



## Why you keep narrowly missing out on that all-important job offer

Do you keep getting to the final stages of the interview process but can't seem to land the job you want?



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Are you constantly wondering why other candidates seem to ultimately have the edge? There may be some very good reasons why this is happening.

Are you falling at the last interview hurdle time and time again? Is this down to you or something else entirely? Most importantly, what can you do to turn things around?

### **It could be you**

By the final interviews, most candidates will probably be equally able to do the job; therefore, you might need to look at your soft skills to see why you are falling at the final hurdle.

Recruitment company **Decision Toolbox's CEO, Kim Shepherd**, says it is these interpersonal skills, such as asking the right questions and listening well, that can attract the attention of a hiring manager who knows that all the candidates are capable of doing the job.

The key to a successful final interview is therefore striking a balance between showing off these interpersonal qualities and seeming approachable and friendly whilst maintaining an air of professionalism and not resorting to sharing too many of your inner thoughts, such as what you really thought of your last boss.

### **But then again...**

No matter how good your interpersonal skills, there may simply be times when you are not the best 'fit' for a company. Personal attributes highly-valued by one firm may not be equally important to another. This is why **Shepherd** suggests looking into the culture of a company before trawling through the recruitment process, although it can sometimes be difficult to get past the marketing spin of some carefully crafted brands to discover the true culture within.

To overcome this issue, it can be a good idea to ask targeted questions early in the interview process. You may want to ask about the average generation represented by the company's workforce or the employees' average tenure. This places an emphasis on the soft skills possessed by the firm in addition to those of the candidate.

### **What next?**

You may have been schooled to ask for constructive feedback after an unsuccessful job application; however, you may be left feeling short-changed, as many prospective employers refuse to give feedback or keep it vague as a result of concerns about liability.

To get around this, **Shepherd** suggests asking a different sort of question to get the most informative answer; for example, you could ask what skills would help you to get the job if you were to apply in the future rather than questioning why you were not offered the position this time around.

Another option is to show an understanding of the hiring manager's role, perhaps comparing it with recruiting you have done in the past and commenting that you have found that there is always one thing you really liked about a candidate and one thing you did not. You could then ask them to share your own 'good' and 'bad' points.

**Shepherd** believes that this is the ideal way to learn more about your strengths and weaknesses whilst identifying with the recruiter's challenges and avoiding sounding defensive.