

ACCESS THE HIRING MANAGER – Your Stroke of Genius

Job searching is loaded with barriers. Human Resources' goal is to block the deluge of candidates who apply, shifting down to a few qualified candidates. The best thing you can do is approach the Hiring Manager, the person who would be your boss. This is the true decision maker. If you can access the Hiring Manager, demonstrating the difference you can make, you stand a good chance of an interview.

The technique we are about to describe is very strategic and has greatly improved candidates' search success. It only works well with jobs for which you are well qualified. There are several ways to employ it. Choose one and utilize it fully. It should significantly improve your chance of success.

Start by developing a Goodness of Fit document - see example below.

To Secure an Interview

If you've been referred to the Hiring Manager, this step is easier. But sometimes you'll see a job ad that "has your name on it" and you haven't been referred to the Hiring Manager. Then your job is to become a detective. Use LinkedIn to find who the Hiring Manager may be. You can search LI by company, name, title to try to find this person. Do an internet search to see what names come up as possible Hiring Managers. If you can't identify possible Hiring Managers, use LI to find someone in the company and explain what you are trying to do. Ask this contact to help you determine who is the Hiring Manager.

Once you know the Hiring Manager's name, phone and email, customize your cover letter to him or her. The day after your contact has referred your information, email your resume, cover letter and Goodness of Fit Document to the Hiring Manager directly. Mention in your email that you're a very good fit for the job and don't want to waste his or her time so you'll call the next day with a couple of questions.

Call the Hiring Manager the next day. If you get their voicemail, leave a limited message that repeats what you said in your email. If the Hiring Manager is not readily available, try calling very early in the morning or after hours. You may find them working on the "Dawn or Dusk Patrol".

When you finally talk to the Hiring Manager, lead the conversation:

"Thanks for returning my call Name. As I said in my email, your Y position is a very good fit for me. I don't want to waste your time, so let me ask a question. How do YOU see the job Name? What are the key duties of the job, the challenges I'll face, and what do you want me to accomplish in the first 3-6 months?"

This will either be a short call or a more involved one. If the Hiring Manager allows the time, tell stories that show you have experience in the key duties and challenges, and demonstrate your excitement in fulfilling the goals. If the Hiring Manager needs it to be a short call, state your strong interest in performing the duties, overcoming the challenges, and accomplishing the goals.

End the call with:

"This is great Name. Your job is a great fit for me. I'd like to come in and discuss the position with you personally if you're interested in meeting me."

Pause and BE SILENT! You've just asked for an interview, so don't take the Hiring Manager off of the hot seat! Most Hiring Managers will appreciate your initiative and invite you in for an interview.

To Impress After an Interview

Bring your Goodness of Fit document with you to an interview, printed on nice paper. At the end of the interview, as you're about to leave, hand your document to the Hiring Manager:

"I've brought you my Goodness of Fit document to show how well I fit your job."

This document will impress the Hiring Manager and will extend your conversation and the duration of the interview.

If you'd like to make your document more powerful, instead of giving it at the end of the interview, use the information that you've learned during the interview to tailor your document. Email it with your thank you note. It will still wow the Hiring Manager and should generate a second interview.

To Clinch an Offer

With your final thank you note, include a Goodness of Fit document and ask for the job. If the Hiring Manager hasn't seen your matrix yet, you'll certainly wow him or her to seriously consider you as the final candidate!

Goodness of Fit Document – partial example

Job Requirements	Company & Title Held	Relevant Accomplishments & Experience
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<p>Report to and support the EVP, Chief Mission Officer in carrying out LLS's research mission and work closely with senior management in other mission departments to provide overall staff leadership to achieve mission.</p>	<p>Hoffmann-La Roche Director, Senior Principal Scientist</p>	<p>Section Head reporting to Vice President of Discovery Chemistry and member of Discovery Chemistry Management Team. Worked with other Section Heads, V.P. of Chemical Development and senior staff of Pharmaceutical and Analytical Research and Development to ensure priorities communicated through Discovery Research to optimize resourcing.</p>
<p>Oversee the LLS research strategy.</p>	<p>Hoffmann-La Roche Director, Senior Principal Scientist</p>	<p>Assisted in development of Roche Discovery Oncology Research strategy and contributed to the Discovery Chemistry strategy.</p>