

## TIPS FOR FOLLOWING UP AFTER JOB INTERVIEWS

**Chicago - Oct. 14, 2010** - Although the time between interviews and hiring decisions is taking much longer today, numerous people are not getting jobs because they are not following up frequently and aggressively enough, according to OI Partners-High Potential Inc. (Chicago), a global talent management firm.

Your follow-up efforts after interviews need to be proactive and assertive without becoming irritating, according to OI Partners-High Potential Inc. ([www.oipartners.net](http://www.oipartners.net)).

"There are various reasons why hiring decisions are taking longer. Many employers are content to wait for the ideal person to walk through the door, a 'home run', which is possible in a buyer's market like we are currently experiencing. Some hiring managers are reluctant to be the sole decision-makers if new hires do not work out. And others may be holding off because they are expecting new business that has not yet materialized. In most cases, companies do not chose to share this information with candidates," said Bob Wilson, managing partner of OI Partners-High Potential Inc.

"The period between the final interviews and hiring is an opportunity for candidates to actively influence decisions. It's important to understand the decision process and timing so you can build an outreach plan," said Wilson.

After four to six weeks, companies figure that most finalists will just assume they have hired someone else, Wilson said. "People who are most persistent in following up are demonstrating leadership, and that is one reason they finally get offers. Following up does not mean merely calling and asking where a company is in its decision-making process. Instead, people should utilize a variety of 'touch-point' approaches," added Wilson.

Among the follow-up tactics that Wilson recommends are:

-- Spell it out beforehand: Establish during the interview what the next step(s) will be, and when and how it would be appropriate for you to follow up - by phone, if possible (but recognize that voice mail may be the candidate's enemy!).

-- Initiate follow up immediately: It's critical to send a follow-up note, or letter, or e-mail, within 24 hours of the interview - and to each person you saw who may have a vote in the hiring decision. Try to assess the culture of the hiring company to determine the best way to communicate (e.g. a hi-tech company would probably prefer electronic communications to snail mail.)

-- Use a rotating cycle strategy: Keep in touch with the company on ongoing cycle, every 7 to 12 days or so.

-- Personalize each follow-up: Each follow-up communication must be personalized to the topic of what was discussed with that particular person. Do not send any form letters, or the same letter to each person.

-- Develop different ways to reach out: Within 5 days or less, find a reason to reach out to the hiring person and other key participants in the decision process. Send them a link to an interesting article that relates to business challenges and work projects discussed during the interview process. The idea is to reinforce the potential value you will bring as part of the team.

-- Follow up by phone: A well-placed follow-up telephone call to the hiring manager and human resources within five days to reaffirm your continuing interest is vital. If they say they are still interviewing, determine when it would be appropriate to call back.

-- Show your continued interest: After 7 to 10 days, send an e-mail demonstrating your continued interest in the position. An enlightened candidate will also use electronic social networking approaches to demonstrate their suitability for a position (e.g. LinkedIn or Twitter) with recommendations from former colleagues or bosses.

-- Set yourself apart: Do something that will give you added recognition, such as write an article for a trade publication, or be a speaker at a conference. If you are participating in an educational activity, update them on how this relates to the competencies of the job for which you interviewed, and be sure to update your LinkedIn profile to showcase this new credential.

--Ask whether you are still in the running: You can - most likely only once - ask if they are still considering you as a viable candidate.

-- Give them a chance to counter-offer: If and when you receive another valid offer, but still would like to work for the company, call or e-mail them that you have another opportunity. Tell them they continue to be your first choice, and give them a short 24 or 48 hour timeline within which to make an offer. Remember, nothing succeeds like success and you want your target companies to feel that you are successful.

-- Don't stop your job search: Most importantly, don't stop the job search. Continue your campaign until you get the job you want.

MEDIA CONTACTS:

Bob Wilson  
Managing Partner  
OI Partners-High Potential Inc.  
33 West Monroe, Suite 2110  
Chicago, IL 60603  
(312) 252-8200  
mailto:bob@hpi-inc.com

or

Sal Vittolino  
(610) 359-8773 or (215) 264-0644  
mailto:svittolino@oipartners.net

About OI Partners

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