



# HIRING SMARTER & INTERVIEWING STRONGER

*A practical guide for job seekers and hiring teams to improve outcomes, communication, and decision-making.*

## THE HIRING BLUEPRINT

### JOB SEEKERS: Show Your Value

- Step 1: List **3–5 business problems** you excel at solving (e.g., messy processes, retention issues, inaccurate reporting).
- Step 2: For each, draft a **STAR** example. Situation – Task – Action – Results.
- Step 3: Practice telling your STAR stories in **2 minutes or less**.

### HIRING TEAMS: Before You Post

- Define the **success profile** for the role (outcomes, not just responsibilities).
- Establish a **single decision maker + essential stakeholders**.
- Clarify **budget + approval flexibility** for exceptional candidates.
- Design an efficient process with **2–4 interviews** for most roles, panels of no more than 2–3 interviewers.
- **Document** your process and **share** it with candidates upfront.

## MARKET-RATE REALITY

### JOB SEEKERS: Know Your Market Value

- Ask **neutral, concrete** questions such as “What range is budgeted for this role?”
- Set your **target range** based on market data + your financial needs.
- **Real market rate** = what strong candidates are currently earning and accepting.

### HIRING TEAMS: Before You Post

- Supplement **comp reports** with actual candidate conversations.
- If top candidates are consistently out of range, **raise budget, adjust scope, or add perks** such as flex time and generous PTO.

## THE 48-HOUR FOLLOW-UP STANDARD

### JOB SEEKERS: Your Post-Interview 48-Hour Plan

- **Within 48 hours:** Send a thank-you email that restates your value proposition + connects one concrete example to a problem the team mentioned
- **If no update by the promised date:** Send a polite check-in with a small value add (short insight, link, clarification).
- **Keep interviewing.** Never hinge your search on one “perfect” role.

### HIRING TEAMS: 48-Hour Response Standards

- Provide a **yes/no/next step within 48 hours** of interviews.
- **If more time is needed:** send a brief status update with a new expected date.
- **Pre-define the process:** decision maker, steps, interview count, typical timing.
- **Candidate experience** = talent brand. Silence erodes trust.