

## Round Two Interview - "The Difference Maker" Dean Tracy

As I coach candidates on job search and interview tactics globally, I admit that there is a bit of a science to nailing the second round interview. If you have the proper formula, you may be the only candidate to make a lasting impression that the company will not soon forget!

Chances are good that if you're being invited back for a second round of interviews, then you've made a good initial impression and have something that they want. That said, besides charisma and all of the right answers to their questions, what will you bring to the interview that will impress them enough to use your interview as the standard against which to grade all other candidates?

Answer: **Your 60/90-Day Strategic Plan.**

During your first interview, you probably heard all about the pain-points that are driving the hiring manager crazy. This includes project deadlines, technology initiatives, budgets, client visits (if you're in Sales), revenue goals and so on. Additionally, you may have noticed that they never seem to have enough people on staff!

If you've asked the right questions in your first round of interviews, and you are truly excited about this potential opportunity, then you should have a pretty good idea as to what you will do to be successful in this role. You should be able to identify at least a 60/90-day strategic plan, based upon your knowledge of the role as it is today.

If used carefully and properly, your strategic plan can be "The Difference Maker" for you in your second round of the interview process.

Three of the primary factors that demonstrate your value proposition, and will drive your success in this new potential role are as follows: having a vision / overview for the job, establishing trust with clients and colleagues, and being able to identify and set goals and objectives. Let's go into each of these in depth.

### **Vision / Overview**

Based upon what you have heard in the interview, you should know the vision / overview of the department or company. What impact will you make within your first 60/90 days that can be tied back to the company reaching its goals?

Consider the following when drafting your plan:

- Know the Product
  - Establish a working knowledge of products or services to create long-term value in your employment.
- Be Credible
  - Become a leader among your peers by spearheading initiatives, collaborating with the leadership team, or presenting to your department.

## Establishing Trust with Clients and Colleagues

Establishing trust is essential for success in any role. What will you do to establish a high degree of trust within your piece of the company or amongst your peers?

Consider the following when drafting your plan:

- **Make Introductions**
  - Meet with key stakeholders in the company or department. This is beneficial on all fronts. It offers an opportunity for you to demonstrate your skills, but also allows you to get their perspectives on the company and projects.
- **Share Expectations**
  - Understand the leadership team's expectations. This is paramount to your success.
  - Investigate revenue objectives, if possible, to set your personal goals.
  - Think about setting “best practices” that may be beneficial to the company and your role. This will include understanding client needs and identifying what may have been learned from any mistakes along the way.
- **Create Buy-In and Set Priorities**
  - Identify how you will partner with the leadership team to create attainable goals for success.
  - Fully understand the company mission statement and be able to share it with others. This represents a degree of commitment and clarity on the corporate goals.

## Goals and Objectives

Setting goals and objectives is simply good business practice. You need to fully understand your new role in order to be successful, and you must approach it as a business. In doing so, it's critical that you identify your personal goals and objectives for success in this new capacity.

Consider the following when drafting your plan:

- **Determine the Objectives**
  - Educate yourself daily on a new aspect of the company, the expectations or the job.
  - Establish product expertise within the first 30 days of employment.
  - Build cross-departmental relationships with departments that are responsible for supporting your success.
- **Shape a Methodology**
  - Identify the steps that you will take to accomplish your objectives. For every objective that is listed, you should have a supporting methodology for the accomplishment.
- **Reflect on Success**
  - Identify how you will evaluate or measure the success of your contributions.

Setting yourself apart from the rest of the candidates is mission critical to having a lasting impact on the person or team that is interviewing you.

No doubt, you've heard the phrase "raise the bar." My perspective is that the candidate before and after you can raise the bar all they want. By entering into the second round interview prepared with a 60/90-Day Strategic Plan, you are sure to launch yourself over any bar that is set before you!

*Dean Tracy is a Professional Recruiter, Public Speaker and Career Coach based in Northern California with an emphasis on placing and coaching professionals at a national level. He also serves on the Leadership Team for Job Connections, which is recognized as one of Northern California's largest and most reputable Professional Networking Groups.*