



When closing the deal with a candidate, don't use trial and error, use trial-close!

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The last phase of our S4 Methodology is the selection phase. While there are multiple subsets within the phase, the most important is negotiation of the salary and terms of the offer.

Recruiters know that negotiation starts with the candidate's initial engagement in phase one. But in that phase it's too early to get specific about what a candidate will accept, in terms of an offer. It's the beginning of a long and complicated process that ends in the selection phase.

Final negotiations are used to get a clear understanding of a candidate's expectations concerning an offer. Basically, what would it take for a candidate to accept an offer? To get this understanding use the trial-close technique. This technique attempts to answer three questions.

The Trial-Close Process

To illustrate, let's assume that a candidate is making \$50,000 and told a recruiter they would not consider a move for less. The recruiter should ask:

1. What would the candidate turn down? Ask the candidate, "If the company offered you \$25,000 do I have your permission to turn it down?"

Nine out of ten times the candidate will laugh or, at least, loosen up as you begin to discuss the delicate subject. From there, work your way up until the candidate says, "I'd have to think about it." Now you are making progress because you have a clear understanding of what they would turn down and what they would begin to consider.

2. What would the candidate say "yes" to? Ask the candidate, "If the company offered you \$100,000 do I have your permission to accept on your behalf?"

Using a humorous approach generates a response similar to, "Hell yeah!" From there, work your way down until the candidate says, "I'd have to think about it." You are making more progress now because you have defined the high and low parameters a candidate would consider or accept.

3. What would the candidate have to think about, and what would be some of the factors involved in their "thinking?" Ask the candidate, "Now that we know what you would say yes or no to, what would be some of the factors to making a decision within the high/low range?"



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Factors to consider: Would the candidate compare it to other offers? Would they rather not go through the ordeal of a job change? Are they anticipating a counter offer? Would they keep looking until they found something better and if so, for how long?

This will give you a clear picture of what will happen if an offer is made in the high/low range.

Recruiters now have all the data they need to provide hiring managers with valuable information, which helps lead to offers candidates will accept or, at least, consider. If hiring managers make an offer they know the candidate would accept, chances are high the deal will close. If hiring managers make an offer in the low range, chances are high the deal will not close. If hiring managers consider what the candidate has to “think about,” there is a chance the deal will close. How much of a chance? That depends on the skills of the recruiter! Remember, closing does not happen from trial and error - but starts with the trial-close.