

INTERVIEW WITH A 90 DAY PLAN IN MIND

Imagine yourself in a job interview. What do you think an interviewer wants to hear out of a candidate? It's all about a question and answer session. Both of you are trying to measure each other up. Is there a reason behind some of the questions? Of course there is. Why else would they spend time with you if they weren't curious and interested in what you could do for a new employer? Want to really capture their attention? Go in with a 90 Day Plan. Let me explain.

One of the very most important keys that an interviewer is asking themselves during their interview period with a candidate, is just how will this candidate perform for us? How long will it take to get this employee productive? What can this candidate bring to us, and how much training will it take to get them productive in the most efficient amount of time and energy spent? If I hire this person, how long will they stay? What would our plan be?

What if you went in with your own plan? Do you think they would be impressed? Let's look at what a plan might be. Generally, the first few days are spent getting oriented, learning the "rules", the required procedures, and the general routine. After that, they are going to be looking for how quickly you can apply your skills and talents as it applies to the job. This is where you come in. As much as possible, gather the key objectives of the position and begin to put together what you would do, step by step in the job.

Examples of your step by step could include just simply taking inventory and condition of your productive assets or resources, which could include your equipment, your people, your systems, and your vendors. The plan could include interviews with your staff or colleagues, gathering information about what they know. You may uncover a lot more than you think this way, but it's a great place to start. Then look at the key objectives of the job. If you are to expand a sales territory, then part of your plan would be to begin making your target list. If you are managing a plant, possibly one of your objectives would be to reduce expenses. Whatever the key objectives are, build your plan, what you think you would do if this were your responsibility, or what you would do if you owned this business and this were your primary objectives.

Remember that it's really not that important that you nail the plan perfectly. The important part is that you took the time to think through a plan and what you are showing is your ability to develop a plan. That is taking initiative, and is something that can be very hard to demonstrate in an interview any other way. Going into that interview with an example of that initiative means that you are prepared.

Another step the plan accomplishes is that at the point that you are able to introduce the plan, you turn the interview from talking about your past to talking about the future. It's great to talk about the past accomplishments since it sets the floor of expectations. But, what you can contribute in the future is what is really important. Once you can swing to talking in the future tense, you have got the interviewer to the point of imagining you in that job and how you will fit. If you do fit, then the interviewer begins to think about your value, or in other words, what kind of a compensation package would it take to get you. Ultimately, this is where you want the interview to end, with the interviewer already thinking about your compensation package. It also means that you have taken more of the offensive of sorts versus being on the defensive throughout the interview. Being on the offensive means that you likely have nudged ahead of your "competition". In most cases, employers have several potential candidates to consider. Getting to the top of that list and getting the offer is what the interview process is all about. Bring your plan in, and quite likely you have already passed most of your competition.

