



Who am I?
Brian Moeskau
VP of Engineering
(& meetup organizer)



Search engine for social services to connect people in need

We have lots of big, interesting problems

Looking for Python and React web devs

About me:

Developer

Software Architect

Cofounded 4 companies

Hired 40-ish people

(and counting)



Why this talk? Hiring sucks.

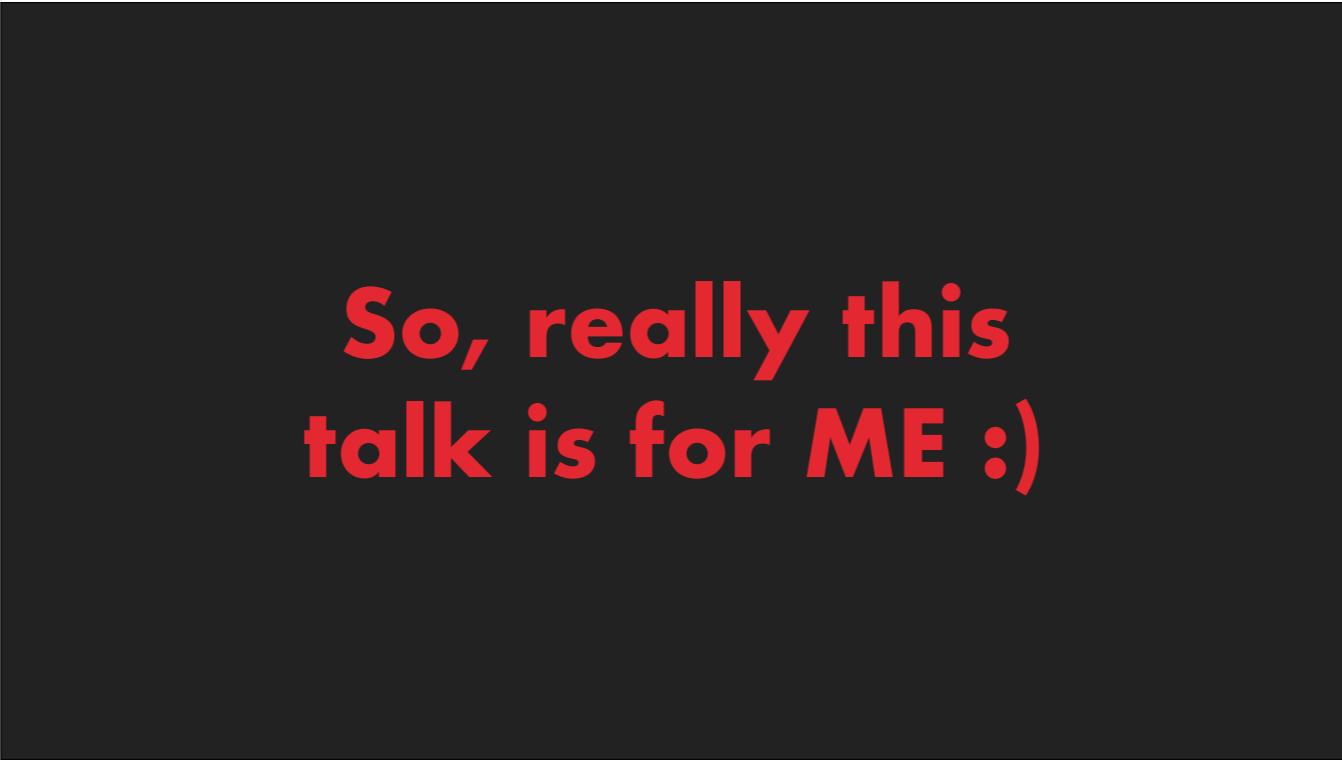
It's difficult, it takes a ton of time, and it requires different skill sets and practice.

Most job seekers don't do anything to help.

This talk aims to change that.

**I want you to get
hired, guaranteed.**

**If you get better at
getting hired, you'll
make my life easier.**



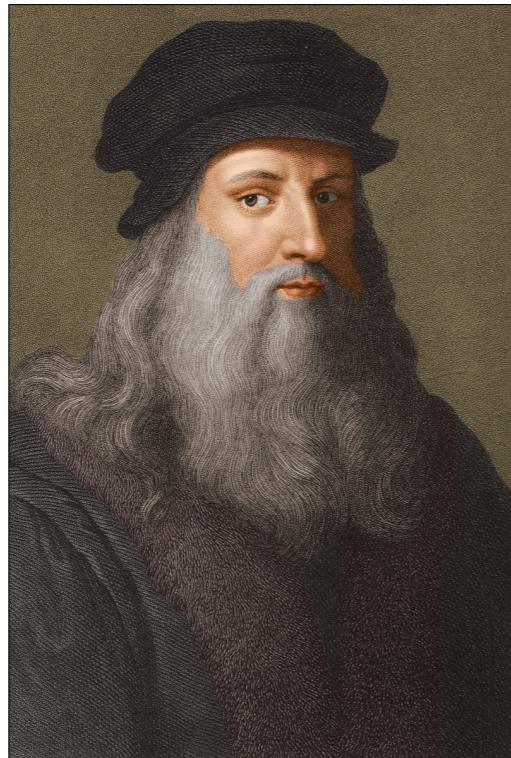
**So, really this
talk is for ME :)**

If you follow my advice, you'll save both of us a lot of time!
Let's begin....

THE RÉSUMÉ

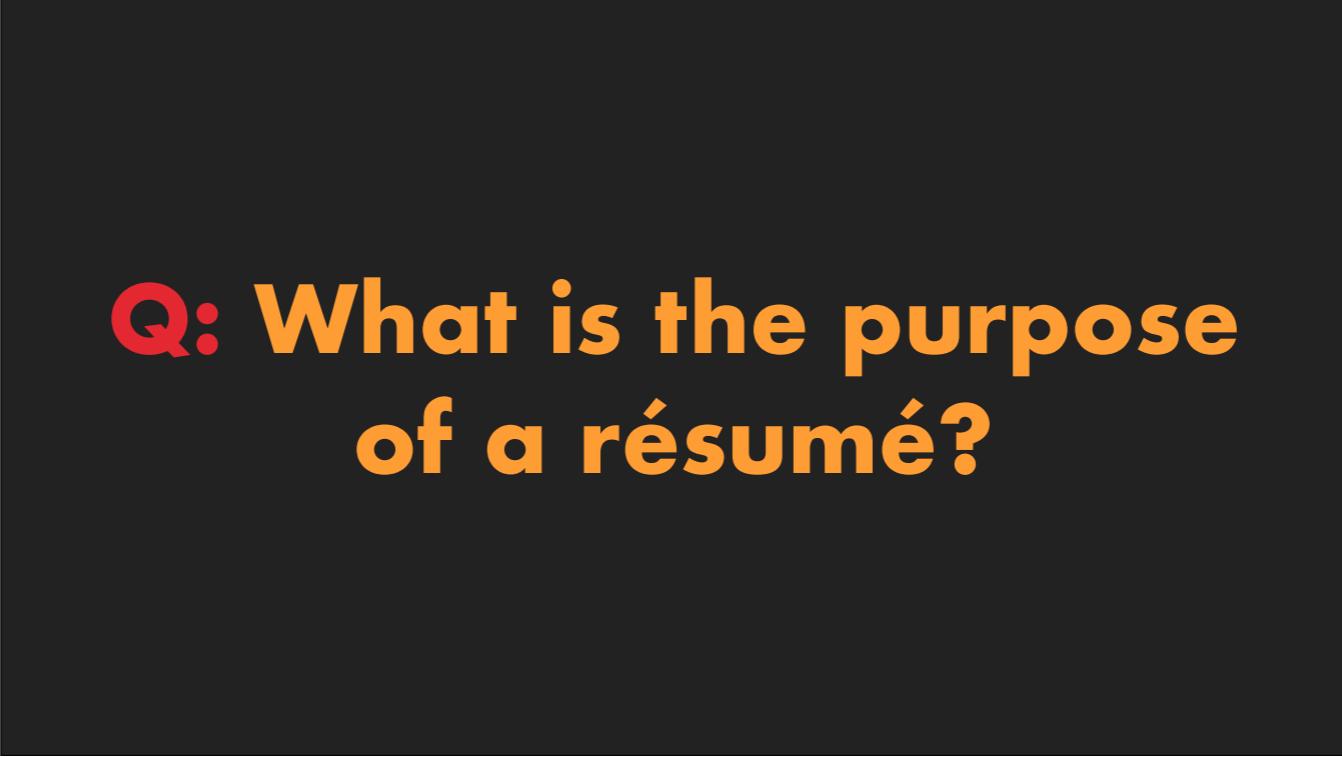


**Résumé: French,
meaning "summary"**



First résumé: Leonardo da Vinci in 1481

His "résumé" took the form of a letter written to a potential employer



Q: What is the purpose of a résumé?

Anybody care to guess?

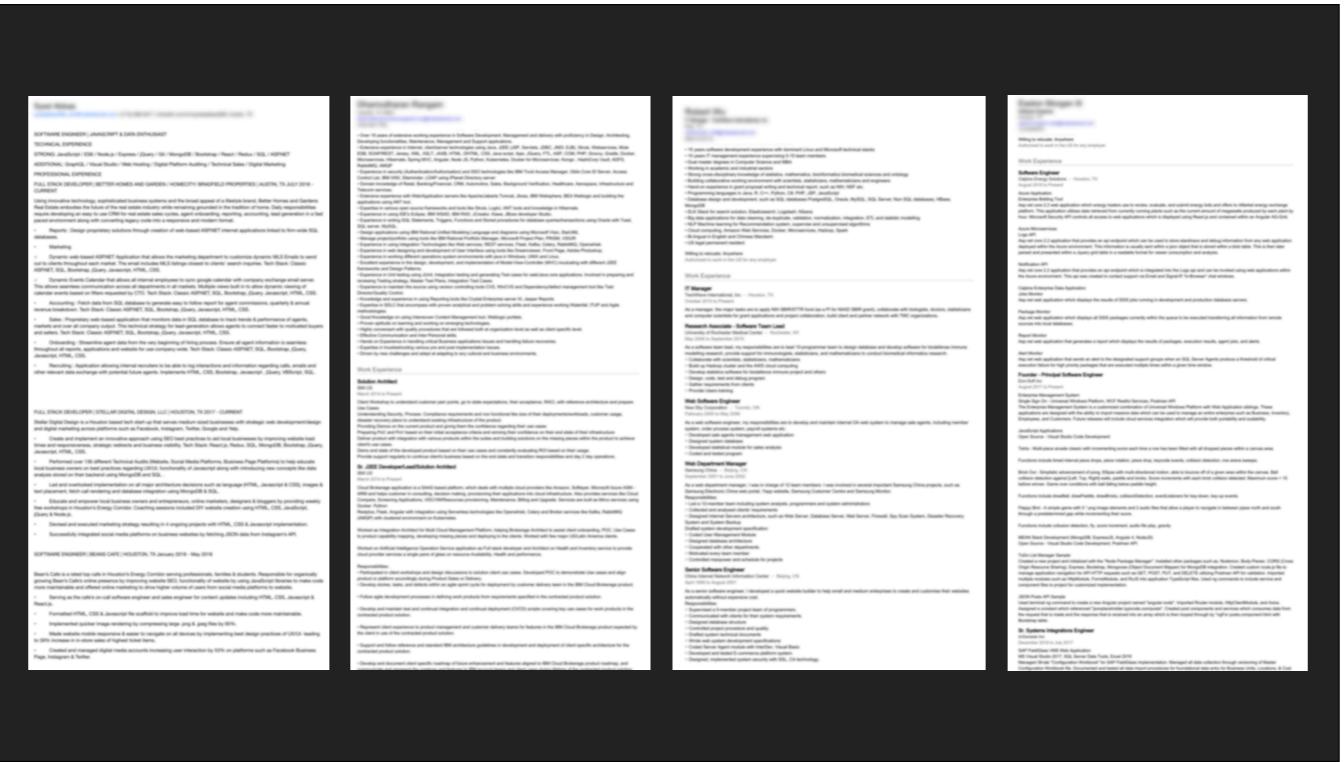
An exhaustive list of every job, project and skill that you've ever had? -- **NO**

A: To get you an interview.



That's it!

**Most résumés look
something like this...**



This is exactly what I see when I look at Indeed.

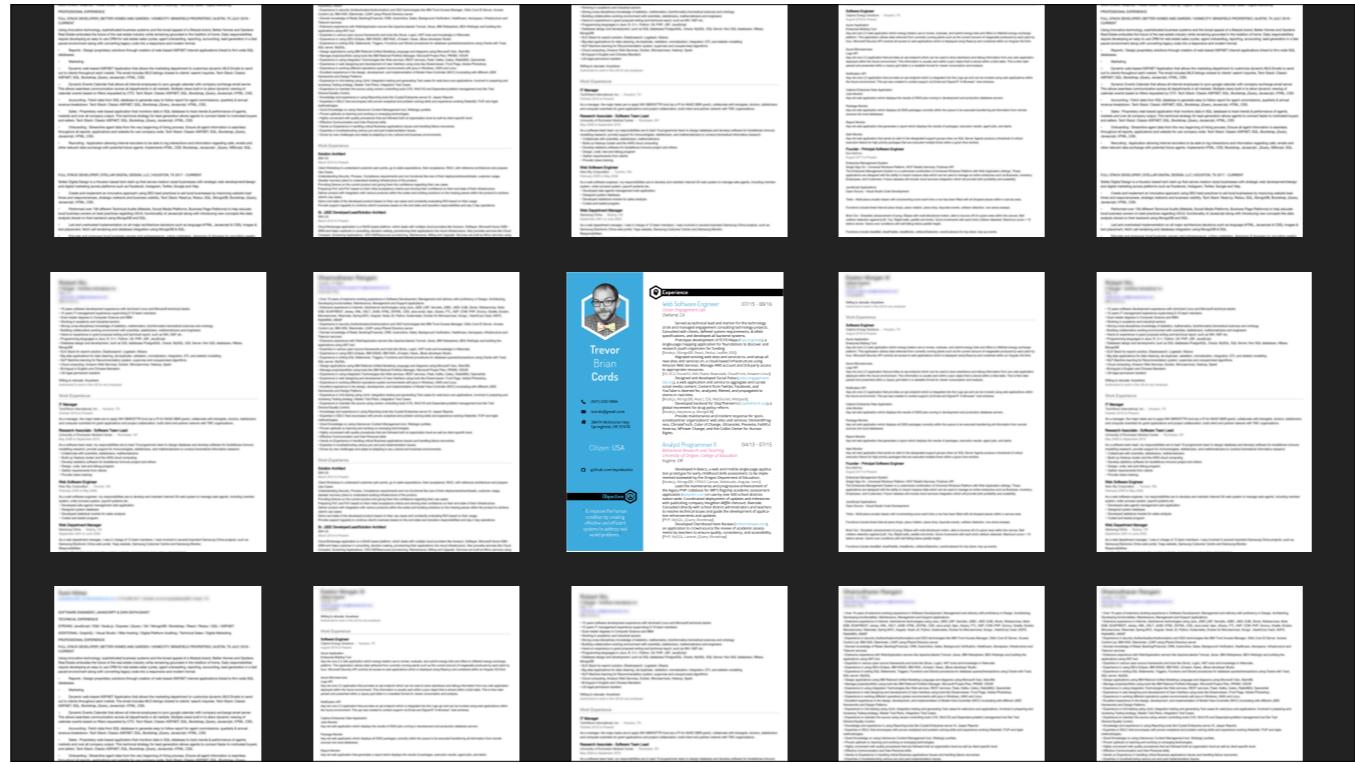
You are in here, somewhere...

<input type="checkbox"/> Software Engineer Edit job Post job in multiple locations	Austin, TX	Mar 27	187 candidates (24 awaiting review)
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<input type="checkbox"/> Technical Support Engineer Edit job Post job in multiple locations	Austin, TX	Jun 3	53 candidates

If you can't count that fast, that's **316** candidates that I have personally had to look through (and counting)

**You have one goal:
Grab my attention!**

How?
Un-suck your
résumé



One of these things is not like the others



Tip #1:
Sans-serif is
your friend

Pay a designer friend to help you out!



Tip #2:

Use (a little) color

Don't go crazy, but a nice colored header or sidebar can go a long way

**But more than that,
it's an information
design problem**

Information design:
The practice of presenting
information in a way that
fosters efficient and effective
understanding of it.

Q: What is the average time recruiters spend reading a résumé?

A: 6 seconds

Source: <http://business.time.com/2012/04/13/how-to-make-your-resume-last-longer-than-6-seconds/>

TheLadders, an online job-matching service, used eye tracking to analyze how long 30 professional recruiters spent reviewing candidate profiles and resumes.

Tip #3: Shorter is better (2 pages max)

No one is going to read your resume top to bottom.

Focus on making these things as easy as possible to grok:

- Contact info
- Top **current** skills and expertise
- Current company, title, and date range
- Previous company, title, and date range

Tip #4: Create a skills inventory

Create a simple skills inventory, listed once at the top of your resume.
Differentiate skill levels, and current vs past vs outdated skills.
Do NOT list every possible skill on every single job.
Consider omitting skills you don't want to be considered for.

Tip #5: Stick to the highlights

Don't list everything you ever did in each job.

Pick one or two relevant projects or achievements.

Do just enough to grab attention and no more. If they want to know, they'll ask in the interview.

Tip #6: Skip older details

Your current and previous jobs / last 3-5 years of experience are the most relevant.

Farther back is useful for context only, not for specific skills.

No one cares about that project you did as an intern in 2005.

Tip #7: Consider having more than one résumé

Especially for jobs that you are most interested in, changing the level of focus on certain skills or experience tailored to the exact job requirements can help

Bad:
resume.pdf

Better:
resume-brian-
moeskau-2019-07-18.pdf

Such a minor thing, but if you ever attach or email your resume, it's another small attention to detail thing that can add up

STANDING OUT



All coders can code
All QAs can QA
All designers can design

**What ELSE can
you do?**

**Any activities?
Sports, classes,
volunteering...**

**Any special talents?
Art, music, language,
kung fu, crochet...**

Tip #9:
Write
(yes, you!)

Writing ideas:

Personal website
Medium articles
Blog posts
LinkedIn articles
Wikipedia articles
Quora answers
Open source docs
Stack Overflow answers

**Every coder lists skills.
What can you SHOW?**

Tip #10: Have a public source repo

This is NOT to prove that you eat, sleep and breathe code. Most people don't!
It's a practical way to demonstrate skills and initiative.
Even if you only invest in one or two quality repos, that's better than nothing.

Tip #11: **Favor real projects** **over toy code**

You're interviewing for a professional job, so invest in writing some decent code.

A default create-react-app repo with 2 commits doesn't cut it.

You don't need an original idea. Fork an existing project and add a new feature.

Focus on good structure, good naming, comments, unit tests (bonus),.

Tip #12: Contribute to open source

Another way to demonstrate initiative and technical skill.
It's easier than you think!

"help wanted"
Look for: **"good first issue"**
"up for grabs"

Resources:

up-for-grabs.net
good-first-issue CLI

```
~ ➤ good-first-issue react
```

Good First Issue in React:

- Title: False positive getDefaultProps warning when mixing development and production versions
- Repository: facebook/react
- Issue: #9999
- Status: open
- Assigned to: unassigned!

Start now: <https://github.com/facebook/react/issues/9999>

If you want to get really meta:

Meta: <https://github.com/cutenode/good-first-issue/labels/good%20first%20issue>

**These are secondary
data points, but might
push you over the line.**

These should not be the focus of the resume, but include anything that will set you apart in an interesting way.
All things being equal in terms of skills inventory, these will make you stand out.

JOB SEARCH



Tip #13:
Don't just look
for "a job"

**DO look
for:**

Interesting industry
Mission / culture
Someone you admire
Learning opportunity
Challenging problems
Clear growth path

What excites you the most -- a specific technology, focus on company mission, growing your career?

Don't compromise if you don't have to -- it's a seeker's market

Decide the right criteria for you and search based on that

Tip #14: **Do your due diligence**

Look at their site -- what are they about?

Google and Glassdoor them -- anything sketchy in the news, or in their history?

Look up the principals, or your potential manager on LinkedIn.

Ask in your own network -- any

Does this seem like a place you want to be, and people you want to work with?



Tip #15: Cold email

If you find a company or manager you are really interested in, apply! If there is nothing posted, find a relevant contact (LinkedIn) and reach out. Lots of companies will hire passively for the right person, especially when they demonstrate initiative.



Tip #16: Network!

You're at this talk -- great first step!

Other resources:

- Slack groups
- LinkedIn (always personalize)

APPLYING





Tip #17: Skip the shotgun

Some sites let you post automatically across lots of jobs.

Don't do it! Look at and apply to each job yourself, based on the last section we just talked about.

Tip #18:

Follow directions!

(you'd be surprised)

I know it sounds simple, but so many people don't do it.

Did they ask for a cover letter, or references?

Specific skills or prerequisites required?

Do they require residency, or local vs remote, or part- vs full-time?

Some of these things are negotiable, but don't ignore them -- explain why you are applying anyway!

Tip #19: Write a personal cover letter

Skip the form letter -- might as well have no letter.

If you're interested enough to apply (remember the last section?) really go for it.

Why are you interested in *this job* at *this company*?



Tip #20: Spell-check!

Seriously! Typos looks lazy and incompetent.

Tip #21: Follow up proactively

Haven't heard back after a few days? It may not be personal.

Most hiring managers, especially at growing companies, are SUPER busy.

Remember this?

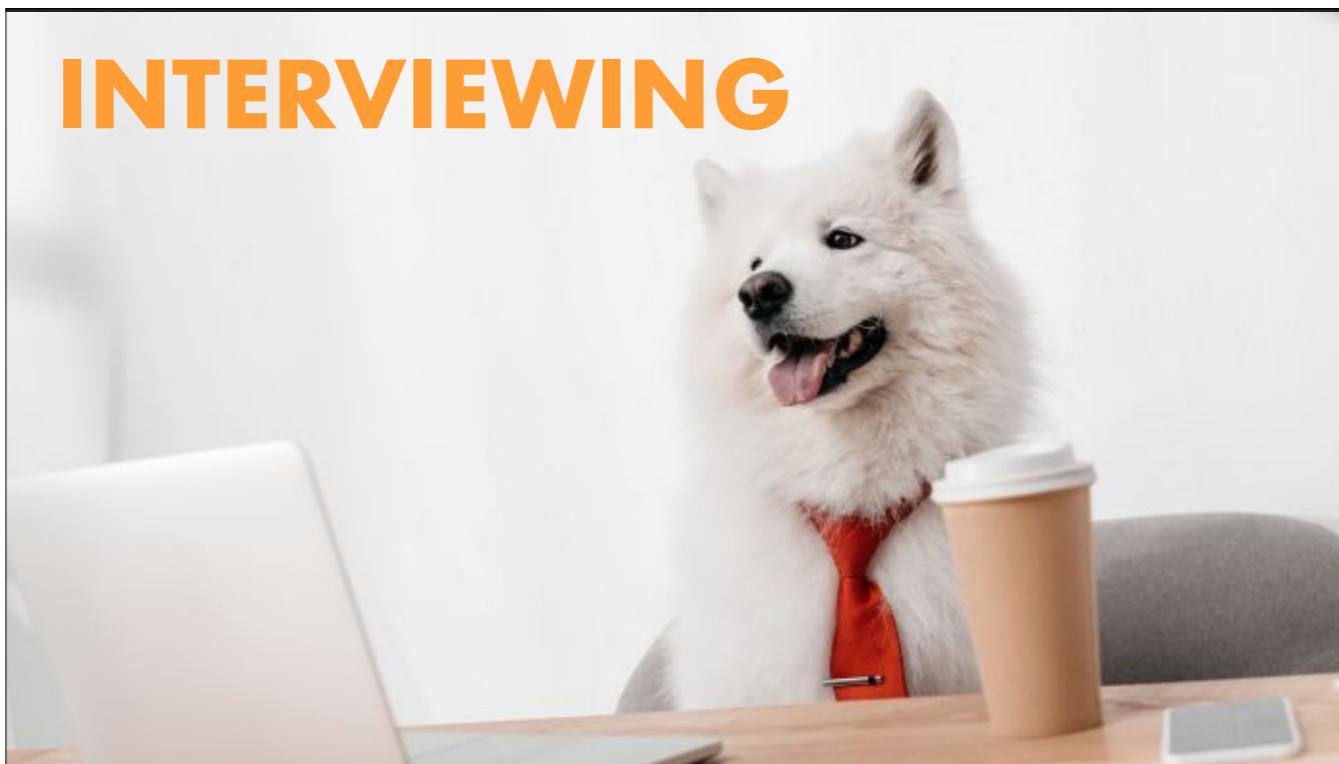
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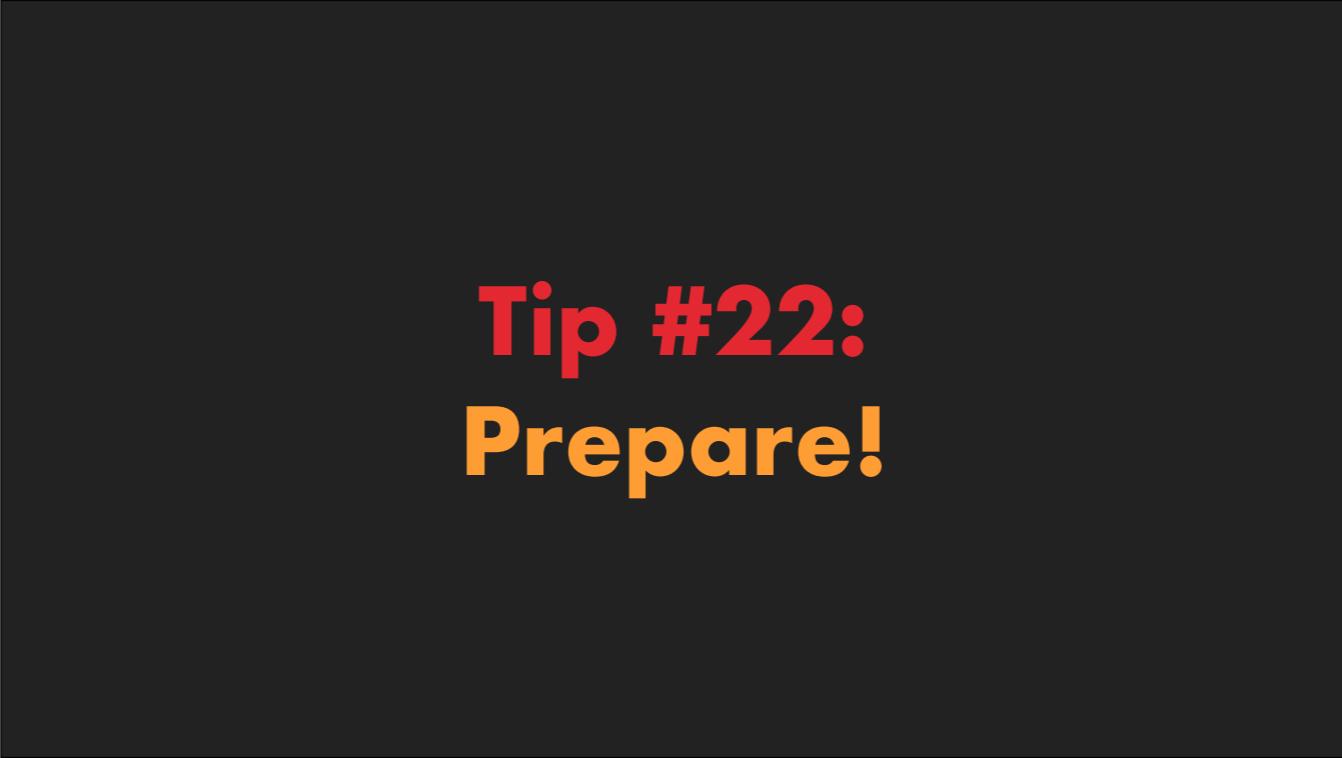
A lot of them also aren't professional recruiters, and may not have great process (no names here).

If you think you're a good match, it may be them, not you.

I appreciate people who follow up and nudge me!

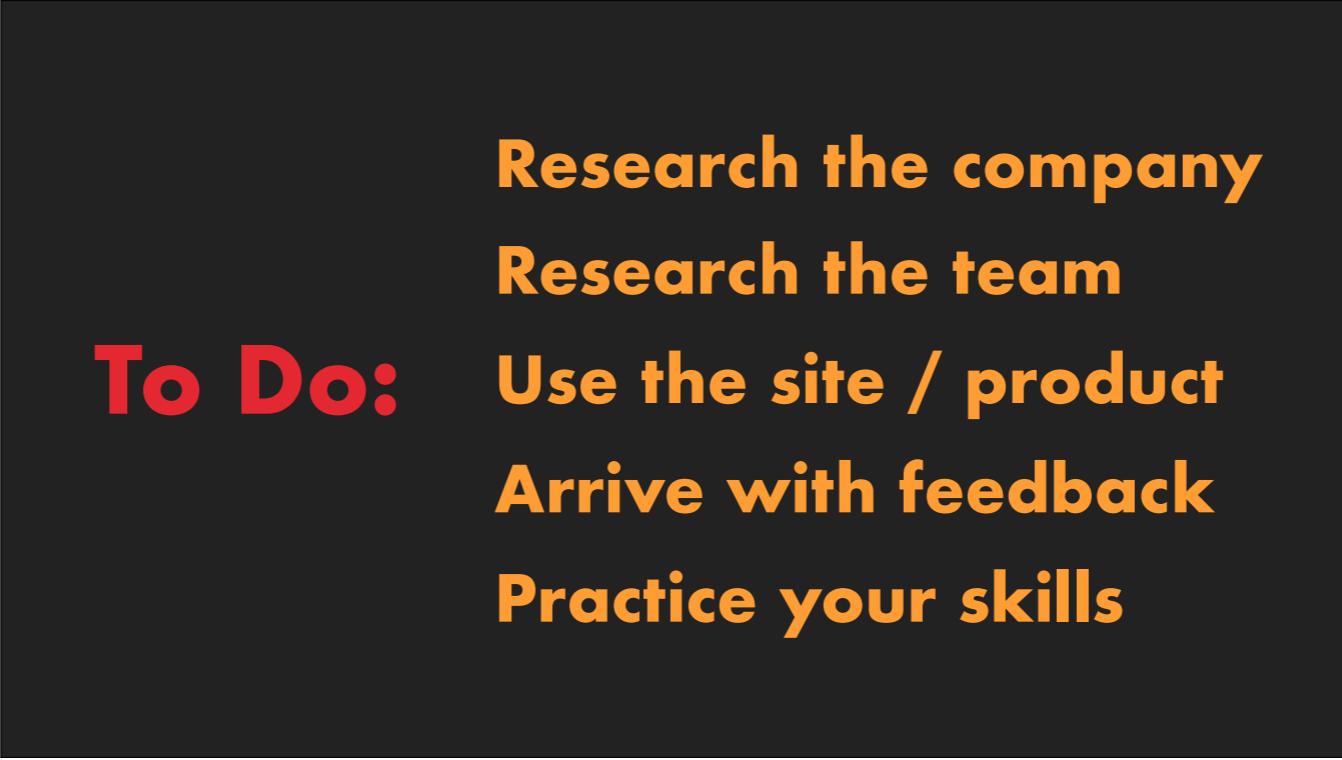
INTERVIEWING





Tip #22: Prepare!

So simple, but many people don't bother



Research the company
Research the team
To Do: **Use the site / product**
Arrive with feedback
Practice your skills

You should have a good idea what the company does and what they offer.

Research hiring contact -- you never know about mutual contacts, interests, etc.

Prep feedback specific to your role if possible.

- QA: "I found this bug". Dev: "I noticed you're using React...". UX: "I noticed this UX pattern..."

What's the main skill for your role? Practice, practice, practice.

Tip #23:
Arrive 15 mins early
(but walk in on time)

Expect the unexpected.

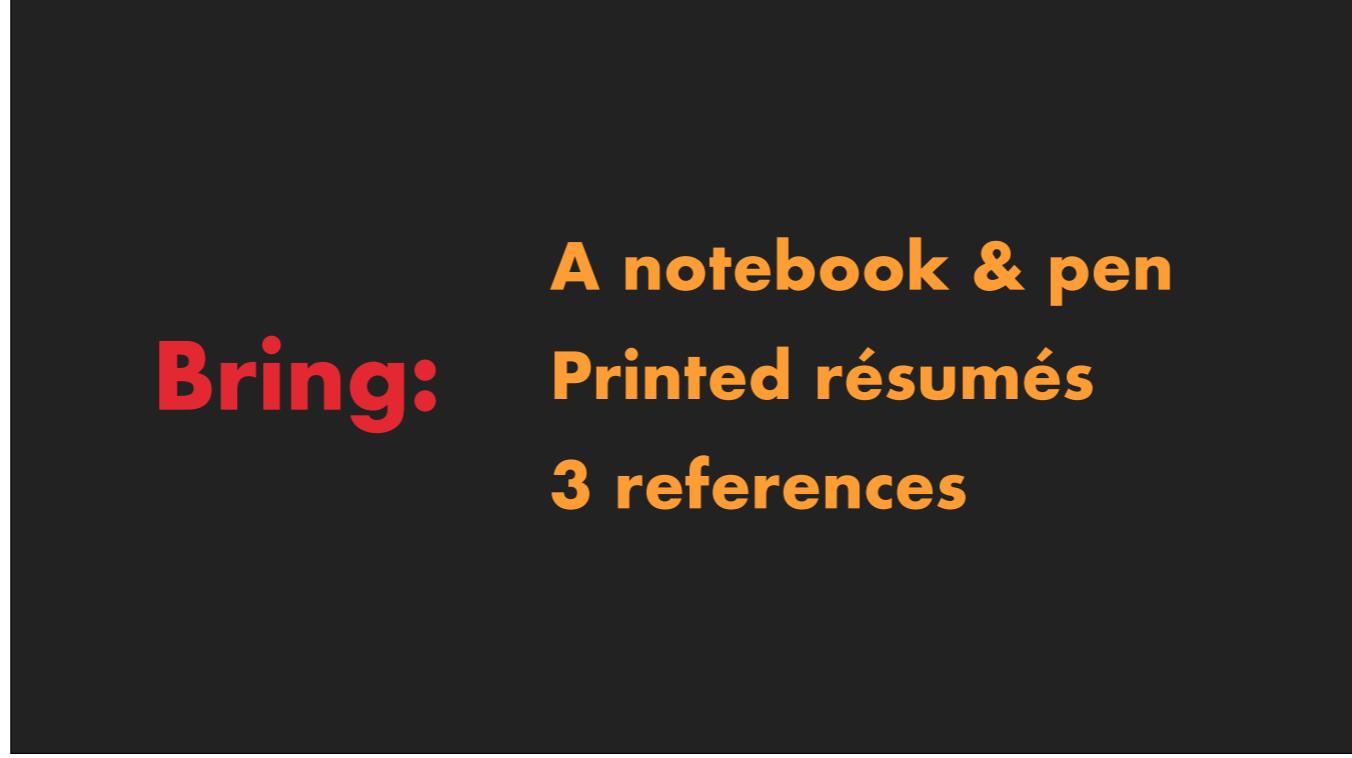
Don't fall victim to traffic, bad directions, wrong address, difficult parking.

Do NOT enter too early -- your contact is probably still in a meeting!

Tip #24:

Don't show up empty-handed

You should always bring these essential items....



Bring:

- A notebook & pen**
- Printed résumés**
- 3 references**

I know this seems so old school, but hear me out.

Notebook:

- Meeting a group? Write down their names by seat position
- Capture something to look up later (book reference, library or algorithm you didn't know about)
- Write down a question you can't answer in the moment
- Write out question details, or work through a problem

Printed resumes:

- Do not hand them out by default, but ask if anyone needs one
- Most people won't. This is mainly to demonstrate preparedness!
- Sometimes there will be that one person who forgot to review it ahead of time!

References:

- 2 professional and 1 personal
- If they like you and check refs, you'll save them asking later
- Even if they don't check refs, this shows confidence and initiative
- Especially if you have solid refs, just seeing them can also help your case

Tip #25:

There are no yes or no questions

Even if you are asked one, always elaborate. Yes, because... No, however...

The point is often to hear your thought process.

That said, don't over-explain. Aim for "just right"



Tip #26: Ask good questions

Usually you get an opportunity to ask them questions.

Focus on questions that will give you insight into the team, your role, or your potential boss:

- What is the team culture like?
- What would success look like in this role?
- What is the biggest challenge facing your team in the next 6 months?
- What is the one question that I should be asking you?

These also show some thought. A good question will require thought to answer.



FOLLOWING UP

Tip #27: Email the day after

Thank them for the opportunity. Answer any followup questions, if any. Ask any followup questions.
Keep it short and sweet. This is just about putting the bow on you as a professional person who takes initiative.

Tip #28:

Follow up proactively (again)

Haven't heard back after a few days? It may not be personal -- again.
There are often more interviews going on, or just the hiring manager is busy.
Wait a few days and follow up. It's OK to reach out a couple of times.

I cannot overstate...

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If you think you're a good match, it may be them, not you.

I appreciate people who follow up and nudge me!



Tip #29: Be gracious in defeat

Got NO? It happens. Thank them again for taking the time.

Austin is a small town -- they may refer you, or you may be able to apply later. Leave a good impression.

Got ghosted? It also happens, unfortunately.

Send a final email thanking them anyway, and closing the door. Be the better person :)



Tip #30: Be gracious in victory!

Got the job? Congrats!
Don't ghost other recruiters.
Email to update and thank them.

