



Interviewing

6 Must-Haves for Your Next Interview

Be better prepared for the next time.

By Dean Tracy

After many years in the [recruiting](#) business, I've learned that candidates often lack preparation when facing a career transition or job change.

Here are six simple steps to take before an [interview](#) to help you land the [job](#).

1. Prepare Your Story

Throughout your career, you may pursue different directions. Be prepared to discuss the reasons you're taking your career in a certain direction.

Organize [talking points](#) that help you tell your story. It's important to touch on reasons you may have left a company without bashing your former co-workers or supervisors. Explain with confidence the reason that you are making (or have made) a career change.

Remember that a lack of [conversation](#) reflects lack of interest. Be prepared to incorporate the story line of your background into their organizational challenges.

2. Calculate Your Compensation

Know the difference between your needs, your value to the company and market trends. Your financial needs are of no importance to the hiring manager or the hiring company. They care about your success, but they are not accountable for your financial responsibilities.

Investigate the market trends for the position for which you're interviewing. The dollar amount is usually defined by what the market will bear for your position. This information can be collected from a variety of Web sites and market research. Keep in mind that this will also depend on the company's size, revenues, head count, geographic location, etc.

The value that you bring to the company is one that only you can define and present to your prospective employer. This will be based upon your demonstrated experience as determined by contributions you've made in previous roles. Capture and reflect on revenues that you generated, incorporate costs and expenses that you managed and/or numbers of people or clients that you have supported.

Understand acronyms and initialisms such as OTE and MBO.





- **OTE** = On Target Earnings. This is what your total compensation package is, including annual base salary, bonuses, etc.
- **MBO** = Management by Objective. This is typically used to identify a percentage of your annual base and may be paid quarterly or once a year.

3. Articulate Your Value

You must be able to address the value that you bring to the company. Be prepared to share your skills and accomplishments and discuss how they benefit the company. Articulate these accomplishments in a problem-action-results sequence.

- **Problem** – This will reflect the specific problem, challenge or situation that you are faced with. The way you would describe this is in the form of an overview or summary.
- **Action** – This represents the steps that you took to address the problem, challenge or situation. Describe the methodology that you followed to drive results and deliverables.
- **Results** – This is where you define the success or accomplishment of your actions. Use this as an opportunity to share how you evaluate the end result.

4. Determine Your Commuting Threshold

Estimate how far are you willing to commute to get to work every day. Some candidates will use this threshold to represent miles and some will use it to measure total road time.

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5. Determine Your Willingness to Travel

This will usually depend on the position for which you're applying. Your previous experiences with work travel will be a true indicator to consider. You should also carefully consider the impact that this will have on your family and personal lifestyle.

6. Articulate Your Management Style

Be prepared to share and discuss the environment or culture where you can be the most productive. Are you most effective in a chaotic, fast-paced, high-stress environment? Do you bring a calming influence in a chaotic setting? Are you detail-oriented, driven by reports in a micromanaged structure? Be prepared to describe your typical activity in a normal workday.

If you do your homework well, you will be extraordinarily successful in your interview. It will become easy for you to open new doors of opportunity toward landing the job of your dreams.





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Dean Tracy is a professional recruiter, public speaker and career coach based in Northern California with an emphasis on placing and coaching professionals at a national level. He is the founder of the National Leadership & Career Management Advisory Group and also serves on the Leadership Team for Job Connections, which is recognized as one of Northern California's largest and most reputable professional networking groups.

