

How to Get Hired: 10 steps to being the top candidate

Scott Swedberg

Landing a job isn't easy. If you apply online to a critical job and get screened, you still only have less than a 1 in 250 chance of getting hired. To land the job you need to enter the process in a way that sets you up for success and play an active role in the process. Here's how:

1. Define what you actually want and why you're qualified

Nothing turns off a recruiter like a candidate who doesn't even seem to want the job they're pursuing. Take the time to define what you want in this next role and why you're a fit for it so you can communicate it throughout the process. If you can't explain why you want the job or why you're a fit for it, you don't stand a chance.

2. Identify and track leads

Organize your job leads in terms of people in your network and job postings you've found for specific companies. Do some research within your network on [LinkedIn](#) and for ideal roles that are posted online so you don't waste your time applying to every role you find. When you batch activities together, you can get a lot more done.

3. Reach out for informational interviews

You're anywhere from 14x-125x more likely to land a job by getting referred than applying online. The best way to get referred is by having a conversation with someone at that company. Those conversations only happen if you ask for the conversation.

4. Prepared for informational interviews

When your requests turn into scheduled calls or meetings, it's time to prepare for that conversation. This person is more likely to refer you if they like you, think you're qualified for a position, and enjoy the conversation. You can increase the likelihood of this happening by research the individual, the company, and industry trends in advance.

5. Get referred

Having an enjoyable conversation is one thing and actually getting referred is another. Sometimes connections will offer to pass your resume along, but many times you have to actually ask to get referred. An informational interview is not a productive job search tool if it doesn't result in a referral, so don't squander this opportunity.

6. Follow up

People do not always respond or follow through immediately. Many times you'll need to follow up on emails where you've requested a conversation or on promises

a connection has made to introduce you to someone. Do not hesitate to respectfully follow up – people forget, and persistence pays off.

7. Prepare for formal interview

Similar to informational interviews, you want to research all the people on your interview committee, industry trends within the role, and company specific information in advance of the formal interview.

8. Build relationships

Referrals work so well because people want to hire people they feel like they know and like. When you build relationships with the people you meeting, engaging in friendly conversation and learning names, they no longer feel like you're a stranger or outsider.

9. Speak to your results and abilities

Companies want to know about the results you've achieved in previous roles and how you can bring that to their company. You should practice explaining results you've achieved in your work history by using the [STAR framework](#): Situation, Task, Action, Result.

10. Negotiate

There's something unappealing about a candidate who is so desperate to work somewhere that they seem like they'd be willing to work for free. Ideal candidates and top performers understand their worth and are thorough in making sure a role is a fit all around. Even if you're uncomfortable negotiating an offer, you should ask probing questions throughout the process and never accept an offer immediately when it's made.

Biography



Scott Swedberg is CEO and founding [career coach](#) of [The Job Sauce](#), a career coaching organization focused on helping professionals land dream jobs with significant compensation increases. As a former LinkedIn employee, recruiter, and hiring manager, Scott's consulting with hundreds of CEOs and VPs of HR on their hiring practices formed the foundation of The Job Sauce's Dream Job program.