

## **Selling Yourself: Come to the Interview with a 100 Day Plan**

When job seekers receive the “thank you for your interest” letter, call or email after the interview – the reason may be that the candidate did not fully articulate his or her value proposition. This means, the candidate was lumped in with the “also-rans” and not identified as the “must-have.”

One of the best ways to “differentiate” yourself and showcase your value proposition is to come to the interview with a well-researched 100 Day Plan. During the course of the interview, you can demonstrate your knowledge of the organization and its needs by telling the story of how you will approach the role.

**The elements of preparing a 100 Day Plan that you need to consider are as follows:**

Which key stakeholders do you need to meet? Why?

Which key team members do you need to shadow? Why?

What processes, procedures or programs do you need to assess? Why?

Which internal or external clients or customers do you need to meet? Why? What are the priorities?

What competitors do you need to research?

What best practices do you need to discuss during the interview?

I had a former client who was a retail executive. In preparation for his upcoming interview with a major retailer, I asked him to come up with 5 – 7 questions that he would ask, if he were head of marketing or operations.

For example, if I were head of marketing or operations, I would want to ‘see’ the store from the customer’s perspective. I would want to know: 1) How easy is it to find what I am looking for? 2) How clean is the operation, including the restrooms? 3) How easy is it for customers to find a sales associate? 4) How are customers treated? 5) What is the average amount of time it takes a customer to pay and exit the store? 6) What is the store’s return policy? 7) How does the major competitor compare on these same indices?

Then, I recommended that he visit as many of the company’s stores as possible. I also told him to send his friends and family members in other cities and states, a copy of these questions and ask them to rate the store and the competitor. By the time he interviewed with the company, he had a very nice research document, full of anecdotes and comments that companies typically pay customer experience consultants to uncover.

The fact that he had conducted this mini research project in conjunction with all the other industry, competitor and economic indicators he compiled and was able to refer to during his series of interviews, certainly helped his candidacy and also made him stand out from the other candidates.

Putting yourself in the role as part of your preparation makes you think deeply about the organization, the position requirements, competitors, customer service problems, sales/marketing strategies, etc. Regardless of your discipline, by telling your story in the form of a 100 Day Plan, you will portray the qualities and competencies the employer is seeking. This strategy also makes you “own” the role and boosts your confidence.

The next time you interview for a professional or leadership role, remember to develop a 100 Day Plan.

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