



## Candidate Feedback: How to “Feed it Forward”

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For third-party recruiters, maintaining beneficial relationships with hiring managers improves the chances of making a quality hire and creates an open arena for shared knowledge and effective teamwork. When it comes to closing the deal, the candidate’s opinion of the interview process could be the deal-killer.

After a scheduled interview with a potential employer, it’s best for recruiters to get the candidate’s feedback within one hour. This gives us information fresh on the candidate’s mind and a chance to clarify any misconceptions they may have developed during the process. Misconceptions can lead to deal-killers if given time to settle in.

Using a standardized interview feedback form, you can get immediate, meaningful feedback that helps clarify your candidate’s interest after each interview and learn more about the position, hiring manager and the company. A feedback form can be tailored to fit your needs, but some basic questions to ask the candidate should be:

- How long were you there?
- With whom did you meet?
- What did you learn about the opportunity?
- What did you like most about the position?
- What did you like least about the position?
- If they came back and made you an offer, would you accept it?
- Did you discuss a compensation plan?
- How did they leave you after the interview?
- Any comments, questions or concerns?
- Remind the candidate to make a follow-up call and email.

What then? Do we just document the feedback and store it away? No!

The next, and most important, step is to “Feed it Forward.” This is the practice of getting in touch with hiring managers (HM, or your designated contact) after each of a candidate’s interview steps and providing them with critical insight about the candidate’s overall experience. Because an HM often uses hiring staff to conduct interviews, they don’t always get to hear a candidate’s opinion of the process.



### The process of “Feeding it Forward:”

- Provides the HM with insight about the interview experience from the candidate’s point of view. Good feedback can reinforce the steps the interviewer is doing to impress candidates, and negative feedback can determine which adjustments to the interviewing style and behaviors need to be changed. For example, interviewers might take more time to carefully plan for the next interview if a recruiter tells them that a candidate thought the interviewer was unprepared, which can be a turn-off.

Also, candidate feedback will help managers understand how well their interviewers are doing in terms of “selling” candidates. Quality feedback will allow them to locate breakdowns in their process, which carelessly lead to withdrawal or rejection of quality talent.

- Gives the HM an idea of a candidate’s interest in the position, helping to close the deal or determine the roadblocks to a decision.
- Provides clarity. If we “Feed it Forward” that the candidate was not overly excited about the interview, it can help the HM decide whether to end the process or try harder to impress the candidate. Either way, you will get action.
- Begins the closing process. Once we “Feed it Forward” that a candidate was really impressed and wants the job, it “warms up” the HM towards closure. Hiring managers often favor candidates who want the job, rather than ones that come across aloof or show only a mild interest.
- Motivates the interviewer to provide *their* feedback. As recruiters, we wait days on end for feedback from an interviewer! One sure way to get them to connect with us sooner is to tell them you want to share feedback from the candidate. This technique almost always motivates them to get back to you sooner. Interviewers usually want to know what the candidate thought of them.

For these reasons, among others, the “Feed it Forward” process serves a role in getting a commitment between the two parties. As we all know, [time kills all deals](#), and using the “Feed it Forward” approach to motivate an interviewer to connect with you is, by far, the most beneficial. So, the next time you get some great (or not so great) candidate feedback after an interview, make sure to “Feed it Forward” and watch your interview-to-hire ratio soar!