

Interviewing Techniques and the Successful Search for a Superintendent Position

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Search Firms Schedule for Hiring

- Proposal Stage
- Hiring Process
- Planning Meeting
- Focus Groups and Individual Interviews
- Superintendent Profile
- Advertising
- Recruitment

The Hiring Process

- Credentials File and Reference Checks
- First Interviews
- Second Interview
- Site or No Site Visit
- Negotiate Contract
- Start Job

Do's and Don'ts in the Application Process

- Prepare a resume that is complete and error free. Target it to the position for which you are applying.
- Develop a strong cover letter that speaks to your background and how that background meets the qualifications of the position.
- Select references and reference letters carefully.

Dos and Don'ts in the Application Process

- Letters should be current and reflect your recent qualifications possibly speak to your qualifications for this job. No old reference letters.
- No date gaps in resume.
- Complete whole application form putting forth your best qualifications.
- If you have been let go, say so and why.
- Complete honesty in all you state.

The Most Important Interview

- The Board is trying to see if you are a good fit for the district and most importantly if they can work with you
- They want to be convinced that you are the best fit for the job – it is your goal to make them feel that way
- They are less interested in your credentials than these 2 items

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- Decide you want to be a superintendent of a particular district before you apply.
- Make sure your family is agreeable to the change.
- The search process is a very public process and subject to open meeting laws
- The media will be involved.
- People will Google you, call about you to others and generally dig into your past.
- The decision to hire you is more about how you will work with the Board and less about your past accomplishments

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- * The Board is looking for a match for their needs. Know what those needs are by doing your homework on the district.
- * Understand that the competition is strong for top positions.
- * You must be able to address the needs and questions from a variety of constituencies from students to community members.

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- You must have endurance to go through the whole process. The 2nd interview day is long.
- Understand that your family may be involved in the meet and greet part of the interview process.

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- * If you don't get the job think about why that may have happened and what do I need to do to improve my marketability. Don't bad mouth the district because you were not selected. Remember it is about the MATCH!

Dos and Don'ts in the Interview

- Dress professionally.
- Be on time.
- Interview for the job you want not the one you are currently doing.
- Prepare adequately for the interview by responding to sample questions.
- Be able to give examples.
- Shake hands with each interviewer before and after the interview.

Dos and Don'ts in the Interview

- Don't speak too long on one question. You only have so much time. Don't talk yourself out of a job!
- Never inflate your work or singly lie about something.
- Seek clarification if you do not understand a question.
- Don't come off as arrogant. They are trying to see if they can work with you.

Dos and Don'ts in the Interview

- If you use humor, make sure it is appropriate to the questions and not offensive or ambiguous.
- Know the district and its hot buttons and never enter them with fixed answers. They just want you to understand their point of view.

Dos and Don'ts in the Interview

- Never underestimate the power of one question or one answer. Each question means something to someone.
- Don't be an inch deep and a mile wide. Give specifics and examples of what you have done.
- Don't be a random responder. Focus on the question and answer it directly. They want to know if you can be succinct.

Dos and Don'ts of the Interview

- Don't leave them hanging on questions. Give a response and details and then close.
- Show some passion for the position and what you stand for in education. They want to know you want the job and can do it.
- Do not use critical examples of your current district in responding to questions.
- Don't name drop unless asked for a name as part of a question or to put an answer in context.

Dos and Don'ts of the Interview

- Don't get too emotional or intense in the interview. Most people want to work with someone who is in control of themselves.
- Keep your facial expressions professional and pleasant.
- Don't answer illegal questions unless you want to for some reason. Move the discussion to the position not something personal.

Dos and Don'ts of the Interview

- If you are an internal candidate you must tell them how it will be if you get this position. They don't know how you will act in this new position and they want to know. You need to show them you can do the superintendent job.
- Have questions for them – not trivial ones that you should know the answer to already.
- Thank them for the interview. Be gracious!

Getting Hired

- If not interested after the interview, bow out soon and gracefully.
- Be able to answer yes if offered the job.
- Agree to negotiate the contract – get advice
- Let the Board direct communications
- Let the current Board know as soon as you accept the position
- Don't use an offer as a bargaining chip with your Board – have that discussion sooner – next time you may not be asked to interview

Getting Hired

- Sign the contract and begin your entry with an entry plan to the new district and an exit plan from your current district.
- Enjoy your last days in your current district. Leave with positive feelings toward you if possible.
- Enjoy your honeymoon in your new district. Get to know people. Listen before acting.
