves; Athletes practice their skills; Salespeople practice their presentations. When you go on a job interview you are performing, competing and selling. You have to rehearse, but be sure you don't memorize each answer word-for-word. Your response should sound natural and conversational, not as though you are reading from a script.

Consider some interviews a rehearsal:

If you are lucky your first interview may not be the job for you; consider it a 'dress rehearsal.' This doesn't mean you don't have to take it seriously; do the best you can. Then critique your performance afterward. Identify your weak spots, determine what you need to do to improve and go to your next interview a much more polished winner!

Have in mind questions that are important for you to get answered at this stage of the interview process.

Dress for Success: Be sensible about how you dress. Many experts on interviewing give countless tips on what to wear; which colors to shy away from; what to carry, etc, etc. The real rule for how to dress and what to carry is to use 'common sense.' If you are still unsure about the most appropriate attire for an interview, ask your spouse, friends, and recruiter or call us to help you make the right decisions. In case you were wondering what to wear:

MEN:

- ▶ A conservative suit in dark blue or dark gray, with a long-sleeved white shirt. The tie should be conservative but in-style. Dark socks (over-the-calf) with dark, freshly

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shined shoes. (Do not deviate from this unless specifically discussed with your Executive Search Consultant!)

- ▶ Jewelry should be limited to a wristwatch and wedding ring.
- ▶ Fingernails should be clean and trimmed.
- ▶ Facial hair should be clean-shaven.
- ▶ Cologne should be kept to a minimum.
- ▶ Overall look neat and clean and please ensure your shoes are polished.
- ▶ Please do not smoke or chew gum; even if offered.

WOMEN: Women today have a few more options when it comes to career dressing, but similar principles apply. Conservative is still the rule of thumb for interviews.

- ▶ A business suit in a subdued color is best for first interviews. Natural fibers work best. Dress in today's styles, but keep the hemline close to the knee length and keep blouses modest. (Do not deviate from this unless specifically discussed with your Executive Search Consultant!)
- ▶ A conservative dress or suit is fine for additional interviews.
- ▶ Hosiery should be worn at all times, regardless of weather conditions. Shoe heel height should be moderate and comfortable - shoes should be freshly polished. If heel tips are worn get them replaced - so you do not click as you walk.
- ▶ Jewelry should be minimal and in good taste; dangling jewelry creates distraction.
- ▶ Nails should be well manicured and polished in clear or light, **conservative** colors. If long nails are a part of a personal fashion statement, avoid bright colors and glittered accents for interviewing.
- ▶ Hairstyle will vary with each individual. Long hair/pull back; Short hair/neat.
- ▶ Make-up should be tastefully and lightly applied.
- ▶ Perfume should be kept to a minimum.
- ▶ Please do not smoke or chew gum; even if offered.

Failure to use common sense in the area of dress is likely to have two effects; neither of which will help you get a job.

1. It may make the interviewer uncomfortable; which most certainly will not be good for you
2. More important; it will mark you as lacking in good judgment; consummating your chance for any job.

Answering Questions:

An interview involves an exchange of information; the following is a list of typical stress questions, followed by some examples of how they might be answered.

- ▶ What are your short-range objectives?
- ▶ What are your long-range objectives?
- ▶ What do you look for in a job?

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- ▶ What is the difference between a good position and an excellent one?
- ▶ Why are you leaving? Why did your business fail?
- ▶ Why did you select my organization to interview with?
- ▶ What can you do for us that someone else cannot do?
- ▶ Why should we hire you?
- ▶ Do you work well under pressure, deadlines, etc.?
- ▶ What is your philosophy of management?
- ▶ How you are best managed?
- ▶ How has your early career or background influenced your progression and current management style?
- ▶ How has your management style changed over the years?
- ▶ What salary are you seeking and why?
- ▶ What are the most important rewards you expect in your career?
- ▶ What are your five biggest accomplishments in your present or last job? Your career?
- ▶ What is your biggest strength? Weakness?
- ▶ What business, credit or character references can you give us?
- ▶ What qualifications do you have that make you think you will be successful in this business?
- ▶ In what ways do you think you can make a contribution to our firm?
- ▶ How long would it take you to make a contribution to our firm?
- ▶ How long would you stay with us?
- ▶ If you could start again, what would you do differently?
- ▶ How do you rate yourself as a professional? As an executive?
- ▶ What new goals or objectives have you established recently? Why?
- ▶ How have you changed the nature of your job?
- ▶ What qualities have you liked or disliked in your boss?
- ▶ What was the most difficult ethical decision you have had to make? What was the result?
- ▶ Why have you not obtained a job so far?
- ▶ What features of your previous jobs have you disliked?
- ▶ Would you describe a few situations in which your work was criticized?
- ▶ How would you evaluate your present firm?
- ▶ Do you generally speak to people before they speak to you?
- ▶ How would you describe the essence of success?
- ▶ How successful have you been?
- ▶ What is the worst situation you have faced in your professional life? How did you deal with it?
- ▶ What happened?
- ▶ What interests you most about the position we have? The least?
- ▶ Do you feel that you might be better off with a different size firm than ours?
- ▶ Are you a leader? A good manager? Analytical? Give an example.
- ▶ How do you build a team under you?
- ▶ How would you describe your own personality?

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- ▶ Have you helped increase sales? Profits? Reduced costs?
- ▶ Where do you relate best - up one level, down one level, or with your peers?
- ▶ What do your subordinates think of you?
- ▶ How do you evaluate your subordinates?
- ▶ Have you had to let people go? Lay off? Terminate? When and why?

As indicated earlier, there are no "pat" answers to these questions. Review the questions and your responses. While some of the questions seem difficult, the keys to answering effectively are to be direct, truthful, positive and succinct!

Some examples:

What is wrong with your present firm? I really do not feel there is anything wrong with the firm. I have enjoyed working there and think they have some good people in management. It is a good company, but I am ready to handle additional responsibilities now, and the opportunities do not exist in my present position.

How long would it take you to make a contribution to our firm? I would want to be sure that I understood the operating environment and the personnel, but I feel that I have the skills and experience to make a contribution in a very short time. What do you feel will be the main focus of the position for the first six months?

Why are you leaving your present position? I enjoy my work, but I am anxious to expand my knowledge and take on more responsibility. Frankly, these opportunities do not exist in my present position.

If you are interested in the position, ask for it, or ask for the next interview. If you want this job, say this: **"I am very interested in your company. I am confident I can do an excellent job for you. What is the next step in your hiring process?"**

Answer the question asked: You would be surprised how many candidates do not do this. You should not intentionally ignore a question by answering a different question or asking a question yourself. If you are unsure about the question, ask the interviewer to repeat it. Or paraphrase the question yourself and re-state it to the interviewer to determine whether you understood it correctly.

Answer questions honestly and directly: Interviewers want to deal with candidates they can trust. Candidates who waffle in their responses hurt their chances. Honest and direct answers, on the other hand, are extremely disarming and because they are relatively rare, albeit very effective. But remember to play your strengths. If you have to talk about negative experiences, point out what you learned from them and why you will not make the same mistakes again.

Organize your answers: Flitting about from point to point, going forward, backward and every which way in answering a question suggests you would do the same thing on the job., Do not be afraid to take a little time before plunging into your answer. Consider

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ways to give your answer structure, either by organizing your response chronologically, organizing your point(s) in order of their importance, or simply starting your answer with a statement, such as **"there are three things I would consider in answering that question, First..."**

Be brief: An interview is supposed to be a dialogue, not a diatribe. If you think you're going on too long; cut your answer short. Remember the '3 Minute rule" do not talk for more than three minutes without allowing the other person to participate in the conversation. If the interviewer wants more information he/she can always ask a follow-up question.

Be energetic: Few things are worse than listening to a candidate drone on in a monotone voice about how great he is with an indifferent expression on his/her face. If you are not interested in or energized by your response; how can you expect the interviewer to be?

Be positive about your reason for leaving your current job: Or any previous jobs, for that matter, the key word to remember is 'more.' You want more challenges, more responsibilities, more opportunities, etc, etc. if you were fired, stress how much you learned from the experience and how it has helped you become even better at what you do. Be as positive as you can.

Quantify the confidence other employers have placed in you: Do this by stressing specific facts, figures and measurable accomplishments. Mention the number of employees you supervised and or commanded; the amount of money you controlled and earnings your department achieved under your management.

Never speak badly of past supervisors or employers!

Make the job you are interviewing for your Chief Objective: Frame your answers so that you let the interviewer know that you see this job as a means to achieving your ultimate career goals. Be careful not to make it sound like either a stepping stone or a safe haven.

Handling obstacles: There will likely be aspects of your career that could present obstacles to employment if not handled correctly. Here are a few of the most common **'RED FLAGS'** to employers and some ways to overcome them and turn them into positives:

- **You were fired from your last job:** Terminations are emotional. When you are fired, it's natural to feel resentment, anger, fear, anxiety, humiliation and even relief. The key here is to vent before you do the interview circuit. Bend the ears of loved ones, friends, parishioners and associates until you feel some sort of closure. Be sure that when you discuss your termination during that very first interview, you can provide emotionally neutral answers. When you respond to

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questions about terminations always include some lessons learned that will benefit future employers.

- **You were laid off:** By now, just about every interviewer you encounter has been touched by layoffs directly or indirectly. The good news is that the stigma of unemployment is mostly gone, especially when the reason for a layoff was not performance related. Here, you want to emphasize the layoff was unrelated to you as a person and as a worker, you did not take it personally and you realize that business is business. Employers are curious about how you will react to adverse situations if hired; here is a good place to show that; no matter what you can make the best out of a less than stellar situation, sort of '*making lemonade out of lemons*' attitude.
- **You do not have enough experience:** When employers raise objections in the qualifications area, you must be able to identify related experience or transferable skills that will convince the interviewer of your ability to do the job. If the interviewer feels you do not possess the right degree, stress the strength and quality of what you do have. Remember, the fact that you are being interviewed at all means that despite not having the right degree of experience you are still a viable candidate.
- **You are overqualified:** If you are deemed as being overqualified your first defense should be to reiterate your best qualifications for the position. On other words, view the objection as another opportunity to sell your qualifications. If the interviewer is still unsure, probe more deeply into the resistance. Your main objective here is to push interviewers into rethinking their position and keeping an open mind.
- **Are you compatible?** It's not enough to have the skills the employer is seeking. Interviewers want to know if and how you'll 'fit' into the company. They will ask 'how you got along with your previous supervisors; what your colleagues thought of you; where you see yourself in five years, etc, etc. If you had or have a problem with your most recent boss, try to neutralize it by focusing your answer on the productive parts of the relationship. The "where do you want to be in five years?" question is a staple in the world of interviewing that you will likely be asked numerous times throughout your career. Don't respond, "I would like to have your job." Instead show an interest in the current job and in making a contribution to the organization. Talk about the levels of responsibility you would like to attain and that your primary goal is to add value to the organization.

Closing the interview: There are 4 important things you need to remember about closing an interview (besides the obvious "Thank You" and firm handshake):

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1. If you have questions about the company that would affect whether you would want to spend further time interviewing, ask them now. To learn more in depth information about the position and the organization, you can ask questions such as:
 - What are the common characteristics of your top people?
 - Where do you see your company in the next five years?
 - What are your personal satisfactions and disappointments since you have been with the firm?
2. If the interviewer has failed to elicit some important information about you, make that information known before you close.
3. Find out what the next step will be and when it is likely to occur.
4. Keep in mind that it is inappropriate (and premature) to ask about salary, benefits, work hours, parking, etc on the first interview – unless they specifically bring the matter open for discussion (see more under Salary Discussion)
5. What is your highest priority in the next six months and how can someone like me help?
6. Who are your major competitors, and how do they stack up against you in terms of product, market share, methods of marketing, and strengths and weaknesses?
7. Tell me about the history/growth of the company.
8. In the recent history of the company, what has been the biggest advance, and what has been the biggest setback?
9. What is your highest priority in the next six months, and how could someone like me help?
10. Tell me about a typical day.
11. Tell me about your training program.
12. What are the characteristics of your top people?
13. Where do you see your company going in the next several years?
14. What are three main qualities you are looking for in a candidate?

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15. How do you see me fitting in with your company?
16. If I were to ask your top person what he/she likes most/least about the company, what type of responses would I get?
17. How do I compare with other qualified applicants?
18. Do you have any hesitations about me being successful with your company?
19. What does your interview process entail?
20. When may I return and meet some of the people with whom I would be working?
21. What are your personal satisfactions and disappointments since you have been with the firm?

PHONE INTERVIEW PREPARATION: Phone interviews are frequently a first step in the interviewing process. In these times of corporate frugality, companies often opt for an initial phone interview for the screening of potential candidates. These phone conversations are normally your first contact with a company, therefore your first impression. Make your impact! Here are a few useful hints to help you through the process:

- Work with your recruiter to set up a specific time for the call. This will allow you to be fully prepared to conduct an effective interview.
- Treat the phone interview just as you would a personal, face-to-face interview. Just because it is over the phone does not mean that you should take it lightly or take it less seriously!
- Make sure the telephone you plan on using for the call is of high quality. Avoid portable and/or cellular phones.
- If you have an answering machine/voice mail, please make sure your recording is both courteous and professional.
- Make sure family members know how to answer the telephone and take messages in your absence. Keep a note pad by the phone for messages and reinforce how important their cooperation is to your search success.
- Be aware of any potential distractions, i.e. radio, television, background conversations, etc. Plan to sit in a quiet room/area where you can speak and think in a productive manner.
- If you have the "call-waiting" feature on your phone, it is best not to interrupt your conversation to answer a call.
- If you have a bad connection and/or have difficulty hearing the other person, offer to call them back.

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- Be fully prepared with your notes in regard to: 1) the company, 2) the position, and 3) yourself (résumé). You will then be able to come across as an organized and articulate interviewee.

Again, do not take this step in the interview process lightly; this is a great opportunity to sell yourself and to find out more about the position. Last, but certainly not least, the phone interview is the opportune time to set up your face-to-face meeting. **DO NOT BE AFRAID TO ASK FOR THE APPOINTMENT!** Have your calendar at hand so you may suggest dates that would be convenient to interview.

Follow-up:

Even when the interview is over you must continue to sell yourself by following up and reinforcing your qualifications. Effective follow-up gives you a chance to say things you might have forgotten to say or to correct things you wish you had said differently. Most importantly it distinguishes you from other candidates; all too many candidates do not follow up. This will make you stand out from the rest.

The Follow up Letter:

Often called a "Thank You" letter, this is a crucial follow-up methodology that should do much more than say 'thanks.' While you want to express your gratitude for the interview, you can also express your interest and enthusiasm for the position, reinforce or correct a first impression, review your major strengths and qualifications and recap the next step in the hiring process. Never use your company stationery for this letter; it sends a bad message. And be sure to mail the letter within forty-eight (48) hours of the interview. The interviewer will be seeing other candidates and may not remember the details about you without a reminder. A follow up by email is also perfectly acceptable. Most recruiters should work with candidates to develop an effective follow-up letter; however if you need help in constructing one please call us. If you were placed in the interview via a recruiter then it would be protocol to speak with the recruiter and not call the employer directly.

Talking money:

This is probably the most uncomfortable part of the interview process for both parties. Should you ask about salary, or should you wait for the interviewer to bring it up? Should you be honest about your most recent compensation? Try to postpone answering any questions about compensation until the employer is enthusiastic about your candidacy. Rather than box yourself in or screen yourself out in the early stages, say that you are flexible but need to know more about the position. If the interviewers really persist, you probably should name some numbers rather than risk irritating them. Express realistic expectations and needs by using salary surveys as a basis for your requirements. This will also convey to the employer that you know your value in the marketplace and are seeking it. Once you know an employer wants to hire you, your first instinct may be to go for the stars. Try to resist! Instead name a figure that as based on your research,

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genuinely reflects the fair market price for your employment. If you are working with a search firm the recruiter will play a key role in the negotiation process. Think of your recruiter as an intermediary and talk openly with him/her. Share your concerns and expectations and call him/her with comments or questions. An effective recruiter will act as an objective third party and help both sides achieve a win-win situation. ABOVE ALL remember the opportunity is the single most important element of your decision. No amount of money will make a bad job good. A quality position, working with quality people in a dynamic work environment, offers rewards that money can't buy.

HOW TO HANDLE THE MONEY ISSUE:

The question of compensation can be very sensitive and often requires extended negotiations to reach a figure that is fair and acceptable to both the company and the individual. Some points to remember:

- Most companies want to make a fair offer. They want to bring new employees on board at a salary level that provides incentive to change jobs that also is consistent with the company's existing salary structure for that position.
- The days of 20% and 25% increases in compensation are gone. Inflation rates are down; all corporations are more conscious of maintaining consistency in existing salary structures; the economic growth in many industries has leveled off, and the competition for better positions has increased. So, **be realistic in your expectations.**
- The position/opportunity is the single most important element of your decision. No amount of money will make a poor position/company a good one. A quality position, working with quality people in a dynamic work environment offers rewards that money cannot buy.
- Be flexible! Compensation packages are a combination of salary, reviews, titles and perks. These elements can be arranged/re-arranged, and sometimes, very creatively to satisfy both the individual and the company.
- Keep your Executive Search Consultant involved. Part of our job is to handle sensitive negotiations and move both parties to a fair and acceptable compensation package. We do this for a living and can often offer alternatives that will satisfy both parties. (We are also a good buffer. We are able to keep sensitive negotiations on a professional level and not become personal.)
- If you are asked what salary you are looking for, try to avoid quoting a specific figure. Attempt something like this: "I am very interested in the opportunity, and I feel I can make a meaningful contribution. I am currently earning \$_____ per year. I would be open to a competitive offer." It is best not to name a figure if at all possible. You don't want to over-price/under-price yourself, so remember to discuss all relevant salary and benefits issues with your Executive Search Consultant.

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*"To care for him who shall have borne the battle and for his widow and orphan..."
- Abraham Lincoln*

- If you are asked again later in the process, you may want to re-state what you are earning, and ask what a person with your experience level is worth in their company.

Accepting the job:

If you are satisfied with the offer, express your satisfaction and ask for something in writing to reduce the risk of confusion. Congratulations! You worked hard to get through the interview process and secure the position you desired. Now you are on your way!

Be willing to turn the job down:

If the job or offer does not meet your criteria – and there is NO room for negotiation – simply do not accept the offer. Also, do not use this as a play to procure a better compensation package, you may lose. You will be on much firmer ground if you reply to the offer with 'Thank You, I'm really interested in joining your company; however there is something I'm concerned about.' If you and the company can't work out such concerns, then move on!

REASONS FOR NOT ACCEPTING A COUNTER-OFFER (Wall Street Journal article excerpts)

1. What type of company is it to work for where you have to threaten to resign before they pay you what you are worth?
2. Where is the money for the counter offer coming from? Is it your next raise early? All companies have strict wage and salary guidelines, which must be followed? Are they going to make your increase retroactive in order to compensate for under paying you over the last several years?
3. Your company may immediately start looking for a new person at a cheaper price. In many cases, you could be training your replacement.
4. You now have made your employer aware that you are unhappy. From this day on your loyalty may be in question.
5. When promotion time comes around, your employer will remember who was loyal and who was not.
6. When times get rough, your employer will begin the cutback with you.
7. The same circumstances that now cause you to consider a change will repeat themselves in the future even if you accept a counter offer. Things about your position and company rarely change.
8. Statistics show that if you accept a counter offer, the probability of voluntarily leaving in six months or being let go within one year is extremely high. 85% of people who accept are gone in six months, and 90% of people who accept are gone in twelve months.

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9. Accepting a counter offer is an insult to your intelligence and a blow to your personal pride knowing that you were bought.
10. Once the word gets out, the relationship that you now enjoy with your co-workers will never be the same; you may lose the personal satisfaction peer group acceptance.

Guidelines for working with recruiters:

The key to a successful relationship with a search firm is **TRUST**. Here are some guidelines you can follow to get the most from the relationship:

- Ask recruiters openly if they think they can help you and how? In turn share your relevant search activities with them
- Offer names of other candidates who may fit a search firm's profile. In appreciation they may set up more interviews for you. Remember a recruiter's stock in trade is a stock pile of worthy resumes and candidates.
- Draw on your search firm's expertise. Ask recruiters to brief and coach you for the interviews they arrange.
- Be honest about your financial needs and goals; as well your past experiences (good and or bad)
- Accept their role as an intermediary. Until you are hired by an employer, a recruiter's job is to function as a go-between.

The prospective employer will make his/her hiring decision based on these factors:

- 1) Attitude and Business Poise
- 2) Image/ Presentation and Communication skills
- 3) Experience / Skill Set
- 4) Education / Certifications
- 5) Transferable Industry / Technical Background

1) Tell the employer why you are the most interested person in the opportunity/ company.

- a)
- b)
- c)
- d)
- e)

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2) Tell the employer why you are the most qualified person for the position.

- a)
- b)
- c)
- d)
- e)

3) Be enthusiastic about the position and the company.

4) Ask good, specific questions. Respond positively to the interviewer's questions whenever possible.

5) Do not discuss salary or benefit packages. Remain open. Let your Executive Search Consultant handle these sensitive negotiations.

6) "Sell your attitude" during the interview. Ask for the position/ be proactive at the end of the interview.

7) Call me immediately after the interview.

RESIGNATION AND COUNTER-OFFERS

While resigning from your current position can be emotional and sometimes stressful, there are several things you can do to make the process go smoothly and quickly.

- ▶ Put it in writing. Handing your boss a resignation letter is the most effective way to handle an uncomfortable situation.
 - It is formal and will become a part of your permanent record. It is for your own protection.
 - It will help you keep the focus on the positive aspects of your career move rather than any negative aspects of your old situation.
 - It relieves the pressure of having to speak first. **(We have included a form letter).**
- ▶ The sooner you leave the company, the better. Give fair notice, but ask to be relieved as soon as possible. You are in a lame duck position. The company will

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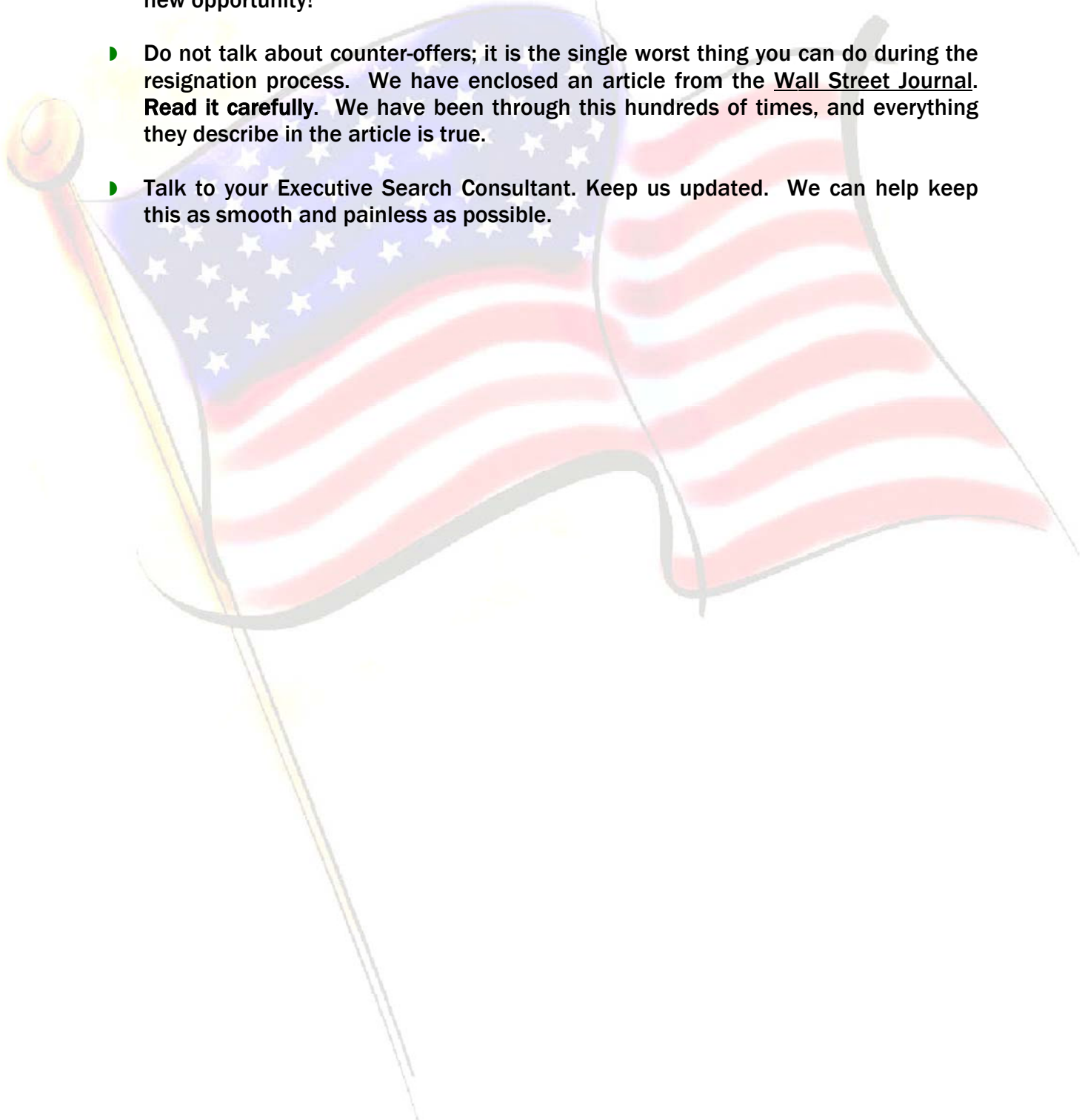
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get by without you, and you owe your energies and loyalty to yourself and to your new opportunity!

- ▶ Do not talk about counter-offers; it is the single worst thing you can do during the resignation process. We have enclosed an article from the Wall Street Journal. **Read it carefully.** We have been through this hundreds of times, and everything they describe in the article is true.
- ▶ Talk to your Executive Search Consultant. Keep us updated. We can help keep this as smooth and painless as possible.



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Sample Resignation Letter

Date

Former Manager's Name

Title

Company Name

Company Address

Dear Former **Manager's Name**,

It is with mixed emotion, yet with firm conviction that I write this letter of resignation from (**Company Name**).

My association during the past (#) years with this excellent firm and its many fine people has been a wonderful part of my professional and personal life.

Please understand that I have made my decision after considerable deliberation. An outstanding opportunity presented itself that will significantly enhance my career and assist me in achieving my goals.

I am therefore resigning from (**Company Name**) effective (**date**). This will allow sufficient time to complete current commitments prior to commencing with my new employer on (**date**). In the interim, I will work with you and the staff to provide a smooth transfer of my current duties.

I hope that you will understand and accept my decision. I will support you in making this change as easy as possible for the staff and department.

Sincerely,

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FOLLOW-UP LETTER

A well-written and timely follow-up letter will enable you to make a positive impression and show your genuine interest in the position. It is an example of both your work habits and writing skills. ***To gain full advantage of this opportunity, here are a few points to consider:***

- ▶ Send the letter as soon as possible. This allows you to convey a sense of urgency and a high interest level in the opportunity. Ideally, your letter should go out the next day.
- ▶ Be as brief as possible. It shows respect for other's time.
- ▶ The body of the letter should address four main points:
 1. Thank them for their time.
 2. Express interest and enthusiasm towards the company and position.
 3. Highlight experiences/ accomplishments that amplify your qualifications, using the manager's own words from the interview.
 4. Ask for the next interview.

Have someone carefully proofread your letter, then e-mail it in MS Word to your spouse, friend, recruiter or us for a final proof (***we ask you to do this in order to avoid a letter being sent out that does not represent you well!***). They will make any corrections or suggestions. Once you have agreed that the letter is ready to be sent, sign a hard copy, and drop it in the mail. Sending thank you letters via e-mail is on the impersonal side, so we recommend avoiding e-mailed thank you letters, unless it is necessary due to timing or special circumstances.

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Sample letter:

Date

**Mr. John Smith
Vice President
XYZ Company
1234 South Street
Anywhere, OH 12345**

Dear Mr. Smith:

I appreciate the time spent with you and discussing XYZ Company and the _____ position. It was a pleasure meeting with you, _____ and _____. I feel my qualifications and skill set in _____, _____, and _____ reflect those necessary to be successful at XYZ Company.

At ABC Corporation, I successfully installed a state of the art _____ system on time and under budget, as well as managed a staff of up to fifteen professionals and clerks. I am confident that I have the experience and drive to successfully manage the _____ Department.

I feel an even greater excitement level about the opportunity because it will allow me to attain my goals of _____, _____ and _____.

I look forward to our next meeting to discuss this opportunity in greater detail.

Sincerely,

Michael Brown

This is a sample letter to help get you started. You may customize yours to reflect what is relevant to your interview. If you need assistance with preparing your thank you letter, then do not hesitate to call us for assistance; we will be happy to help you with it!

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