

Section 6

The Final Stages of the Hiring Process

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Overview

This section is designed to give you a thorough understanding of follow-up interviews, receiving and negotiating job offers, and the final stages of the hiring process. At this point, you have completed an initial interview and the company has decided that you are a candidate of interest. Understanding how a follow up interview will be conducted will help you prepare more effectively. The information on offers and offer negotiations is included to help you make an informed decision when you get to that stage of the interview process. Your Orion Candidate Recruiter will also be there throughout the entire process to assist you.

Second Interviews

Congratulations! You have successfully completed your initial interview and are moving to a second interview! This time around, expect to spend more time at the company, talk to more people, individually and collectively, and have your skills and personality scrutinized more closely.

From an employer's perspective, the second interview is a chance to closely evaluate a candidate's abilities and interpersonal skills. Your prospective employer wants to see that you can do the job and work well with colleagues. Be aware that many employers bring in several candidates on the same day to streamline the second interview process. Your challenge is to distinguish yourself from the other candidates. Remember your interview fundamentals: have a plan, prepare good examples, and close the interview.

What to Expect

On your first interview, you probably met with one or two people. It is even possible that the only interview you have conducted was a phone interview. This time, be prepared to meet several more interviewers over the course of the day, including potential managers, coworkers and other staff members. If you meet with a panel or group, be sure to make eye contact with both the individual asking the question and the group as a whole.

You may meet individually with several people, who will most likely ask you similar questions. Keep your answers consistent but mix up your delivery so that your answers do not sound stale or staged. If possible, before the interview, acquire a list of the people you will be meeting with and do a little research on each one. Then ask questions that show your knowledge of each person.

Be sure to talk to your Orion Candidate Recruiter and the Account Executive assigned to that particular company prior to your interview to make sure you know what to expect. In most cases, we have had individuals interview at the company in the past and will be able to share some key insights.

Prior to your second interview, make sure you review this guide and your interview notes. The interviewing fundamentals covered earlier are just as applicable for second interviews. You must have a plan, practice questions, identify specific examples to use, and close an interview. In addition to the fundamentals covered previously, keep the following tips in mind as you prepare for your interview.

Be early. Make sure you give yourself plenty of time to get to your interview. You will more than likely be traveling in an unfamiliar area. Err on the side of caution and leave earlier than you normally would. If possible, travel to the site the day before to make sure you are 100% sure where you are going.

Be prepared. Make sure you know the appropriate attire to wear and look as sharp as possible. Ensure you have a professional portfolio with additional copies of your resume and professional references. If you are preparing for a sales interview, make sure you have a brag book prepared. You do not want to be caught rushing around the morning of the interview because you did not properly prepare.

Develop a plan. Do additional research on the company. Talk to the Orion team and look online to ensure you can make your case. Know what the company wants and be prepared to talk to those points. Identify strengths and examples to support your case.

Do not assume anything. You do not have the job yet. You must impress everybody you speak with. Be friendly to everyone. Janitors, secretaries, assistants and other support staff sometimes have the ear of key decision makers. Be courteous.

Close the interview. You must close the interview and ask for the job. Show them you want the job in no uncertain terms and close the deal.

Offers

It is important that you consider everything when making a decision because an offer does not consist exclusively of a base salary. If the company cannot meet your salary requirements, it may be able to make it up to you in other ways, such as overtime, bonuses, company vehicle, or growth potential. Job satisfaction and advancement potential are two things you should also weigh heavily when considering an offer.

Remember, we are here to help. Consult with your Orion Recruiter during the offer process. We will help answer questions and work with you to ensure you get the best possible overall package. It is a critical time in the hiring process, so please make sure you talk with us regularly.

Keys to Success

Companies typically give a candidate anywhere between two to ten days to consider a potential offer. Some companies will specify the decision deadline in an offer letter. The current business standard is five business days. You should be deliberating on your decision throughout the hiring process and be prepared to make a decision as soon as possible.

Waiting until the last moment possible to accept an offer can make an unintended poor first impression. The Orion team will guide you throughout the offer process. Use our experience to your advantage.

Salary: What Can I Expect to Receive?

The short answer is it varies depending on your qualifications, background, the job location, and the pay range for the specific position. Rest assured the entire Orion team is here to help you secure the best possible overall package for you.

In some cases there is not much flexibility when it comes to salary. The pay structure for entire companies is often based on internal equity: what other individuals with similar qualifications who are currently at the company make. So, major fluctuations in that number can upset the whole system. But even notoriously competitive industries will bend a little. Most companies have a small pay band, typically a few thousand dollars, that they can flex based on an individual's performance during the interview process. The best interviewers are typically on the top end of a company's pay band. Keep that in mind when you are preparing for second or subsequent interviews.

Other companies tend to be less flexible about basic pay. When some companies extend an offer, they base it on what they perceive as your market value. These companies feel that they have a pretty good idea about what they have to pay to be competitive and attract the best candidates.

Keep in mind that the company's benefits package can add several thousand dollars to an offer and salary alone should not be the only consideration when evaluating an offer. Think about the entire package and decide what best meets the needs of you and your family. Talk through your offer with your Orion Recruiter. Your recruiter can answer any questions you may have to ensure you have all the information to make the best possible decision.

Negotiating

Many people think that once they have landed and aced an interview, all of their work is done. But, sometimes deciding whether or not to accept a job offer can be just as stressful and time-consuming as getting to that point in the first place. One point of contention is salary negotiation. This process can be overwhelming, particularly for job seekers without a great deal of experience.

Negotiating a fair and practical salary is a critical step in the job search process, and one that can be navigated smoothly if you know what to do -- and what not to do. Do not try this on your own. Use the Orion Team and our extensive experience to gain the best possible offer for you. Offer negotiation is one of our most important roles in the hiring process. We have an established relationship with the company that we can leverage to ensure you are getting the best overall offer. Consult with us throughout the offer process and use our expertise to your advantage.

It is also important to remember that good companies recognize great talent and they will pay fair market value for it. Do not overvalue yourself initially. You are entering a new industry; it will not take good companies long to recognize that you are a valuable contributor.

In the end, negotiating is not necessarily about winning at all costs. It is about agreeing on terms of a job offer that will satisfy you. Do not get greedy. If you receive a fair offer for a position you want, quit while you are ahead. If you continue to negotiate for the sake of negotiating -- even after you have received a fair job offer -- you may end up hurting yourself. A company could simply end negotiations and present you with an ultimatum. You also risk alienating your future boss. And you certainly do not want your boss to resent you before you have even started work. The bottom line is that salary negotiations, like anything else, need to be done respectfully and kept in perspective. Always be courteous, direct and honest. Consult with us and we will work to secure the best possible overall package for you.

Making Your Decision

Keep in mind that while your base salary and benefits package are important to your overall decision on whether a company is a good long term match for you, there are other factors that should impact your decision. Career advancement, stability, company culture, and job satisfaction should all be important factors in your final decision. Weigh all of those factors when considering a prospective offer.

Over the years, we have seen many candidates who have spurned the highest initial salary offer for one that paid less, but offered them a foot in the door in a great company, in a growing industry, that afforded them the opportunity for rapid growth in position and responsibility. We have seen candidates get promoted multiple times and double their initial salary in just a few years because they got their foot in the door of the right company, at the right time and performed well. This can be a big decision. Look down the road at where you want to be and consider whether the opportunity can really help you get there. In the end, you must make a decision that is best for you and the Orion Talent Team is here to help you every step along the way.

Civilian Benefits

Most transitioning military professionals do not know what to expect when entering the civilian workforce in terms of the benefits package they can expect to receive. This section is meant to provide an overview on typical benefits packages in the types of companies in which we usually place our candidates.

In addition to salary, a company's benefit package is a key component to an overall job package, and the more information you have when considering an offer, the better decision you can make. This section is not all-inclusive, but it is intended to highlight the most common benefit options provided by employers today.

Overtime

Many positions offer a base salary in the form of an hourly wage. For hourly waged positions and non-exempt salaried positions, hours worked beyond 40 hours in a work week are typically paid at a time-and-a-half (1.5x) rate. Many employees make as much or even more than their total base salary in overtime hours. In some situations, overtime may be paid at double (2.0x) the base rate. Often overtime is built-in to the work schedule, so it is a consistent and reliable portion of the total income.

Compressed Work Week



Many companies run multiple shifts to allow for 24 hour per day operations. In some cases this allows for compressed work weeks where employees work three or four days per week and have built-in overtime. This allows for three or four day weekends each week! Essentially only work 50% of the year!

Bonuses

Bonuses can significantly increase the value of your overall compensation package. Listed below are a variety of bonuses companies can offer. You may receive one or more of these bonuses depending on how your individual compensation package is structured. Consult your Orion Candidate Recruiter if you have any questions concerning a bonus or bonuses you may be in line to receive.

Signing Bonus

Some companies may offer a signing bonus as an incentive to accept a company's offer. Signing bonuses are usually paid within 30 days of a candidate accepting a position. Signing bonuses are not standard components of every company's compensation package. Several years ago, a signing bonus was more common. Today, they are given out much less frequently. Typically, a signing bonus must be paid back in full if a candidate does not complete a predetermined period of time with the company.

Performance Bonus

A large number of companies include a performance bonus as part of an overall compensation package. This discretionary bonus is typically based on both company and individual performance criteria and is normally paid on a quarterly, semi-annual, or annual basis. The amount of this bonus can vary widely depending on the individual company and position you are hired for, but are typically computed as a percentage of your base salary.

Production Bonus

Some companies include a production bonus as part of an overall compensations package. This type of bonus is typically directly tied to the overall production of a company or portion of a company. This type of bonus is common in the manufacturing industries and is used to incentivize the entire workforce. The more the company produces, the more the employees earn. In some industries these bonuses can double the base salary foremployees!

Health Insurance Plans

Health Insurance is a very important component of a company's benefit package. There are a number of different types of health insurance plans available in Corporate America and it can be somewhat confusing for transitioning military members accustomed to the military's TRICARE system. When you are evaluating a company's health insurance plan, there are three critical components that you should understand: the type of plan, premiums, and co-pays. The overall cost of different healthcare plans can vary widely, but understanding the following terms can be useful when wading through a company's healthcare insurance plan.

Types of Health Plans

There are two basic health insurance plans that exist today, Health Maintenance Organizations (HMOs) and Preferred Provider Organizations (PPOs). Both types of plans offer positives and negatives. The plan that is best for you will depend on your individual situation and a careful cost benefit analysis.

- HMOs have a limited list of doctors to choose from in your network of approved physicians. HMOs allow you to visit an “Out of Network” provider, but at a higher cost. They may require you to get a referral from your Primary Care Physician prior to seeing a specialist such as an Ear, Nose and Throat specialist. Because your options are more limited, a HMO is normally cheaper than a PPO.
- PPOs normally offer more flexibility by offering a large selection of approved doctors. They typically do not require you to get a referral from a Primary Care Physician before seeing a specialist. Because of your expanded options, a PPO is typically more expensive than a HMO.

Premiums

A premium is a payment you incur monthly in order to participate in that particular health insurance plan. The amount of your monthly premium varies based on the type of plan (HMO or PPO) you select or use, the health insurance company that is selected, and your employers’ contribution. Typically, larger companies contribute more towards your premium reducing your monthly costs. There are very few companies remaining who pay 100% of an employee’s medical premiums.

Co-Pays

Co-Pays are the out of pocket expenses you incur for using your health insurance (prescriptions, doctor’s visit, physical, emergency room visit). The amount of the co-pay depends on the health insurance plan that your company offers. For example, you may have a \$25 co-pay on a \$100 prescription. You incur an out of pocket expense of \$25 and your insurance company pays the remaining \$75.

Disability Insurance

Most companies offer two types of relatively inexpensive disability insurance: Short Term Disability Insurance and Long Term Disability Insurance.

- Short Term Disability Insurance: Short Term Disability Insurance supplements your income in case you are disabled and cannot work for an extended period of time, but typically less than one year.
- Long Term Disability Insurance: Long Term Disability Insurance supplements your income in case you are disabled and cannot work for an extended period of time. This insurance will typically start after your short term insurance is exhausted or after you have been disabled for more than 180 days.

Vacation Time, Holidays, Time Off

On average, you can expect to accrue vacation and sick days on a per month basis with most companies’ offering 7-14 days of vacation a year. Typically the number of vacation days allowed increases as an employee gains tenure. In addition to vacation days, most companies also observe certain standard national holidays throughout the year to include the following:

- New Years Day
- Memorial Day
- 4th of July

- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving
- Christmas Day

Other Benefits

401(k) Plans

A 401(k) is the most common type of retirement savings program offered by companies and has all but replaced the traditional pension plan. A 401(k) is a type of employer-sponsored retirement plan that allows a worker to save for retirement while deferring income tax on the saved money and earnings until withdrawal. The employee elects to have a portion of his or her wages paid directly, or "deferred", into his or her 401(k) account. In participant-directed plans (the most common option), the employee can select from a number of investment options, usually an assortment of mutual funds that emphasize stocks, bonds, money market investments, or some mix of the above.

Some companies will match a percentage of your contributions to your 401(k) program. A common employer matching formula is 50% of 401(k) employee deferral contributions up to a certain contribution limit (typically a maximum of 6%). This can be a powerful wealth builder and a valuable piece of an overall compensation package.

Relocation Assistance

Some companies offer relocation assistance on a case-by-case basis. If a company offers a relocation package, it will come in the form of either a relocation bonus or they will take care of moving your household goods, similar to a military PCS move. If you receive a relocation bonus, the amount will vary depending on company, the position you are hired for, and the physical distance involved in the move. Relocation assistance can significantly add to the overall value of an offer. Relocation assistance should not be expected in most cases.

Tuition Reimbursement

Some companies may offer tuition reimbursement for college. Typically, there is a limited amount of assistance available. Additionally, most companies require that classes taken apply directly to your position or the industry in general.

Company Car or Car Allowance

Most positions that involve a significant amount of driving (field service for example) provide either a company car or a monthly car allowance as part of your overall compensation package. A company car or allowance can add seven to ten thousand dollars to the overall value of your offer.

If a company car is provided, the company typically leases the car and pays the monthly payment, insurance, gas, and the maintenance for the vehicle. The company owns the car. Some companies allow you to use the vehicle for personal use.

If you are given a car allowance, the company covers your transportation costs in the form of a bonus. Unlike a company car, you would personally own or lease the car, and you would use the allowance to pay for the car payment, the maintenance and the insurance. In addition to the stipend, the company may also reimburse you for your work-related mileage.

Employee Stock Plans

There are three primary stock option plans that companies may offer as part of an overall compensation package: Employee Stock Option Plans, Employee Stock Ownership Plans (ESOPs), and Employee Stock Purchase Plans (ESPPs). Each is different and offers unique advantages. All three can add significantly to the overall value of an offer.

Employee Stock Option Plans

Some companies use Employee Stock Option Plans as an additional way to compensate their employees. These plans allow an employee to purchase a specific number of company shares during a specified period of time at a fixed price. For example, if an employee gets an option on 100 shares at \$10 and the stock price goes up to \$20, the employee can "exercise" the option and buy those 100 shares at \$10 each, sell them on the market for \$20 each, and pocket the difference. But if the stock price never rises above the option price, the employee will simply not exercise the option.

Employee Stock Ownership Plans (ESOPs)

An ESOP is a type of tax-qualified employee benefit plan in which most or all of the assets are invested in stock of the employer. Like profit sharing and 401(k) plans, an ESOP generally must include at least all full-time employees meeting certain age and service requirements. Employees do not actually buy shares in an ESOP. Instead, the company contributes its own shares to the plan, contributes cash to buy its own stock (often from an existing owner), or, most commonly, has the plan borrow money to buy stock, with the company repaying the loan. All of these uses have significant tax benefits for the company, the employees, and the sellers. Employees gradually vest in their accounts and receive their benefits when they leave the company (although there may be distributions prior to that).

Employee Stock Purchase Plans (ESPP)

An ESPP is similar to a stock option plan. It gives employees the chance to buy stock, usually through payroll deductions over a 3- to 27-month "offering period." The price is usually discounted up to 15% from the market price. Frequently, employees can choose to buy stock at a discount from the lower of the price either at the beginning or the end of the ESPP offering period, which can increase the discount still further. As with a stock option, after acquiring the stock the employee can sell it for a quick profit or hold onto it for a while. Unlike stock options, the discounted price built into most ESPPs means that employees can profit even if the stock price has gone down since the grant date.

Keep in mind that a comprehensive benefits package can add several thousands of dollars to any job offer you receive, and should be just as much a consideration in your decision as the salary itself. The transition from a military to civilian benefits program may seem overwhelming but by ensuring that you do the research to understand the terms and what each benefit entails, you can be confident that you are informed and able to make the best decision regarding benefits to meet you and your family's needs. And of course, please ask your Orion Recruiter if there is anything we can do to help!

Paving the Way for Others

Keep in mind during the interview process and particularly after you have accepted an offer, that you represent all military candidates in the eyes of your company. Your performance will influence their opinion of future military candidates. So, put your best foot forward.

The first six months, no matter if it is your dream job, can be extremely challenging. Typically, we find that there is a transition period that most people go through when making a career change of this magnitude. There are new people and a new culture that is quite different from the military environment that you are accustomed to. After this adjustment period, most people find things settle down and things work out well.

Also keep in mind that you are representing other military candidates and Orion Talent at your new company. Orion has a great record of success in Corporate America due in large part to the success of the thousands of candidates that came before you. Their outstanding performance over the years paved the way for you now. Please keep in mind moving forward that our ability to place others with your company is directly related to your performance. Now it is your turn to advance that torch – not for Orion – but for your fellow Veterans that will follow behind you.

Post-Military Careers

Most candidates transitioning to Corporate America are not offered executive level positions. Most companies expect you to come in and learn the business and prove yourself before moving up in the organization. You have advantages over your peers. Companies value the discipline, drive, motivation, and experience of military candidates. Your experience puts you on a completely separate career path than a recent college graduate.

However, companies want to ensure you have the grounding in their business, so companies will want you to prove your worth. You should view the opportunities presented to you by the Orion Talent team as your foot in the door. Like in the military, you have to serve at a lower rank prior to gaining higher ranks. The same principle applies in Corporate America. Seize the opportunity to get your foot in the door of an outstanding company and move up.