

60 TIPS TO BE THE TOP CANDIDATE REPORT

In this report, there are 60 tips for you to complete so you can shine and rise to the TOP as “the” candidate when interviewing for your ideal job. Consistently doing ALL 60 of these tips will break you out of the pack and propel you as the Leading Contender Candidate. Follow these important steps so you land the job you want, need, and deserve.

- 1. Schedule time for your job search tasks.** If you are not focused on your job search then time will pass you by and you will miss out on opportunities because you did not take action. If getting a job is a priority then set time aside for it just like you do for working out, traveling, personal appointments, etc.
- 2. Research industries, available jobs, and future opportunities.** How do you know what’s out there if you don’t do your research? Research is the foundation and basis of your job search process. When you research you gather intelligence and can then devise your job search strategy.
- 3. Determine the industries and jobs you are interested in pursuing.** You have to know what you like so you can charge ahead. People perform better in jobs they have a passion for over jobs that do not interest them. When you like a job, you perform more optimally and improve your chances at pay increases.
- 4. Determine companies that align with your goals and interests.** It’s hard to work for a company if you don’t respect their mission and goals. When your professional interests match with an organization then you can support their mission and it shows in your interviews, work, and achievements.
- 5. Identify pay range need/want.** You have to know your worth and what compensation is acceptable for you. This is important to not only support your living expenses and bank account, but it is also necessary to know the pay range so you attain financial compensation goals as you perform throughout your job.
- 6. Identify work location – near home, moving to a new area, remote, hybrid, etc.** It’s important to know your professional location preferences. Not only do you need to know what kind of location options but also where do you work best (e.g., in an office setting, outside, at home, part in the office & part at home).
- 7. Identify employment classification.** You must know which employment classification works for you and your availability otherwise you end up applying for roles that don’t fit your needs or that of the employer. Will you be full time, part time, contract, independent contractor, temporary, on-call, or volunteer?
- 8. Identify work preferences.** It is integral to know your work preferences so you can be successful. Are you someone that needs to work with others or do you prefer to be an independent contributor? Do you enjoy assembly line work or do you prefer researching from a desk? What are your preferences?
- 9. Sign up for job notifications on job search sites.** Once you choose your job search sites and sign up, you can have notifications sent to you instead of you having to search every day. Leveraging job search sites enables you to save time by having them do the searching while you peruse the results.
- 10. Identify and inventory your skill sets.** Knowing what you bring to the table is imperative in your job search process and that requires you completing a thorough inventory of your skill sets. This helps you identify which jobs you qualify for and which ones you may land to help you obtain more experience of those skills.

60 TIPS TO BE THE TOP CANDIDATE REPORT

- 11. Begin working on skills you don't currently possess but want to develop for new job opportunities.** If you don't have the skills for the job you want, then there are various ways you can learn those skills prior or during your search. You always want to expand your skill sets because it gives you more opportunities.
- 12. Inventory your job history.** Just like your skills, you need to do a thorough inventory of each job you have had throughout your life. This helps you gather skills and experiences that may be useful and applicable for specific jobs, as well as, for scenario identification to use for your interviews.
- 13. Note achievements throughout your work history.** You always want to track any achievements, awards, or recognitions you've earned throughout your work history. Employers want to know what you've achieved, what you're interested in achieving, and what you will achieve if you work with their company.
- 14. Identify credentials, certifications, and other professional accreditations.** It's inevitable that throughout your career you have completed various degrees, credentials, certifications, and other accreditations which are often important to employers – so inventory, list, and be ready to discuss them.
- 15. Generate a results-oriented resume.** Resumes have changed over the decades and you need to stay abreast of the current model – it's a results-oriented resume that employers want to see. That means you're not listing what you've done but rather what results you've accomplished for and with employers.
- 16. Remove errors from your resume.** Having errors in your resume is a big no-no! If you have misspellings, grammar issues, or inaccuracies you show that you do not have a strong attention to detail and perhaps potential issues with written communication. Make sure your resume is honest, accurate, & error free!
- 17. Confirm information provided is pertinent to position.** When you apply for a position, you must provide pertinent information that relates to the position otherwise you will not get an interview. If you apply for a CPA job, listing modeling experience from 10 years ago is neither pertinent or applicable to the CPA role.
- 18. Confirm resume technicalities.** Be sure your resume is up to date and that means only current information and technology is listed. List relevant experience up to a maximum of 15 years to minimize ageism and discrimination. It's also important to be succinct which means no more than 2 pages maximum.
- 19. Confirm resume matches job posting SEO.** If your resume does not include job posting search words then you do not have the key words for their search engine to select your resume for an interview. You must make sure your wording aligns with the job posting otherwise it will be a very long job search process.
- 20. Develop professional contact information.** Although we are individuals, it's important your contact information remains professional. Using batgirllikesbatboy@yahoo.com is a no-no! First the email name is too personal and the email service is dated – again, protect yourself from ageism and discrimination.
- 21. If applying for varied opportunities – develop a couple resume versions.** If your interests vary across industries, job roles, locations, etc. then you may need more than one version of your resume. To increase your interview potential, make sure your resume matches each job postings word search criteria.
- 22. Identify references.** Your references may or may not be called by a future employer, however, plan that they will contact them. This means you need to carefully select your references. Remember references are like testimonials - these people represent you, your experience, and your skills to a future employer.
- 23. Notify & update references.** Make sure your references are listed accurately which means you need to confirm with your references that you have the latest and greatest contact information. Your references should know all about your job search - never blind-side a reference – unless you don't want the job!

60 TIPS TO BE THE TOP CANDIDATE REPORT

- 24. Upload your content to multiple job search engines.** Now that your documentation is ready, make sure it's uploaded correctly in the job search engines to ensure a faster job search process. By doing this you set yourself up for faster responses overall – interviews, offers, questions, etc.
- 25. Clean up your social media.** Your online presence is vast. How does it look? If any posting could be considered offensive, vulgar, political, etc. – clean it up. Remember, when you work with or for an employer you become a direct representative of them and their business – even in the off hours online.
- 26. Create &/or update your LinkedIn profile.** Given that LinkedIn is a professional site leveraged by many employers and recruiters, it is a prime location to ensure you have a presence. If you don't have a profile already then generate one and keep it up to date. LinkedIn provides a plethora of networking options.
- 27. Give recommendations on LinkedIn.** Expand your influence and be a giver – a giver of recommendations to previous co-workers and employers. Keep it positive and do several across your work history. This will enable you to “reconnect” with co-workers/friends and possibly considered for new or potential openings.
- 28. Obtain recommendations on LinkedIn.** When you have recommendations on LinkedIn, employers can read them. If you don't have any recommendations – go ask for some! You have a work history, connect with previous co-workers and remember reciprocity is key.
- 29. Research people who may work for companies that you want to work with.** By following people who work for companies that you're interested in you can learn more about the organization. This also helps you understand the culture and company dynamics to help you determine if the company is a fit for you.
- 30. Hold Informational interviews with employees at potential employers.** Informational interviews are very helpful – they give you the real in reality at a company. Creating opportunities to gain perspective about an employer, a job, or a department helps you get better details and see if the company is a fit for you.
- 31. Develop an interview question list.** By developing a list of potential interview questions you'll be asked you determine what answers you need to generate and practice. Remember the interview questions are about what's important from the company's perspective – not yours.
- 32. Select scenarios for interview practice.** Identifying the right scenarios from your vast experience is important for an interview. When you demonstrate your ability to convey pertinent information succinctly and eloquently you lend faith to the employer that investing in you will benefit them exponentially.
- 33. Practice online interview skills.** Interviewing online is different then onsite and you need to be ready for a possible online panel interview. How you're perceived online in an interview is important because if they do business nationally or internationally online, you may have to represent the company.
- 34. Get the “words” right and practice.** This is the hard part – knowing how to succinctly, accurately, and eloquently represent your experience, knowledge, and skills without sounding canned. Remember, the words you use and how you speak is how they envision you speaking on their behalf.
- 35. Sell YOU.** Being able to sell YOU without sounding arrogant requires tremendous finesse and skill. Many people struggle in this area. This is where your tone, pauses, word choice and emphasis, cadence, scenario choices, etc. are judged. Getting this down will make or break your interview and determine the outcome.
- 36. Develop list of questions for interviewer.** Interviews are a two-way street – they aren't just interviewing you. Develop a list of questions for the employer. Being prepared shows you researched the company, you're interested, have thoughtful questions, and are determining if the company is a fit for you, too.

60 TIPS TO BE THE TOP CANDIDATE REPORT

- 37. Identify and contact possible recruiters you want to work with.** Relying solely on online options and referrals is not in your best interest. If you can work with a recruiter and their fee is paid by the employer, I recommend you do it. Recruiters know what the company is looking for and can really help you prepare.
- 38. Network.** If you don't get yourself out there for others to see, recognize, and notice then you will be the greatest kept secret. That is NOT a good thing when looking for a job. Reaching out and networking is critical to knowing and sharing upcoming opportunities, connecting, and building a referral network.
- 39. Track your interview process.** There is nothing worse than an employer calling a candidate and the candidate has no idea which employer or position they applied for – you sound disorganized, callous, and unprofessional. Tracking your interview process keeps you focused, organized, and confident.
- 40. Develop your cover letter or letter of interest template.** Leveraging your cover letter or letter of interest template that you created helps keep you organized, ready to apply in a moment's notice, and confident. Remember to keep the letters unique per posting so they do not sound canned – they always know.
- 41. Develop a thank you letter template.** Just like the cover letter, a thank you letter template is integral in the job search process. You need to ensure it enables uniqueness per posting while enabling you to leverage a consistent format. Sending thank you letters helps you stand out – make sure they are strong.
- 42. Set up your interview space at home.** Your interview space needs to be ready to go at all times. If you look like you're in a dark cave and can't present yourself then no one is going to hire you. Remember they're expecting you to present yourself to their customers and clients every day. Be prepared and be ready!
- 43. Evaluate wardrobe for interview apparel.** Knowing that you have interview clothes readily available is important – which means you need to spend some time in your closet. Determine what you can use and if you need anything. Your first impression is the most important impression – it matters so make it count.
- 44. Buy or augment your interview apparel.** You need at least 3 interview wardrobe options as you may have more than one interview. There are several options to do this inexpensively while still ensuring you look sharp – dress to impress. You don't ever want to show up looking more casual than your interviewers.
- 45. Practice interviewing in interview apparel.** If you haven't worn interview clothes in a while, you may find them uncomfortable, cause you to overheat, or they may not fit as you remember. You want to practice so you look comfortable during your interview and not draw attention to your discomfort or fidgeting.
- 46. Practice multiple interview options.** There are multiple interview options – in person, online, 1 on 1, panel, etc. Practicing each of these styles is important so you are not caught off guard. The goal is to look comfortable. Remember, how you appear in front of them is how they imagine you with customers.
- 47. Send thank you letters.** Highlighting the right content in a thank you letter to a potential employer after an interview helps you stand out. Getting the thank you letter out quickly after an interview shows consideration, follow-up skills, and interest. When they see this, they envision how you are with clients.
- 48. Determine responses for gaps in employment.** Having a plan for accurately explaining a gap in employment is a skill you need to get right. Many employers have expectations of what they believe are acceptable reasons for employment gaps – this is something I easily help my clients address.
- 49. Determine honest, appropriate responses for situations when you were let go or left a position.** Just like explaining gaps in employment, the same applies for when you were let go or left a position. Employers may have expectations of what they believe are acceptable reasons – again I help my clients in this area.

60 TIPS TO BE THE TOP CANDIDATE REPORT

- 50. Obtain answers to all your questions prior to accepting a position.** Get answers to all of your questions so you can decide to accept or decline an offer. Make sure questions are addressed before you accept, otherwise you may regret your decision. Anything “special” should be in writing to allay any concerns.
- 51. Prioritize your “extras” for negotiating.** There are so many items that can be negotiated prior to acceptance of a position. You need to identify your priorities and be prepared to negotiate at the time an offer is made – or shortly thereafter. This is another area I help clients navigate through in the process.
- 52. Refrain from drug substances to pass drug tests.** In some industries it’s standard to complete a drug test. This means you need to plan ahead to pass it in order to gain employment. If this is a concern, you need to be sure you can pass before you engage in the interview process; don’t waste everyone’s time.
- 53. Set a reasonable start date.** Make sure you know your available start date before accepting the position and that this has been agreed upon. Remember, you want to make a great first impression when you start, so be rested, ready, and energized – and that requires a start date that enables you to be all these things.
- 54. Accept position.** Once you’ve made your decision to accept the position – you can do that verbally. If you want to send an “I’m excited to start letter” you can do that – it’s a nice touch, but it’s not required. It’s time to celebrate as you’ve reached your goal!
- 55. Decline other offers gracefully.** Some other offers may roll in after you’ve accepted the position. Gracefully decline, express appreciation for the offer, and keep the door open with them should your situation change down the road. Keep their contact information readily available for future use.
- 56. Add new employment to resume.** Update your resume with the new position and applicable role information. As you continue to work with your new employer keep your resume up to date - you never know when a viable opportunity or promotion may be on the horizon. Be prepared!
- 57. Add new employment to LinkedIn profile.** Just like your resume - update your LinkedIn profile with the new position and applicable role information. Again, continue to keep this profile updated throughout your tenure as you never know when another opportunity may arise. Being prepared is integral.
- 58. Publicize on LinkedIn starting at new position.** Once you start, publicize on LinkedIn that you started a new position because this keeps your networking door open. Continuing relationships that you’ve built is important because it’s not just about what someone can do for you – networking is about connection.
- 59. Update social media with new position.** Update your social media profiles with your new position information. Other platforms can also serve as a place for personal and professional connection. Networking across platforms helps you build connections and a professional support system.
- 60. If you worked with a recruiter – thank recruiter for assistance and post a recommendation.** Closing the loop on an engagement with a recruiter is important – they went to bat for you. Showing appreciation and posting a recommendation helps them remember you in the future should you need their services again.

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What Should You Do Next?

Now you need to talk to me because I guarantee you aren't doing all of these important steps well and you might need resources to pull your skill sets out or to get the right "words". *99.9% of every client that I've helped have said that the words that I give them are the secret magic sauce.*

You might try and figure this stuff out yourself but when's the last time you interviewed?

And when's the last time you actually had to land the job that you really wanted?

Times have changed and you've got to have the right language otherwise you're going to get passed by.

So, book a call with me and get the results you want faster!

[BOOK A CALL HERE](#)

You can also schedule a call via my:

- ✓ Website: www.ShiningOutcomes.com
- ✓ Cell: (208) 610-1750
- ✓ Email: Shawna@ShiningOutcomes.com

"I would like to give my sincerest recommendation for attaining services with Shawna Champlin with Shining Outcomes. With Shawna's past experiences and expertise in HR, project management, operations, and sales she was easily able to help point me in the right direction. Shawna really listened to my frustrations and was able to easily articulate areas I needed to focus my energies on. She was able to coach me through owning my strengths as well as being able to articulate what I bring to an organization. She was accessible, easy to talk to, incredibly professional and trustworthy. I would tell anyone to utilize her expertise and will happily continue our working relationship."

ANGELA PUMFORD, DIRECTOR OF SALES, WESTERN US, EMBA

Meet Shawna

For decades, Shawna has helped people find their confidence, identify what they bring to the table, improve their self-sales skills, polish their interview competencies, plan their career trajectory, and more. She is a masterful Interview, Career, & Life Coach that helps you strategize your overall career options, dreams, and goals so you can truly live the life you love.

Shawna has over 30+ years in Corporate America working in for-profit and non-profit organizations across the Auto, Education, Health Care, and Financial industries in roles from HR, Recruiting, Management, Operations, IT, Sales, Marketing, Program/Project Management, QA/QI, Analysis, Training, and Coaching. Throughout her career she's interviewed tons of candidates, built and managed large teams, ran large program/project teams, promoted many team members, and helped people land the jobs they want. It's time you focused on what you want, need, and deserve.

