

Want to Ace the Final Interview-Solve...

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Obviously, the current labor market is an employer's market. Companies can select from arguably the largest candidate pool in history. Discouraged job seekers often complain that the disparity in numbers contributes to an atmosphere of employer arrogance. Their advantage of supply over demand has led to a lack of common courtesy regarding keeping candidates informed, returning calls, etc. While this perception certainly has merit, it's important for job seekers to realize that the key individual at a company with an opening may not perceive him or herself as holding all the trump cards. That's the hiring manager.

In most scenarios, these uncertain economic times means that this opening has existed significantly longer than the hiring manager would have liked. The extended delay increases the probability that what started as a need has quickly escalated to the problem or crisis level, most of which has fallen on the desk of the hiring manager. This crisis presents a candidate with their best opportunity to get hired. A hiring manager facing a laundry list of problems will be drawn to the candidate most capable of solving these problems.

Once you're scheduled to interview with a hiring manager, prepare by learning as much information as possible regarding the backlogs and difficulties this opening has created. This is where your network becomes critical. Think of anyone you know with knowledge of the company and the hiring manager. LinkedIn can provide connecting points from your network to the company. Once you identify them, use these contacts to get an idea of what the biggest need facing company and hiring manager is. Don't be afraid to ask questions. Once you have a better idea what the problems are, you can better emphasize the skills, successes and projects from your background that will best demonstrate your ability to solve them.

One of the most consistent mistakes I see job seekers make is failing to view the hiring situation through the eyes of the employer. Rather than perceiving a hiring manager as a the one with all the power, realize this is an individual with a need. You can much better offer yourself as a solution by knowing what exactly the need is.

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