

The elusive 'Hiring Manager': Q&A on how to get an offer

UIUC Physics Career Seminar

Richard Aburano

Feb 3, 2015

Disclaimer

- This is one person's view as a hiring manager, however it is pretty typical as far as I can tell.

Hiring Managers

- The hiring manager is the person who has the job opening.
- This is the primary person you practice your pitch and interviewing skills for.
 - They approve your on-site interview, review the feedback and put together your offer.
- They are virtually impossible to identify from the job posting.
 - Until they contact you, networking is the main way to identify whom it may be (i.e. job referral or knowing someone who is there).
- Typically, they are doing the hiring on the “side”. It is not their primary job responsibility.
 - Expect delays and limited courtesy calls

Look here!

- You need to find some way to get their attention, but you won't know this in advance.
 - I look for things to differentiate a resume, i.e. a connection (physicist), an experience, a skill, etc.
- There is typically no silver bullet to be noticed.
- Know current resume reviewing software is not friendly to either side (hiring or applicant)
 - Put important items near the top of the first page
- Beware of keyword blitzes on resumes
 - It may help in robo-searches, but you're going to have to justify them

So what can you do?

- Like your tax return, don't do anything stupid
 - Put the wrong job or another company name on resumes
- **Network** – your colleagues, prior student referrals, etc.
- Do as much homework as possible
 - what the company does
 - what you might be doing
 - LinkedIn (you can be seen) and Glassdoor
- Everything you say on your resume, can and will be used against you...
- Job descriptions are wish-lists – rarely a perfect match
- Practice, Practice, Practice to get your 'stories' down

Can you hear me now?

- If you give a cell number, then make sure you have many bars! An old fashioned land-line is best.
- Be prepared to concisely explain anything on your resume
- Display being able to generate results, problem solving, teamwork vs individual contributor, behavioral interview Q's
- Show interest (e.g. know about the company, have questions)
- Do follow up (but keep expectations in check)

I'm going to Disneyland!

- Err on the side of formality for dress code (or ask)
- Know where you are going – dry run to site, be slightly early
- Ask questions (find out about your coworkers, company culture, and most importantly your boss – his/her management style)
 - You likely will spend inordinate amounts of time with them
 - Your boss will be key to your immediate future/success
- Be prepared to concisely explain what you are doing to more people
- Verbalize your problem solving thoughts.
 - I care more about what you think and how you think than you get it right. There are few textbook solutions in industry
 - I don't expect any new college grad to be able to produce results immediately
- Show “life” through positive verbal and body language
- Don't take it too personally
 - There are many things going on behind the scenes
- Again, do follow up (but keep expectations in check)

Final Thoughts

- Coming from UIUC you have an advantage – good engineering school
- Finding a job is possible, but it takes effort and determination. There are a lot of qualified candidates.
- Expect a background check, drug test, social network check, maybe a call to a reference
- Good reference - Xu Wang “Semiconductor industry job hunting, in retrospect” in this seminar series.
 - Not all places will want to see your thesis work, but have it available anyway
 - High Tech industry benefits are good. Save this conversation for the HR person or after you have an offer. Negotiate last. Hiring bonuses are usually reserved for experienced hires.