



## CAREER LEADER

### ENDING THE INTERVIEW: A SCRIPT

In my experience, and the experience of almost all the hiring managers and recruiters I've talked with, many students—most students—are reluctant to go for the close when they're interviewing. This means actually *asking for the job*.

If you don't say that you want the job, your chances of getting the offer drop by between 20% and 100%.

The reasons? First, nobody wants to be rejected. That may be silly, but it's true. Second, the clock is ticking. If I offer you a position, I have to give you time to consider. We negotiate terms. And while you're thinking it over and we're spelling out terms, my other candidates may have received other offers, taken other positions.

So if I'm a hiring manager, and I have three finalists—Harry, Ron and Hermione, and I like them all equally—and in fact, I'd love to hire all three of them (but I only have one position to fill), but I don't think either Hermione or Harry will accept my offer... Congratulations, Mr. Weasley!

In fact, even if I prefer Hermione, but I think she's going to take an offer someplace else, Ron's and Harry's chances just went from 33% to 50%. I will not tie up my offer with Hermione.

Now, you may not want to feel rejected, either. Or want to be seen as "pushy." So what to do?

Every interview winds down the same way. After asking you a lot of questions the interviewer says, "So, do you have any questions for me?" And you do. Saying "No, not really" indicates that you aren't interested, you just want to get this interview over with. So, you ask a couple of questions.

Then the interviewer says, "Any more questions?" And here you come to the proverbial fork in the road. Which direction you go in depends on your being fully honest with yourself. If you're not 100% bought in, you say, "Well, I'm just wondering what the next steps in the interview process are and when you'll be making your decision."

But if you are super-interested, here's your script:

"Well, I don't have any other questions right now, but I do just want to say that I was really interested in this opportunity before we had this chance talk, and I'm a hundred times more excited about it now. I want you to know that I really, really want this job."

Just by saying that, you bumped up your chances by 10% or 15%. But you can do even better. Because then you say, "I *really* want this job. And I'd like to take two minutes to tell you why. I've done some pretty in-depth career self-assessment during my time in this program, and I know that my strongest interests are A and B. And that I'm most



## CAREER LEADER

highly motivated by C and D. And that my greatest strengths are E, F and G.” (A, B...G are from your CareerLeader results.)

*And you close by saying, “Please correct me if I’m wrong, because I don’t want to get the wrong job any more than you want to hire the wrong person. But my understanding of this position is that it will allow me to express those interests, use those skills, and—if I’m successful—get some of those rewards. But please, if I have this wrong, tell me. Better that we both know now, rather than find out later on.”*

So, what have you done in these two or three minutes? Four things.

1. You said that you want the job. (IF you really do. This is the time for rigorous honesty.) *“An offer to me will not be wasted.”*
2. You explained why you want it—you backed up your assertion that you want it.
3. You signaled to the interviewer that you are being honest, because you really, really don’t want the wrong position. You want to be in the right job and you want the company to be glad that they hired you.
4. If you have misjudged, you gave the interviewer the chance to save you from yourself. Which is a gift, because now you’re not going get hired for a position in which you are going to be miserable and unsuccessful.

So, in return for three minutes of talking and maybe five minutes reviewing your CareerLeader assessment, you have gone from one of three or four top candidates to *number one* of three or four. And if that’s not a good return on your investment, I don’t know what is (or maybe I went to the wrong business school).