

Job Interview Road Map Companion Guide

Greetings Job Seeker!

Road Map is a great overview that summarizes everything you need to know, and is really going to get you started on the right foot! Our goal is to give you a nice overall understanding of the job interview process, and the Road Map succeeds in doing that.

How To Use the Road Map For Your Preparation

First things first...print it off! The Road Map was designed for you to be able to reference very quickly and easily, so take the time to print it off on a standard 8" x 11" piece of paper.

You then want to keep it close by at all times. We recommend tacking it up somewhere where you will see it all the time, perhaps over your desk, on your refrigerator or even on the mirror in your bathroom! Science has proven that repetition and learning through osmosis greatly encourage your ability to retain information, so this first step is vital.

Now, some of our students also like to be able to take the Road Map (and this Companion Guide) with them wherever they go, whether it is on their laptop, tablet or smart phone. The Road Map was designed just for this, so feel free to save the file on your device as well.

Phases

You will notice that the Road Map is separated into three distinct, color-coded Phases, listed below:

1. Research ("road signs" 1-3)
2. Questions & Answers (signs 4-6)
3. General Preparation (signs 7-8)

In general, these represent the stages of your preparation. Much like following the road in life, you should follow the Road Map in order, beginning at Sign #1 and ending with Sign #8.

Actually, your journey should land you on Sign #9, where you should finish up your preparation by clicking the link ([alternatively, you can click here](#)).

Now let's take a deeper look into each Road Sign!



Phase 1 – Research

1 – Learning the Tailoring Method

Okay we know what you might be thinking. “Guys, I don’t have a lot of time. Why are you making me learn some new method instead of giving me the answers to the questions?”

Here’s the deal. If you want to get a job offer from your next interview, the Tailoring Method is the one thing you can learn that will give you an instant advantage over every single one of your competitors and get you the job offer you deserve.

So go ahead and start here, and use the Tailoring Method as your base for answering every interview question.

Many of you will recall the Tailoring Method from <this article>. Here is another quick summary of the key points:

Perfect Candidate

Every company that you interview for is looking for their Perfect Candidate (PC). In short, their PC is their ideal hire for the position they are interviewing for, and is generally made up of a specific (and predetermined) set of knowledge, skills and abilities. Guess what? You have one job and one job only. Become the Perfect Candidate

Qualities

These knowledge, skills and abilities can be grouped into one category, which we like to call Qualities. Every company has a set of Qualities that they put a lot of value in, and it is your job to figure out what these Qualities are and ensure that you are showing that you have them during your job interview.

The best place to do this is in your answers to the interview questions. In each answer, you should reference one of these qualities and use an example from your past to support your claim.

Success Stories

We like to call these examples from your past Success Stories. Success Stories are examples from your past that clearly demonstrate you succeeding in specific situations, and generally assist in proving that you have a certain Quality. You



should always have at least 3-5 Success Stories in mind when you go into the interview room.

Multipliers

The final pieces to the puzzle are Multipliers. A “multiplier” is a tidbit of information that you add to your interview answer, and most importantly, is something the hiring manager does not expect you to know. This can include (but is not limited to) special programs offered at the company, events or initiatives.

Multipliers are an extremely powerful tool because they force the interviewer to see you in the position and as a “member of the family” before you are even hired. Not only that, but it is so rare for an interviewee to use this tactic that it allows you to stand out head and shoulders above your competitors.

Pulling It All Together

In the end, to become the Perfect Candidate you need to pull your Qualities, Success Stories and Multipliers together to form the answers to your interview questions.

Begin by doing the research laid out in the next few sections and compiling a list of your company’s Qualities. While you are doing your research, take note of any potential Multipliers you can use when appropriate.

When you feel like you have got a good list of Qualities and Multipliers, you’ll need to come up with 3-5 Success Stories from your past that will help you demonstrate that you have the Qualities that you discovered through your research. Make sense?

So, if you find that a company puts a lot of value in “leadership” as a Quality, you’ll need to come up with a Success Story from your past that shows you being a leader.

So, when the company asks you something like “Why do you want to work for this company?” you can say something along the lines of:

“When looking for opportunities I wanted to ensure that my next job was with a company that embraced, nurtured and promoted strong leaders. I feel this is one of my best qualities, which I demonstrated through <insert Success Story>. Specifically, I’d eventually like to take a leadership role in your Community at Large Outreach program.”

If you didn’t guess already, mentioning the “Community at Large Outreach Program” was the Multiplier for this question...the tidbit of information discovered through your detailed research that the hiring manager didn’t expect you to know.

Got it? Great! Now, on to the research!



2 – Research My Position

In this step, you want to learn as much about the position you are interviewing for. More specifically, this is where you will want to begin locating your Qualities and Multipliers. Ask yourself this. What do you really know about the position? The hiring manager will expect you to be able to discuss the role and show an understanding of the core responsibilities.

Where is the best place to learn about the position? Well, the job description (JD) of course! Make sure you print off a copy of the JD and be ready to analyze it thoroughly.

You want to go through the JD and record any Qualities that are required in order to be successful in the position. This could include things such as “highly organized”, “natural leader”, or even something as basic as “excellent typer.”

Recall that you are trying to become the Perfect Candidate, so you need to take note of the Qualities that the company puts in the job description and reference them in your interview answers.

Now, we know what you might be thinking. “Guys, this is very basic. Of course I’ve read the job description...there isn’t much new information there.”

Not so fast! There are often “hidden” qualities that are alluded to in the JD but not necessarily obvious.

Once this is done, you should have a list of 4 or 5 good qualities that you can reference in your answers in Step 4 and 5 (the questions).

3 – Research My Company

So now that you have a good idea of what your position entails, the next step is to do the exact same thing for the company you are interviewing with.

As in step one, the hiring manager will expect that you know the company inside and out. And of course, if you don’t, your competitors will.

The best place to get this information is on the Internet, obviously by beginning with the company’s website. Specifically though, you should always look for the “Careers” or “Jobs” page. This is where the company will have all of their important job-related materials.

The categories you should be studying and memorizing are

- Company Analysis (core business, products available, etc.)



- Who are the main competitors of your company?
- Take note of any current events that have affected the company in the last year or two
- Identifying the “personality”, or culture of the company (the mission statement is a good place to start

Now here is the most important part. Through this step, you will begin to notice that the company will reveal more Qualities. Similarly, you should get a good idea of the Qualities that every employee at the company seems to possess. Guess what? If you want to get the job, you have to make sure that the hiring manager believes that you also have these qualities.

Record the qualities you find and like Step 1, reference them in your answers to the interview questions.

Phase 2 – Questions & Answers

4 – Traditional Questions

In this section, we offer up 5 of the most common traditional questions you will likely face in your interview.

1. Tell Me About Yourself
2. Why should we hire you?
3. What is your greatest Weakness?
4. Why did you leave your last job?
5. Where do you see yourself in 5 years?

There obvious is a right way and an infinite number of wrong ways to answer an interview question. Below is one of our example answers to “Tell Me About Yourself”:

“I think the best way to do that would be to tell you about the time I was faced with a pretty disastrous situation while managing at XYZ Company. Our company's web application project was stuck in the mud & moving ahead at a snail's pace, mainly because of constant "meetings" that accomplished little. Meetings were the norm at the company but I really felt like they were hurting us so I came up with a solution I thought would help and then had our great team build it. It was an "Intranet Chat" program that allowed us to communicate, share ideas and plan our next moves with ease. It was a big hit with everyone because not only did it help productivity but it led to great bonding throughout our division. I bring this little story up because I think it highlights two things I pride myself on: working well with others and thinking outside the box.”



Below are listed some of the Do's and Don'ts to remember when attempting to answer this question:

DO:

- Qualities: works well with others, outside the box thinking.
- Focus on the strengths you have that they are looking for.
- Keep it succinct and to the point.
- Keep it focused on your work accomplishments. They're not asking about personal situations. Remember, save those confessions for the shrink's couch...not the interview office.

DON'T:

- Don't start out like Charles Dickens's famous novel David Copperfield did, with Chapter 1: "I Am Born." In this particular example, to talk about yourself is not an invitation to travel down every avenue leading out of Memory Lane.
- Don't digress.
- Don't go off on tangents.
- Don't talk excessively about educational or work experience that is not related to the job at hand.
- Don't recount in any detail more than the last ten years of your work experience.

This example answer shows you how to answer this question, but of course, you'll want to adjust the details of your response to your own situation.

5 – Behavioral Questions

Behavioral Questions are a huge sense of angst for many of our students, but they really don't need to be. The key difference between a traditional and a behavioral question is that the hiring manager wants to see the behaviors you exhibited when confronted with certain situations in your past work experience.

This is why we teach that is absolutely vital for you to have several Success Stories in mind that you can use as the base for your answers to behavioral questions.

In this section, we offer up 3 of the most common Behavioral Question you will likely face in your interview:

1. Describe to me a time when you faced a problem and how you dealt with it.
2. Give an example of a situation in which you took specific steps to further your career.
3. Give an example of a risk you took in an employment situation and how it panned out.



6 – Questions to Ask

This is the step that a lot of people mess up, because they underestimate the importance of preparing questions to ask the hiring manager at the end of the interview. This is NOT just an afterthought.

You should be using this opportunity for a few different reasons:

1. To obtain information about the role or the company that you may not have already learned through your research
2. To show the hiring manager that you are a curious, thoughtful and intelligent candidate who is always wanting to learn
3. To “turn the tables” on the hiring manager and direct the conversation towards highlighting your qualities. Remember, these qualities should be in line with the qualities that the company is looking for (which you discovered in Step 2)

There are hundreds of questions that you can ask, but don’t choose randomly. This is a science! Choose questions that will steer the conversation toward your competency as a candidate.

Here are some good examples:

1. What qualities do your top performing employees have in common?
2. As an employee, how could I succeed your expectations?
3. Is there anything that stands out to you that makes you think I may not be the right fit for this job?

Phase 3 – General Preparation

7 – Preparation Tips 101

Let’s be honest guys. They call it an “interview” for a reason. It’s because the questions, and more importantly the answers you give to those questions, are BY FAR the most important part of the whole process. You should be focusing roughly 90% of your time on preparing for the questions.

That being said, there are a few preparation tips that we would basically call “common sense” that you need to ensure that you are utilizing when it comes time for your interview to start:



1. Wardrobe – always dress for the role you are interviewing for – don't wear a suit if you're interviewing for a landscaper and don't wear jeans if you're interviewing for a stockbroker.
2. Body language – sit up in your chair, put your hands on your lap, and always make eye contact with the hiring manager. Address each interviewer when applicable.
3. Documents – Always bring at least two copies of both your resume and cover letter in a portfolio. If you already know how many people are interviewing you, bring a copy for each person
4. Your Body – Eat a balanced diet, drink lots of water. Get lots of sleep. 20-40 minutes of light exercise before the interview will help with nerves and brain function.

8 – Interview Nerves

It's no secret that managing the inevitable bout of nerves prior to a big interview is something that many, many job seekers face (and you are no doubt one of the many folks who stress about this!).

The fact of the matter is, the nerves you feel are a direct result of your subconscious telling you that you are not prepared for a part (or parts!!!) of your interview. Preparation is the ultimate remedy for interview nerves.

Now, certainly a big part of it is also our general fear of failure. But we have found that this fear seems to wash away when we are able to build such a secure sense of confidence through the preparation techniques we have discussed in this Companion Guide.

And at the end of the day, if you truly feel like you have put in your best effort, it's hard to feel like anything you do could ever be a failure. We like to think of these little "speed bumps" more like "life lessons".

Here are a few of our tips to help you blast your interview nerves and ensure that you are cool and confident when in the interview room:

1. Eliminate the unknown - Make sure you find out any details about the interview that you are unsure of (i.e. name of interviewer, dress code, etc.)
2. Arrive at your job interview early and spend some time relaxing – it helps to plan your route ahead of time so you don't arrive stressed
3. Visualize the entire process as a discussion between two colleagues
4. Don't worry about making a mistake – just be ready to resilient and adapt when it happens
5. Prepare, prepare, PREPARE. The biggest nerve-destroyer is your preparation. Being prepared will ensure you are as calm as possible.



9 – Bonus – The Trick to Answering 2 of the Trickiest Interview Questions

Okay. So there is a fair amount of information here...frankly more than should probably be crammed into one introductory document!

Here's the thing. As you probably already thought to yourself while you were studying this helpful little document, there really isn't enough room for us to cover everything. Especially all of the interview questions!

So as a bonus for making it this far, we created a very helpful video to help you with two of the most troublesome interview questions you'll face.

[→ Click Here To Watch Your Bonus Video](#)

Best of luck!

The Interview Guys

