

Recruiter Screens

The recruiter screen is usually the first conversation you have with a company. These interviews are rarely technical and meant to get you and the company acquainted. You are pretty much guaranteed to go to the next stage so no need to worry about “failing” this interview.

Your goal is to clearly communicate your narrative and expectations. For example, if you’re expecting to be leveled as an L6, it is critical you let your recruiter know early on. They may push back or tell you that leveling is determined post interview – that’s fine. Be firm with your expectations, make it clear you are open to interviewing and explain the **scope** you are looking for so your recruiter understands why you want this level. It will help your recruiter build the right interview loop and the right case for the hiring committee.

Communication

Remember to always be positive and classy. Treat your recruiter as a friend. Even though this isn’t true – realize they have a vested interest in you succeeding and signing an offer. Assume positive intent. Not all recruiters are created equally and some are better than others. Treat everyone with respect at all times. Make your recruiter part of your team and work with them to get the package you want.

Expected compensation

A recruiter may ask at this stage what your expected compensation is. To get an idea of what you should target, we recommend you look at levels.fyi – However, We personally recommend you do not give any numbers this early. Instead, focus the discussion on determining mutual fit and leveling. It’s better to discuss numbers at the offer stage – your goal for now is to make sure you actually like the company and get leveled correctly. If a recruiter keeps pressing, you can tell them a range at the top of your level – emphasize that you believe the company is competitive and you are not worried about reaching a mutual agreement. We highly recommend you look up [patio11’s salary negotiation article](#) as well as additional negotiation resources to prepare for this scenario.

Homework

- Read [patio11’s salary negotiation article](#)