

## ***MEETING THE BIG CHEESE***

The moment of truth – you’ve made the final meeting. Now it’s the moment of truth.

The final meeting however is not only about getting the job but also about you knowing that you want the job. Set your goals upfront – you want the company to offer you the job but you also want to gather as much information from the final interview to make an informed decision regards whether you actually want to work for the company.

Preparing for the final interview is vital and often overlooked. Here are some guidelines that will ensure that you are prepared and that you impress the final interviewer. Remember: the final interviewer will in all likelihood be your new boss and feeling comfortable that you can work with him or her is crucial to achieving your long term career goals. Here are some preparation guidelines that you simply must follow:

- Nothing impresses a company more than an informed candidate - and I mean informed, not arrogant. After your first meeting you should have a specification detailing a job description. Now you can get down to business. Start by gathering information regards the company from the web and getting a real understanding of the company’s profile and business ethics. I like looking for aspects such as CSI programs, product information, management structure and any form of information pertaining to future and potential growth.
- Google the name of the company or it’s CEO. I cannot tell you the amount of candidates that tell me they started working for a company and the company was acquired or liquidated. General searches will reveal any complaints problems or hidden deals that may be lurking in the shadows.
- Then if you can Google the person who will be interviewing you. I think understanding the background of your interviewer is a good thing. I especially recommend this for a final interview with the MD or CEO. Most successful business people love having their ego’s stroked and the fact that you have shown interested is a good sign and even better for you as you know more about your new boss.

- By the time your final interview arrives you should have a good understanding of the role and creating a list of questions will be vital. I also recommend asking questions regards incentive and shares schemes as this shows long term interest in the business. It also provides insight into the companies aspirations.

You are now ready for your final interview. Here are some golden rules for your meeting with the big cheese.

- Call your recruiter the day before the interview and confirm the appointment.
- Do not be late for the interview. – there are no excuses. When arriving at the interview, switch your cellphone off and wait patiently for your interviewer. Do not take family members to the interview if you have taken a lift. Let them wait in the car.
- Do not be nervous. Remember the person you are meeting was once in your seat. Most final meetings are what I call a courteously meeting and often just an informal discussion to gauge personality fit. So you may be in for a very informal discussion. You should not assume this, but arriving tense will certainly lessen your chances of showing your true personality.

It is important to remember that most HR Managers know that their recommendation to their boss regards talent will influence their bonuses. Even HR managers have performance appraisals. This means that after being screened by a recruiter, HR manager and possibly even some line managers you must have made somebody feel comfortable that you can do the job and that you can fit into the company.

So very importantly, if you have reached your final meeting do not oversell yourself. Your sales pitch has already worked keep a cool head. Your previous accomplishments and promotions in your current company remain your secret weapon use this subtle if and when necessary as your WMD.

Try keep your answers short and to the point often top decision makers just want to know that you have direction and you still want to keep time at the end of the interview for your questions. So make sure when speaking you speak as if your are telling a story – your life story.

Do not get flustered when the person interviewing you probes something in the interview. I have had candidates say their interview went very badly and they got the job, always keep a positive frame of mind.

You should not leave the interview without indicating that you have done your research, so when asking questions, ask something that is relevant regards the company's future.

I always feel that in most final interviews the line manager will actually tell you at the meeting that they are interested. They will simply just hide their interest. Hints should be asking regards your money expectation or your resignation period.

The way that you are interviewed in the final interview often will tell you about a company's methodology of accessing talent. Of course this is a huge generalisation but as an example, I have had clients conduct final interviews with a panel. I think this is an insult to prospective talent and provides no insight for either party on what actually lies behind the company walls.

A lot of top companies will insist that the CEO has the final courteously meeting, which I think is fantastic, as it is normally this individual who sets the scene for the companies vision.

A good final interview process should leave you excited and comfortable. You should feel that you know what the role will encompass and what type of people you will be working with. The best interviewers will make you feel comfortable and ensure that you provide them with the information they need to make a final decision.

After the interview, call your recruiter and provide the recruiter with feedback, especially telling the recruiter if you're keen on the opportunity and why.

Ask the recruiter to call you when they have feedback and the unfortunately the rest is up to fate.