



OWNING YOUR JOB SEARCH

From Application to Interview to Salary



By Richard Harris

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the 
HARRIS
consulting group

DEDICATIONS

To my wife, Cathy, our sons, Riley and Bodhi, and our dog, Lola, for the daily love, laughter, family, and spirit that makes it all worthwhile through all the ups and downs that life can have.

To Scott Leese who challenges, encourages, motivates, and inspires like no other. The countless hours we've spent talking through these issues have been fun. #SurfAndSales

To my customers and sales community, thank you for giving me the opportunity to support your growth, personally, professionally, and organizationally.

To the people who told me "no, we chose someone else", thank you. Thank you for teaching me and helping me hone my craft and skills. Don't worry, you'll be back, and by then the price will be more. See you soon :)



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Advice That Works	4
Introduction	5
Part 1: How To Get More Interviews	6
Your Top 8 Questions Answered	6
Step 1: Update Your LinkedIn Profile	8
Step 2: Update Your Resume	8
Step 3: Know Your ICP (Ideal Company Profile)	8
Step 4: Apply To The Position	9
Step 5: Identify the Hiring Manager, or the Person Most Likely to Be the Hiring Manager	9
Step 6: Find The Company's Head Of HR	9
Step 7: PICK UP THE FRIGGIN PHONE!!!!	10
Step 8: PICK UP THE FRIGGIN PHONE AGAIN!!!!	10
Step 9: Wash, Rinse, Repeat After 48 Hours	10
Part 2: How To Make It To The Next Round In The Interview Process	11
How To Get "Short-Listed" In The Interview Process	11
The Secret Sauce	12
Best Questions For Candidates And Hiring Managers	13
Questions For Managers To Ask Their Reps	14
Part 3: Navigating Multiple Company Interviews, Offers, and Timelines	15
Verbal Offers	16
Negotiating Salary	16
The Written Offers	17
Handling The 30-60-90 Day Plan Request	19
Frequently Asked Questions	20
About The Author	24

ADVICE THAT WORKS

WHAT OTHERS ARE SAYING ABOUT THE ADVICE IN THIS EBOOK:



Matthew Gray • 2nd Senior Director | Vice President | Board Advisor | Angel Investor | Mu... 1w ...

Nice approach **Richard Harris™**, very well put. I think time and again this seemingly simple exercise of the initial interview is taken for granted. Now more than ever, candidates need to stand out to get the offer. This process exposes how the rep will work with the customer when they are working for you.

👍 · 1 Like | 💬 · 1 Reply



Dina Berger, Ph.D. Learning and Development Leader • 2nd Proven to transform people and organizations with passion and purp... 1w ...

I love this Richard Harris: it's bold. This method can be tweaked for a non-sales role too by positioning more broadly around business problems the hiring manager is looking to solve with this particular role. Great share, thank you!

👍 · 2 Likes | 💬 · 1 Reply



Slavyk Mayewski • 2nd Reducing manual work and eliminating dry runs for residential contra... 1w ...

Dropping straight 🔥🔥

👍 · 1 Like | 💬 · 1 Reply



Rob Jeppsen • 2nd Founder/CEO of Xvoyant | World's #1 Sales Improvement Platform | K... 1w ...

Richard this is money. Pure gold.

👍 · 1 Like | 💬 · 6 Replies



Kiran R. • 2nd Sales Enablement Specialist at UT Dallas | Business Honors Student 1w ...

As a student and in the midst of interviews, this is definitely helpful. I never thought of it in that way! Thanks for sharing.

👍 · 4 Likes | 💬 · 1 Reply



Amy Volas • 2nd Founder/CEO, 2X Entrepreneur | help startups hire sales lea... 1w ...

Richard, can I frame this and use this? Thanks for the super kind feedback and I'm grateful you shared this spot-on insight.

👍 · 2 Likes | 💬



David Roelke • 3rd+ Student-Athlete at Lehigh University College of Arts and Sci... 1w ...

Richard Harris™ Thank you! I'll be sure to let you know. As a 2020 grad hoping to step into my first full-time sales job, these questions will definitely help me vet the situation I'd be getting into a lot more effectively.

👍 | 💬

WE WANT YOUR FEEDBACK!

Has this worked for you?

We want to celebrate wins with you. If you've found that the advice in this ebook helped you land your job or your in the middle of the interview process and you're seeing results, let Richard know [here!](#)

INTRODUCTION

You are interviewing them even more than they are interviewing you. Of course, first you have to get to that part.

Landing, and of course, nailing job interviews is an invaluable life skill, and if you've ever had to wade through the job market, you probably know that your single greatest point of leverage is securing multiple job offers simultaneously. This puts pressure on employers to take you more seriously and make hiring decisions more swiftly. Therefore, the purpose of this ebook is not only to help score a job, but to help you score more job offers.

Note: While this guide is written from the sales perspective, I have given this advice to many friends in other industries, all of whom say it works flawlessly.

The following guide is structured with a sales funnel in mind. A sales funnel is the process which customers journey through before making a purchase. When you're searching for a new gig, you must journey through a similar funnel, one which leads you from job posting to job offer.

- Companies _____
- Jobs _____
- Outreach _____
- Interviewing _____
- Getting Offer _____
- Acceptance _____



PART 1: HOW TO GET MORE INTERVIEWS

Your Top 8 Questions Answered

1 How many companies do I apply to in a day?

Using this process, we recommend applying to no more than 3-4 companies per day. Simply put, its mentally taxing to do this, and it does take time to do each step.

Your mental health is important during this process. We want to keep a productive *“I am getting enough done along with having time to relax, and actually take advantage of your time off for self-reflection, spending time with your family, friends, or doing something you love, art, sports, etc.”*

We believe it’s important for you to “give yourself permission” to “exhale and breathe” during this job search time. It’s stressful and we want to encourage you to recognize that, own it, and find ways to reduce stress in healthy and productive ways.

2 Should I mention that I am also reaching out to the Hiring Manager or HR department?

No, let them do their own detective work. They can ask you about it in the interview if they want. You are then in the driver’s seat. If they ask if you have reached out to others, then by all means answer truthfully. Keep your reply simple and brief. For example, “Yes, I have.” Elaborate further and you will be at risk of “talking past the close.” Remember, a magician never tells his secrets.

3 What if the HR person and Hiring Manager compare notes?

They will agree that they appreciate the extra effort. They never compare notes (really, they don’t). They will think it’s overkill (and trust me you wouldn’t want to work for someone who cannot appreciate your hard work).

4 Who else can I contact besides HR and Hiring manager?

Anyone, Board member, rep, another sales manager from another department, etc.

5 What if I am not a 100% match?

It doesn’t matter. Apply for everything (within reason) and you may be able to network a bit, help someone else find a job, and in short, put out good karma in your job search. Stop creating a false belief system! Far too often people **do not apply for a job** internally at a company because they don’t feel they meet the requirements.

Continued on next page.

Your Top 8 Questions Answered (continued)

6

Do you prefer email or LinkedIn?

I prefer using all means necessary. I would even direct you to tweet them. You have absolutely nothing to lose. *See the LinkedIn examples that have worked on this page.*

7

How does doing all of this help me?

To prove you are more dedicated than the other 99% of candidates and because nobody else is doing it.

8

Does all this really work?

YES!

Join my network on LinkedIn



Richard Harris · SaaS Sales Leader
To: **Alfred Lin**

Hi Alfred,

Wondering if you can point me in the right direction at Achievers regarding the Director of Sales Development role there?

I recently completed this exact process for Mashery which was sold to intel last week for \$180m+.

Thanks for your time.

-Richard Harris
415.596.9149

Achievers



Alfred Lin · Partner at Sequoia Capital
To: **Richard Harris, Greg Brown**

You replied to this message:

Hi Richard,

You asked for an introduction to Achievers, so I am connecting you to Greg Brown, Chief Revenue Officer.

Alfred

Example 2

Your Inside Sales Manager Position



Richard Harris · SaaS Sales Leader
InMail Feedback: ★★★★★
Email: kelsey@opendns.com
To: **Kelsey Duignan**

Hi Kelsey,

First off, congrats on your new position at OpenDNS. I know they are a strong organization.

I actually just applied to the opening you have for this role and feel my background with technology, security, and leading inside sales teams are a strong match for this role.

Can you please tell me who at the organization is the best person to speak with regarding the open positions? If it is you, can you tell me the best way to get 15 minutes on your calendar for a quick introductory call?

Sincerely,
Richard Harris
415.596.9149

Example 1

RE: Your Inside Sales Manager Position



Richard Harris · SaaS Sales Leader
InMail Feedback: ★★★★★
Email: kelsey@opendns.com
To: **Kelsey Duignan**

Kelsey Duignan has accepted your InMail:

Richard,

Thanks for reaching out. I am actually the best person to talk to for this position. Let me know what time works best for you and I will give you a ring.

Thanks,
Kelsey

RE: Achievers



Richard Harris · SaaS Sales Leader
To: **Alfred Lin, Greg Brown**

Thanks, Alfred!

Greg, nice to e-meet you. Can you tell me who I should speak to at Achievers regarding the Director of Sales Development role I see posted?

I am very interested in the role as it speaks specifically to my background.

Sincerely,
Richard Harris
415.596.9149

Example 3

RE: Achievers



Greg Brown · Chief Revenue Officer at Achievers
To: **Richard Harris**

You replied to this message:

Hi Richard,

I'll have the first call with you to discuss the opportunity. Let me know if you have time to speak on Monday or Tuesday between 3-5pm.

Greg

STEP 1: UPDATE YOUR LINKEDIN PROFILE

1. Use a professional picture (no party pics).
2. Update jobs and dates.
 - a. Ensure your LinkedIn timeline matches your resume timeline.
 - b. Ensure your LinkedIn metrics match your resume metrics.
3. Be sure to get recommendations (not endorsements) from colleagues. Nothing demonstrates your value more than testimonials from your own customers (or in this case co-workers).
4. Include your phone number in your contact info.
5. Follow Step 1 when it comes to mentioning your successes.

Bad Example:

- a. Achieved 105% of goal Q4 2016
- b. Achieved 102% of goal CYE 2016
- c. Conversion rate of 75% from qualified to closed won

Good Example:

- a. 105% Q4 2016
- b. 102% CYE 2016
- c. 75% conversion rate

Pro Tip: LinkedIn is more important than your resume especially since folks will scroll forever through the info as opposed to viewing a 3 page resume as a burden.



STEP 2: UPDATE YOUR RESUME

1. Include real data.
2. Put numbers first.

STEP 3: KNOW YOUR ICP (IDEAL COMPANY PROFILE)

1. Establish your ideal type of organization.
 - a. A Fortune 500 company? A startup?
 - b. What stage? Early, expansion, growth, exit?
2. Determine what type of sales cycle you thrive under.
3. Define your ideal type of selling. B2B or B2C?
4. Identify your ideal position at your targeted company.



STEP 4: APPLY TO THE POSITION

Apply using the company's website when possible.

STEP 5: IDENTIFY THE HIRING MANAGER, OR THE PERSON MOST LIKELY TO BE THE HIRING MANAGER

1. Connect with them on LinkedIn.
2. Personalize the message using a variation of the following:

Hi _____,

I just applied to the open position on your website. Assuming you are the right hiring manager, what's the best way to get 15 minutes on your calendar to discuss? If you are not the right hiring manager, can you please direct me to the correct person?

*Sincerely,
XXXX*

3. If you are unable to connect, send them an InMail with the same message.

STEP 6: FIND THE COMPANY'S HEAD OF HR

1. Connect with them on LinkedIn.
2. Personalize the message using a variation of the following:

Hi _____,

I just applied to the open position on your website. I understand there is a process for applying, but I certainly want to do everything I can to make myself stand out from the rest of the candidates.

What is the best way to get 15 minutes on your calendar for an initial discussion?

*Sincerely,
XXXX*

STEP 7

PICK UP THE FRIGGIN PHONE!!!!

Call the potential hiring manager and leave a similar message to the one you sent on LinkedIn. Of course, feel free to be a little more creative.

Hi _____,

I just applied to the open position on your website. Assuming you are the right hiring manager, what's the best way to get 15 minutes on your calendar to discuss? I sent you a connection on LinkedIn as well.

Oh, and I promise I'm not stalking you, I'm just excited about the role and don't want to leave it all up to a single click on the "Apply" button on your website.

STEP 8

PICK UP THE FRIGGIN PHONE AGAIN!!!!

Call the potential HR person and leave the same message.

STEP 9

WASH, RINSE, REPEAT AFTER 48 HOURS

1. Be sure to keep it creative. Don't say you're following up or checking in on your resume submission. Spice it up.
2. Leave the following message for both the HR person and the Hiring Manager.

Hey, I know you're probably busy with 10 other things on your to do list. Would you do me the courtesy of letting me know where things stand so I don't have to keep bugging you?

Thanks again for your time. This is _____ and I am the one who sent you emails, left voicemails, and sent a LinkedIn request regarding _____ position. Here's my number _____.



PART 2: HOW TO MAKE IT TO THE NEXT ROUND IN THE INTERVIEW PROCESS

HOW TO GET “SHORT-LISTED” IN THE INTERVIEW PROCESS

This section includes recommendations that I have been giving to people that are actually helping them get short-listed.

YOU ARE INTERVIEWING THEM, NOT THE OTHER WAY AROUND.

It's a buyers' market for salespeople right now and you have to be better than “the other person”. Bad demos are easy to spot. Here are the steps you should remember:

1. Don't show up and throw up. It's always a buyers' market no matter what the pundits say.
2. Don't make your demo like a product training. No “features and benefits”, meaning talking all about your highlights. With your new LinkedIn profile, they should be asking you curiosity questions based on the numbers you've shown.
3. The interview is your “demo”.

HERE IS A SUGGESTION:

Email something like this to your hiring manager:

Dear _____.

Interviews are just like demoing your product, except this time I'm the product/service.

I have no desire to click on 1000 things and waste your time telling you every little thing.

I want to maximize your time to help you make the right decision in hiring me.

So, as I prep, here's what I would like to know:

1. *What pains will this rep help you solve in addition to hitting revenue targets?*
2. *What types of things does a rep do to bring out your best as a leader to support you and your goals?*
3. *What stuff do you hate discussing in an interview?*

And yes, this is how I prepare when I am working with a prospect/customer too.

WHY THIS WORKS:

1. Rarely is anyone else doing it
2. It shows them you understand a process
3. It shows them you understand how to discovery the customers' pains

THE SECRET SAUCE

1. It helps you measure their leadership capabilities.
2. It helps you understand if they are the kind of leader you want to work for. Ask questions like:
 - a. What kinds of things can I expect to learn from you?
 - b. How do you help your reps get better in their careers?
 - c. How many people have been promoted from under you in your entire career?
 - d. My clincher for interviews that everyone should be asking: *“If you could snap your fingers right now and improve 3 things immediately, what would they be?”*

The answer is ALWAYS: *“That’s a good question. Probably ____, ____, and ____.”*

And it’s beneficial to go one question further and ask, *“Great, what’s actually preventing that from actually happening?”*

This helps you understand the internal politics at the org for making decisions, the level of juice this person has in making change, and ultimately whether or not you want to work for them.

If someone answers this question, “Nothing”, then that’s a red flag and you shouldn’t take the job. I’d even suggest calling bullshit on them, right there in the interview. Ain’t nothing that perfect!

Whether you’re applying to be a VP of Sales for a tech startup’s Inside Sales Team, or you’ve got your eye on a marketing manager position at a Fortune 100 company, following the above steps will guarantee you more interviews. And for those still unsure about this process, no, you’re not being annoying.

There’s something called Persistent Pestering, and with so much competition and ever-increasing standards, the only way to distinguish yourself from the masses is to step out of your comfort zone and digitally tap on a few shoulders.



BEST QUESTIONS FOR CANDIDATES AND HIRING MANAGERS

INTRODUCTION:

Jobs are won and lost in the interview process. And mis-hires occur due to poor interview questions by leadership.

These questions are designed for both leaders and reps to make sure there is great alignment in management style, coachability, and sales team culture. Ultimately both parties want a good fit, but too often people dance around because they either don't know how to ask these questions, or don't understand the value of these kinds of questions. We hope this provides insight into both.



QUESTIONS FOR REPS TO ASK THEIR POTENTIAL SUPERVISOR

You win the job when it's your turn to ask questions. So ask these types of questions. Yes, they are specifically designed to put you on an even level with your potential new boss. They are designed so that you can display the level of confidence leaders want on their team. If a leader is taken aback by these questions and doesn't progress you to the next round, then it's probably a good thing, because it means they don't understand what real leadership means and worse, how to be a good leader.

Preamble by rep before asking questions:

Yes, I do have some questions. I hope you understand, just like you, I want to make sure this is a good fit for all of us. Also, I want you to hear these questions, not simply from the interview process, but I hope it shows you how I go about doing qualification and discovery.

1. Questions to understand their leadership style

- Aside from hitting the number, what else can a rep do to support you and your initiatives?
- How are your 1:1's structured?
- If I ask your team what how they feel you've contributed to their professional growth, what would they say?
- What was your turnover rate in 2019?
- From a leadership perspective, how do you differentiate between training, coaching, and micromanaging?

2. Onboarding Questions

- How do you differentiate sales training, product training, and process training in your onboarding?
- What is your expected ramp time?
- How many reps hit that in 2019?

3. Questions to understand internal company culture

- If you could change 3 things with the snap of your fingers, what would they be?
- Follow Up: What's happening internally that is preventing that from happening?

Preamble - My goal here is to make sure we find the right salespeople.

Sometimes that's based on experience, other times that's based on potential. When added together that helps us build the right culture.

1. Questions around coachability

- On a scale of 1-10, how coachable would you define yourself?
 1. Follow Up 1 - What's the difference between ___ and 10?
 2. Follow Up 2 - Can you provide an example in life where you've received feedback, implemented it, and how you kept using it?
- What kind of leader brings out the best in you?
 1. Typical answer will include "not micro-manage"
 2. Follow -Up How do you define micromanage?
 3. Follow Up - Do you have an example from a previous role where someone micromanaged you?
 4. Follow Up - Do you have an example from previous role where someone did not micromanage you?
- How much coaching do you like on a daily, weekly, or monthly basis?
 1. The goal here is for you as a leader to find out if it fits your company and style. Don't miss hire here.

2. Questions following a process

- What is something that is part of your regular routine?
- What bores you? How do you change it up?

3. Questions around aspirations

- If you could do anything, be anything, what would that be?
 1. (not looking for a sales-related answer)
 2. Follow Up - What's preventing you from pursuing that?

4. Questions around the internal senses of urgency

- How do you prioritize multiple things on your to-do list?
- Do you eat fast or slow?
 1. Slow indicates the ability to consistently follow a process
 2. Fast indicates the ability to move quickly from one thing to the next.

QUESTIONS FOR MANAGERS TO ASK THEIR REPS



PART 3: NAVIGATING MULTIPLE COMPANY INTERVIEWS, OFFERS, AND TIMELINES

This is the fun part of interviewing. Rule #1, NEVER APOLOGIZE during this part of the process

Your number one priority during this phase is to appropriately stall and delay so you can get as many offers as you can. Let me repeat this again. Your priority is to stall and delay so you can get as many offers as you can. They never all show up on the same day, so don't waste time thinking about that. It is simply how the game is played. Keep in mind, this is what they are doing while interviewing multiple candidates. Fair is fair and this is simply how the game is played.

MANAGING THE ANXIETY

You feel validated, you feel wanted, and yet many feel uncomfortable with the attention, or the realization that you actually hold all the cards. This feeling is reasonable simply because we are not used to it in many cases.

Part of your responsibility when it comes to multiple offers is going to be to delay and stall based on the timing. That is simply how it goes. This in addition to waiting for an offer increases your anxiety levels. In many cases we feel "forced" to make a decision on someone else's timeline. Or we simply do not like the anxiety of uncertainty even when it's good news, and rush to make a decision only to be disappointed or feel regretful later.

If you can work to detach yourself from the outcomes emotionally (more easily said than done in some cases), you will have the ability to choose what is best for you, your life, your current state, as well as your future. Focus on the long term goals of what is important to you and this will help detach from the emotional.

Once you accept this, you can work towards a slightly more logical vision and feeling towards the decision, and thereby reducing the anxiety and worry.

It is not your job to manage their anxiety during the process. You already have enough on your plate. If they cannot make things happen for you the way you want it, that is on them, not you. Do not apologize. You are doing nothing wrong looking out for your own self-interest.

Nobody is ever going to take better care of your career than you. Others can choose to support you and your decisions, but ultimately you have all the power. There is peace in this acceptance.



VERBAL OFFERS

Until the offer is in writing, it is not a legitimate offer. It is ok to verbally accept an offer while you wait for “the paper” and continue to explore other opportunities. It’s simply how the game is played.

You’ll be asked to commit to a start date with the verbal offer. Of course you say that you will make that work. That’s it, say nothing more until the written offer is received.

Should something else come along while you wait, that is 100% their issue, not yours. And frankly, this is what you want, right? Multiple offers.

NEGOTIATING SALARY

When it comes to negotiating salary, in most cases, you are now the top choice. However you need to confirm it out loud.

In addition, when they make the first offer, simply breathe, do not react, and remain neutral. If you have done your research and you see you are at the low end of the spectrum, then its ok to say, *“Hmmm, this is on the low end, can you help me understand how you approached this number?”*

“Hey ____, this is getting exciting.” This phrase makes them get happy ears and excited too, which is to your advantage. They now like you more. You are helping them hit a very important KPI, so internally they are feeling relieved.

Next say, *“So does this mean I am officially #1 assuming we agree on the details?”*

Now you need to pay attention to this part of their response. If they pause, and seem to stumble, it may mean there is still someone else in play.

If they answer right away, then you can usually take that statement as truth. What you need to know to negotiate better for yourself:

1. Do you research
2. Glassdoor, friends, mentors, trusted advisors.
3. Never bring up money first, let them.
4. When they ask, “what are your expectations?” Simply say, “fair market rate”
5. There are tons of things to negotiate:

Salary	Company Credit Card
Commissions	Additional Vacation
Bonuses	Upgraded Computer
Equity	Home Office
Severance Package (Managers Only)	Remote Work (Different than WFH)
Vacation	Insurance (Paid for more than you)
Car Allowance	

THE WRITTEN OFFERS

Here they come. They don't all show up at the same time. Sometimes you have two conversations and no verbal, 1 verbal and 1 written. It's enough to be excited, but also make you lose a lot of sleep. This is when you have to professionally stall.

If the offer is given to you on Monday or Tuesday, ask for a Friday deadline.

If the offer is given to you on Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, ask for the weekend to review and you will let them know 10am Monday morning. At minimum ask for 48 hours.

They will pressure you to sign. Do not let them "make you feel guilty" for not giving them what they want, this is not about them, this is about you, your future, your family, your life. You have absolute control.

You don't need to tell them this next part, but you need time to review benefits and healthcare, as well as seek advice from your mentors, family, etc. and that simply cannot be done in 24 hours and it is the truth.

During this time you can also assess where you are in the process of other opportunities. It is not required to let anyone else know that you are talking to other people. If you are at this stage, should they really be surprised?

Now if you have the first offer, and you want to push the other company, then you can simply say something like this,

"Hey, I know we are working on your timeline, so I wanted to let you know you guys are my first choice, but I just got an offer but don't want to give up on you. Any chance you can let me know where things stand?"

So another written offer comes in, what do you do?

You rejoice. This is what you have been waiting for. You can now take the time to figure out which role, company, and culture you want to be a part of. Again, ask for the time as mentioned above.

Now you will either need to figure out another way to stall the first offer or you may have to come clean and let the first offer (not the second one) know you have received an offer from someone else.

This is where you can seek to leverage your position to more money, vacation, expenses, equity, etc. Yes, you run some risk of upsetting the first company, and that is something you should consider. However, this is exactly what you wanted.



THE WRITTEN OFFERS (CONTINUED)

HOW TO SAY “NO” TO THE OFFER

So you have made your decision, how do you tell the other company(ies)? Simply, politely, and professionally.

“Hey _____, I really appreciate everything you and the team have done. I have decided to take a different offer with another company.”

That is all you need to say, nothing more. Less is always more when it comes to bad news for the receiving party.

It is ok to send this via email if you prefer. In some cases, it may be better for you and your professional brand to do it via phone/zoom. Let them hear your sincerity and see the expression on your face. Maybe you know them, maybe you were referred in, etc.

There will now be some emotional response from the other party. It could be disappointment, anger, frustration, even sadness. Remember it is not your responsibility to manage their emotions



or let downs. If the shoe were on the other foot, they don't want to manage your emotions either. Do you tell them who? I do not think its required, but up to you.

“You said we were the top choice, what happened? I understand, but the other company happened.” “I can't believe you did this, it's so unprofessional!”

Simply respond, “I understand you are disappointed but ultimately I had to do what is best for me (and my family), etc.”

Again, it is not your job to manage their disappointment. This is why you often get the “bad news” in email. They do not want to “deal” with your emotional disappointment and the conversation that comes with that. Again, NEVER APOLOGIZE you've done NOTHING wrong when looking out for your own best interest anymore than they are when they choose someone else.

CAN I TAKE AN OFFER, START A NEW JOB AND KEEP INTERVIEWING AND EVEN LEAVE?

Simply put, yes, 100%. You are always a free agent.

Even if you have taken the job and started, you need to look out for you. Just remember there a ton of people who have had offers rescinded or layoffs occur because of COVID. Simply put, a financial situation came up that the company had to adjust headcount. This is no different.

Here's how I would say it, *“Dear _____, I know this is not ideal but an offer has come along that I simply cannot pass up. My last effective day is _____. I wish you the best.”*

Do it politely, do it calmly, and DO NOT apologize. But you can say, “I understand” when they get upset. Which they do have the right to do. Everyone's perspective is fair and right in this situation.

Remember...

1. They cannot say anything about your employment status other than dates you work there.
2. You don't have to put it on your resume or LinkedIn profile
3. You've all signed a ton of non-disclosures, and frankly they need to be more worried about you not saying anything on Glassdoor than you worried about them. Glassdoor can be very anonymous.



HANDLING THE 30-60-90 DAY PLAN REQUEST

In the interview process, you have only a few tangible assets.

And handling the 30-60-90 day plan request is one of them. Remember, you are interviewing them as much as they are interviewing you. So this is your chance to explore their leadership style.

Obviously, every situation is unique. If you only have one interview on your horizon, or circumstances require you to take something you might not normally take, then this strategy may not be right at this time. Like many things, timing is everything.

The goal of this strategy is to keep getting yourself shortlisted. Showcase your ability to handle what many people feel is the uncomfortable part of negotiations in a live setting. Messaging is delicate in this scenario, so feel free to wordsmith to your own authentic voice.

Here's an example:

Hiring Manager - "Hey Richard, we would love to take you to the next step and see a 30-60-90 plan. Would you mind putting one together?"

Richard - "Sure. A couple quick questions:

1. Is one of the challenges for this role to teach the team how to better handle negotiations and the next steps around the proposal stage?

- If so, how often do you think that happens?
- What does the pipeline say?

2. How often are you hearing "they won't get back to me, they've gone dark" after sending a proposal?" (You have to make them commit to a number. So throw out, "More or less than 50% in your mind?")

Hiring Manager - "30%"

Richard - "Cool, so back to the 30-60-90 day plan, when can we schedule a time to walk through it?"

Hiring Manager - "Actually, can you send it over when you have it?"

Richard - "Well, that's interesting. In the interview process, a candidate only has so many specific assets, just like in sales, so my concern is that if I send it without a commitment, I might not get the next conversation. And you just said this is the part of the process where the team needs help. So I am trying to explain to you how I can teach the team to do this.

I respect the ask, but from my vantage point, it's just like a customer asking me to "email a proposal" without being able to walk them through it.

Might this work instead? I will bring it with me, walk you through it, and if we both agree its good, I am happy to hand it over. Is that fair?"

Now you wait. Other closing lines depending on your desire for the role.

"If I've offended you, maybe its not the right fit. But, I bet no other candidate has taken this approach. And if so, we should both be on your shortlist."

Closing thoughts...

If you have more than one company in your pipeline, then this is easier. If you have a company you LOVE and one that's "meh", then maybe you try this with the one that's "meh".

Just like all sales, your ability to close the offer will be based solely on your ability to walk away from the deal!

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

I am transitioning into sales as a second career. I'm well into my forties. I have a lot of experience, not in sales per se. I've been doing a lot of research, listening to a lot of podcasts, working on my resume, and all that kind of good stuff. So any advice for someone moving into sales as a 2nd career?

For this example, let's assume the first career was a teacher, and now the goal is to move on to phase 2. Teachers happen make some of the best sales people and should be moved to the top of the hiring stack above those with sales experience, and here's why:

1. Teaching is selling at scale.
2. Teachers know how to explain things in a very simple way. You can take what someone believes is complex and break it down to simpler elements, right?
3. Teachers are highly coachable. Teachers have to learn something, then internalize and translate it into a way that has to be taught to someone else.
4. Teachers know the value of a process, how to follow a process, and how to lead someone through a process.
5. Teachers have more patience.
6. Teachers have strong active listening skills and can more easily spot when someone is not paying attention or not getting it.
7. Teachers have the practice and finesse to helping someone figure it out on their own.

Conclusion: Look at your first career. Look for parallels around leadership, convincing people to change their minds, seeing big picture and breaking it down into smaller tasks.

How do I leverage the recruiter in the hiring process?

I would also say I would reach out to as many recruiters as you can, because they're going to interview you and guess what? Even if they don't want to put you in front of somebody, which emotionally doesn't feel good, it's a practice interview. We all need practice.

Talk to as many recruiters as you can. You do not need to tell the recruiters you are working with other recruiters. They know how the game is played. It's ok to tell the recruiter and your potential new employer you want to make more money as a reason for your job search.

Recruiters can give you honest feedback on your resume, tips on how to interview on Zoom, and so much more.

Finally, a job search is tough. Some weeks you will have tons of company interviews, while other weeks you will only have interviews with a recruiter. A week with nothing, but recruiter interviews are gold. They are your tentacles. Talking with them gives you the opportunity to reach others at scale. So don't get down on yourself if your week only includes interviews with recruiters.

I'm talking to several companies, all very similar roles. I need to make the decision as to what company I want to align myself with. What are some of the things that I should look out for? Title, culture, equity, salary, etc.?. Is it doing the thing that I love and aligning that?

Titles do matter as you look at your career. They matter a great deal, particularly when you get out of the sort of frontline kind of environment. There is a balance of navigating an upward trajectory by title and in some cases you may stall out. For example, it matters whether you've been a VP of Sales before, or whether you have not. It'll be much harder to get a VP of Sales job without ever having that title and tag, but you will eventually get it. What you get when you optimize for title is greater leverage in your negotiations around base salary, OTE, equity, vacation, and expenses.

Size and stage of the company matters as well when it comes to titles. It's different being a VP of Sales at a smaller Series A company than it is Series, B, C, or D. The role shifts. In some cases, you may have to take a VP role at a smaller company to get the title, grow the org, and then get a VP role at a larger stage company.

Life matters. One's personal circumstances are to be considered. Sometimes life does force us to take a lower title or role than we would like. There is no shame in taking a step back or laterally if it's going to support you and your family. You need a home, you need insurance, you need to be able to take care of yourself. Sometimes the optimization is about making sure you don't go under water. That's ok, in a few months you can get back at it.

Autonomy matters. We've all heard stories about taking a job where one thing was promised, but it was just not true. When interviewing for a next title role, be sure you understand the kinds of things you want to be able to make your own decisions about without having to check with someone. For example, hiring decisions, compensation plans for your team, signature authority over your own budget, etc.

The best way to prepare for this is to make a list of all the things your previous bosses have done that have bugged you. If they micromanaged you, then by all means write down the specific things they micromanaged. It's possible you will get the answers you want in the interview and then the story changes after you are there, but at least you did what you needed to do and you can decide in time if they are deserving of your services.

How should you respond in interviews when you are asked, "Why do you want to work here?"

This is a terrible question in most cases because the people asking are actually expecting you to kiss their behind, when that's really not what they want, they just don't know it. But you should play the game, then change the rules.

How do you play the game? By saying something like, *"Based on what I know about the company, its values, its product/service, and the people, I like what I see so far. And I'd like to ask you this in return, what makes someone the ideal candidate for this role to help you accomplish your goals?"*

This question will blow them away. This question will put you on the short list because you are telling them you see and understand their bigger picture. It forces them to be honest about the problems that exist around the role in a more intimate conversation. You are no longer selling them on hiring you. They are now buying you and want to convince you to work for them.

What do you do when they say an offer is coming, but it keeps getting delayed?

So this is really important to pay attention to. We all want to work for a company with a great culture. The definition of culture is not defined by the likability of your co-workers. The definition of culture is specifically built around the ability to get something done and one's tolerance for the delays in getting something done.

So when this happens, it's a big indicator of culture. If you've gone through an entire interview process and received a verbal offer, and written offer is taking days, or getting delayed several times, it should tell you how easy or hard it is to get things done in the organization overall, not just a job offer.

This gives you an opportunity to decide if you want to work at such a company. Yes, sometimes things can be delayed for real reasons like vacations, but even then, it's something to keep in mind.

What happens if I take a job and then a better one comes along within a few weeks or months?

As you absorb this next portion, remember, the ultimate goal is to always be professional. You are always a free agent. You are a mercenary for hire, to the highest bidder. If the company can find a way to save money, they will do it. If the company can find a way to make more money they will do it.

Why shouldn't you be allowed to do the same?

You do not need to apologize, but you can be professional. If you want to take the other job, take the other job, period. It's not your fault if another company values you more than your current company. That is the fault of your current company, not yours.

Be polite, but never apologize.

1. When they are rude, you be polite.
2. When they get upset and complain, you say you understand.
3. When they threaten you, say nothing, get up, and leave with a smile on your face and then report it to the Human Resources department, telling them it was completely unprofessional

Remember, let them be the jerks. Looking out for one's own best interest is not selfish, it's survival. Just be polite about it.

I interviewed with the CRO who wants to hire a Director of Sales. Should I be concerned they aren't hiring for a VP of Sales?

There are two answers to this question.

1. Maybe they really want someone young and hungry who can grow into the role.
 - You will want to ask specifically about this.
 - How come you're not hiring for a VP?
 - If I hit certain metrics as the Director, I want to be guaranteed the VP of Sales role. What would prevent this from happening?
2. They don't want to have another member on the executive team.
 - They don't want to give away that much in equity
 - They want to under pay and overwork someone.
 - They want someone else to help make them millionaires

So you must decide based on the information you have what the role is worth to you.

- Is the logo worth it?
- Is the role worth it for your long term goals?
- Are the benefits better?
- Is there a quality of life issue at play here? (WFH, less travel, shorter commute)

What does it mean during the interview when they don't have a compensation plan written and say that is part of your role since they are a startup?

This is a big red flag. It means they are unprepared and unwilling to pay fair market rate. They will work to lower your cash compensation.

This will be rooted in the false promises built on their own false belief system that they are a deity and they really are going to revolutionize the shoe-string industry. This level of passion is a must in the start-up world, right up until they start believing their own press. Simply, be polite, but stay away.

What is the most professional way to speak to gaps in your resume?

In 2020, if you have a gap in your resume, just say, "Its because of Corona."

If it's a larger gap you can explain it as a "Gap/Reflection Period". *"I felt it was important to take some time for myself and make sure that when I go after the next job, it's the right one for me, and I am the right person for my new employer."*

If you have a few small gigs during this bigger gap, you can still explain that you were doing your reflection, but took some work along the way to pay bills while you figure out your next move.

At what point do you prioritize the experience you're gaining at working and helping grow a startup versus the money you actually could be making out a bigger, more established, and funded type of company?

Welcome to adulthood. Eventually everyone will reach this stage where money and stability may start to be more attractive. You have to stop, take stock, and put some thoughts into what really matters. So you first want to make sure you understand what has changed and reflect on that in order to decide.

1. Significant other?
2. Rent?
3. Mortgage?
4. Marriage?
5. Kids?
6. Credit card debt?
7. Boredom?
8. More or less internal politics?
9. Tired of making other people millionaires?
10. Want a new car?
11. Going back to school?
12. Kids in private school?
13. Maybe you want a new challenge in a new environment
14. Maybe you want that bigger company experience
15. Maybe you want that bigger company logo
16. More money?
17. What comes after this role, either internally at the bigger company or can you parlay it into a bigger role with more equity somewhere else in a few years?

Summary

Through the entire interview process, remember that you are good enough. You have more than a skill, you have a craft you are honing. Your craft has a cross-section into your life. Both are important. Yes, you can compartmentalize them, but in reality, they flow in and out of each other.

Embracing the flow of both is where you find the joy.

Please try to find the ways to be kind to yourself in those moments when it's tough

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



MEET RICHARD HARRIS

Richard brings 20+ years of sales and SaaS experience working with companies like [Google](#), [Udemy](#), [Zoom](#), [Pandora](#), [Visa](#), [Pager Duty](#), [Gainsight](#), and others to the table when teaching about sales.

His passion is helping companies close the gap between the old school feature and benefits approach to focus on earning the right to ask questions, which questions to ask, and when to do it. Richard believes success comes when people stop talking about what they do and get them to start talking about the pains they solve. He ties all this together by focusing on a more relaxed conversational selling style that helps people go from strangers to acquaintances to trusted business allies.

Richard has been named a Top 25 Inside Sales Professional by the [American Association of Inside Sales](#) repeatedly. As well as a Top 10 Sales Development Leader as voted by Inside Sales and [Sales Hacker](#). He is also published in [Huffington Post, Inc](#), and most recently [NBCNews](#).

Richard lives in Northern California with a wife, Cathy, 2 boys, Riley (12) and Bodhi (10), and their dog Lola.

A special thanks to all my previous bosses, leaders, friends, and mentors. In particular, a big thanks to Scott Leese from Scott Leese Consulting for our friendship and partnership through the years where we have discussed these topics over and over again.

Have questions for Richard pertaining to your own unique situation(s)?
Connect with him [here](#) or on social:

