



# Making a Candidate Offer: How to maximise your chances of Success

Date:

June 2024

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Powering Hypergrowth™



# Introduction

In a recent poll of over 300 GTM Talent Acquisition Specialists, via our Community, [The Launch Collective](#), we asked:

**What percentage of offers have you seen declined this year to date?**

Through this Poll, we identified that some of our members, were seeing up to 30% of their offers declined. Not only is this a waste of valuable Talent Acquisition and Hiring Manager resource, it also increases the Time to Hire, resulting in increased lost revenue for the business.

Here at Strive, we have worked hard to maximise our offer process, addressing potential issues right from the outset of the hiring process. This guide shares some best practices as to how to manage the offer process, to maximise the probability of your employment offer being accepted.

Some of the areas we will cover throughout this document include:

- The Initial Engagement of a Candidate.
- The Interview Process.
- Risking the Candidate & Trial Closing.
- Making the Offer.

## Strive Top Tip

**Presenting an offer starts from initial engagement!**

**Understand and align a candidate's expectations from the start of the process.**





# The Initial Engagement of a Candidate

From the offset, ensure you understand your candidate's current situation in full – and their future expectations and wants. It is key here to not just focus in purely on financials – whilst this is of course important, there will be other drivers in their decision-making process which are key to understand.

Some areas, Strive recommend exploring at this stage:

## Financials:

- Directly understand where someone is at from a financial perspective and what their expectations are.
- Remember this is not just around Base and OTE but all benefits should be considered (especially important when hiring in the USA)- understand their Healthcare, Dental, Vision Insurances, 408(k), etc.

## Equity:

- Where are they currently at?
- How much is vested?
- What are their expectations going forward?

**Top Tip:** Explore the likelihood of the equity with the Candidate.

- How close is the company to an exit?
- How likely are they to realise any money from this equity?
- How long has the person been waiting (either the length in between funding rounds or working to an event)?
- If the equity is not likely to realise its value, your Candidate ultimately has golden handcuffs for no reason.

## Career Progression:

- What would make them consider a move? Note, don't just take their answer at face value (e.g. "progression"), ensure you are really digging down to understand their 'why'.

## Active Processes:

If your candidate is active in the market, it is key to understand what other processes they are part of. Questions to consider asking:

- Where else are they interviewing and what stages are they at?
- Ask them to rank the opportunities they are part of (and do this at every single stage of your process). Example questions: Where do we sit currently in your decision-making process? Can you rank the opportunities for us?

## Strive Top Tip

**Note that in a number of States in the USA, it is illegal to ask a Candidate about their salary history as a way of determining their future pay.**

**Ensure you are up-to-date on all relevant legislation for both the State you are hiring in and the State your Company is based in.**





# The Interview Process

To increase the probability of an offer acceptance at the end of the interview process, its key to ensure your process is as efficient as possible - and that you use the process to engage the candidate and ensure there is a momentum to their decision making.

Some suggestions for your process:

## Continue to revisit the candidate's expectations that were established during the initial engagement stage:

- Once the candidate has had their first stage interview, ensure you have another call with them. Obtain their feedback on the interview but also use this as an opportunity to revisit their expectations.
- Revisit and reclarify their expectations at every step of the interview process - by continually reinforcing the message, you will stop candidates from potentially shifting the goalposts when an offer is made.

## Manage the momentum:

- Get the candidate bought in and excited about the opportunity. At the engagement part of the process, typically you will be trying to obtain a candidate's interest in your company - during the interview process, the 'control' should shift where a candidate is now actively demonstrating why they want to work for the company.

- Recognise where to push and pull in the process.

## Increase engagement opportunities:

- Is there anyone else the candidate can speak to outside of the interview process? E.g. for an IC role, can they speak to a top performing rep? For an SE role, could they speak with the Head of Engineering?
- Look at your interview process and determine if you are missing opportunities to increase candidate engagement.
- Ensure the Hiring Manager is checking in throughout the process with the candidate. Use the HM as a champion builder to keep the candidate is engaged.

## Remember that to win the 'war for talent', there are typically two ways to ensure you win:

- Pay more than anyone else; or increase efficiency in your hiring process.
- Whilst your interview process should be thorough and considered - equally don't waste time - "time kills deals".
- Keeping candidates waiting can leave them feeling unloved and their other processes could become more appealing.



## Strive Top Tip

At the start of your hiring process, block time in the Hiring Managers' diaries for each interview stage and create internal timelines and expectations to keep the process moving swiftly and efficiently.

This will remove internal blockers for the Hiring Manager and also demonstrates to the Candidate how (if the Company acts like this in their hiring process), optimal their Sales Process is likely to be.



# Risking & Trial Closing the Candidate: The Strive MODEL Process

Before the Final Interview, the Agency (or Internal Recruiter) should fully risk and start trial-closing the candidate. To risk the Candidate, Strive use the MODEL Process:

## Money

- Current package v potential offer.
- OTE - remember to qualify if they are actually hitting this.
- Stock / equity / vesting.
- Commission due.
- Benefits - healthcare, pension, PTO.
- Guarantees and Pipeline.

## Opportunity

- For active candidates, does this opportunity align to their Reason for Leaving? What is the push?
- For passive candidates, is there enough pull?
- How does this opportunity compare to others (get the candidate to rank them)?
- Who is the competition? What is their offer? What stage in the process are they at?

## Decision Making Criteria

- What is their decision making process? Who else is involved? What are the timeframes?
- What could stop them accepting the Offer? Any personal circumstances such as a house move, family planning, financial planning?
- What do they look for / value in an employer? What is important to them in a role?

## Experience

- Does their experience align to the brief (hire for an 80% fit)?
- Does this opportunity offer them development?
- ICCE (Intelligence, Coachability, Character, Experience).
- Technical Fit.

## Likelihood

- What do you think is the likelihood out of 10 that they will accept?
- Other identified risks?
- How closable are they?



# Risking & Trial Closing the Candidate:

As well as the MODEL process, we would encourage you to follow the below tips:

## Use the information you obtained during the Initial Engagement to clarify their interest:

Ask the candidate questions using the information you have established from the outset of your process, for example:

- “Dylan when we first spoke, you said ABC were important you because of XYZ, would you say this opportunity aligns with that?”
- “You told me progression was really important to you, having now met with the client, what do you believe are the progression opportunities in the organisation for you?”

## Identify buying signals:

How proactive has the Candidate been at communication during the process?

- Are they following up post interview?
- Are they reaching out to the next stakeholder they’re meeting ahead of the interview?
- Have they champion built?
- The Push and Pull Factor – is the candidate being Proactive or Reactive? Have they got “happy ears” or are they genuinely excited by this opportunity?

## Ensure you have fully understood the risk:

This is an area that is too often completed at a surface level or skipped entirely.

- Financial risks– has the candidate got any commission due? Any big deals due to land?
- Are they an active candidate in the market or was this a

headhunt? I.e. are they looking to leave their current position regardless, or only if this opportunity is right? Are they actually ready to make a move?

- Have you discussed and managed a potential counter offer?
- Where do this role rank against their other opportunities?

## Communicate all this information to the Hiring Manager before the final interview:

Ensure the Hiring Manager is aware of all the risks etc, plus the three aspects of a potential financial offer to the Candidate:

1. What is the Candidate ‘Walk away point’ financially?
2. What is the salary range where they would need to take some time to consider the offer?
3. What is the best possible scenario, where they would accept the offer there and then?

This will ensure candidate expectations are met and an under offer isn’t made.

## Strive Top Tip

**At this stage you want the candidate to be selling the opportunity to back to you – this will show they are engaged and closeable.**

**If they are selling the opportunity, it shows they are much more likely to accept an offer, assuming it matches their financial expectations.**





# Making the Offer

If you have now:

- Engaged and qualified the Candidate thoroughly from the outset of your process.
- Executed an optimised interview process, which maximises opportunity for Candidate engagement.
- Fully risked and trial closed the Candidate.

Then the offer itself should be a “slam dunk”!

We recommend that the Hiring Manager (or whomever the Candidate would be reporting into) presents the offer. They should do this using the intel provided to them from the trial close, and should set expectations from a timeline perspective.

Use your Agency (or Internal Recruiter) to have an honest chat with the Candidate about the offer – what are the reservations or red flags? Where does the HM need to sell? Ensure the Candidate has a point of contact whom they feel they can be entirely honest with.

## Click For Further Info

**Whitepaper - Creating for Scale: How to optimise your recruitment process for accelerated growth**

**Strive Solutions - How can we support you?**

**The Scale with Strive Podcast**

**If you are looking for an ‘Employer of Record’ Service for your Employee, we recommend Multiplier. Please quote ‘Strive’ at point of contact for discounted rates.**





# Contact Us

Founded in 2017, Strive is a specialist go-to-market talent partner whose network spans the globe.

With offices in the UK and US and a headcount of 30, Strive has the size to offer talent acquisition services at scale, whilst also the capability to deliver on strategic hires.

Working with leading VC's, Strive has helped scale their portfolio of B2B SaaS companies, placing key hires within the go-to-market function.

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