

# BEYOND THE JOB DESCRIPTION:

## Finding Your **Ideal** Employer Fit

Your strategy for landing a satisfying job that fits your goals and lifestyle.



# Are you really happy with your job?







Did you know that in 2022, only **49% of American employees were completely satisfied with their jobs?**

That means over half of Americans' jobs don't align with their goals or values.

For employees, this can cause problems that go beyond decreased engagement and productivity. Most of us spend the majority of our time at work, and if you're not satisfied with your job, it can have a massive impact on your overall happiness and well-being.

All this means that it's essential for job seekers to find their ideal employer fit. No job is perfect, but there are steps you can take to ensure the job you accept is one that brings you a sense of purpose, pride, and even joy.

## In this eBook, you'll learn how to:

-  Take inventory of your personal goals and values.
-  Understand which type of employer is the best fit for you.
-  Research potential employers before you apply for a job with them.
-  Gain the information you need about an employer during a job interview.
-  Evaluate job offers to determine if they're right for you.
-  Choose which job offer to accept.



# Assess Your Personal Goals & Values

You can change jobs as many times as you want - but you can't change the person you are. That's why, in order to find the right employer, you need to find yourself.

Sound cheesy? Maybe - but there's a reason books like *What Color is Your Parachute?* have been on bestseller lists for decades. Taking careful inventory of your skills, talents, passions, and motivations can open your eyes to possibilities you haven't yet considered and can transform your "just okay" job into a meaningful career.

**If you're not sure how to get started, here are a few questions to set you down the right path.**

## Questions to Ask Yourself

What type of work am I really good at doing? Maybe your teachers always praised your writing ability, maybe you're great at talking to people, or maybe you have an eagle eye for detail.

- ? What type of work do I enjoy doing?** Your answer to this question may or may not match your answer to the question above. Just because you're naturally good at something doesn't mean you get satisfaction from doing it.
- ? What are my core values?** Core values aren't just for companies. Brainstorm your personal lines in the sand – the things you won't compromise on.
- ? What work environment do I thrive in?** Do you do your best work while collaborating with others, or while working alone? Would you rather work from home or in an office?

The answers you generate during this process will help you narrow your search, forge a career path, and find employers who offer the type of work you'll be most satisfied doing.



# Understand Different Types of Employers

Another factor in your job satisfaction is the type of employer you work for. Similar roles can look quite different depending on your organization. For instance, a marketing job with a nonprofit will involve different responsibilities and require different skill sets than a marketing job with a large corporation.

**Here's an overview of common employer types and the pros and cons of each.**

**Startups:** A startup is a newly established company, typically characterized by a small team and an innovative product or service. Startups offer dynamic work environments with a high potential for creativity and growth. However, they can also involve longer working hours, unclear job duties, and limited stability.

**Small Businesses:** Working for a small business is a great choice if you prefer forging close relationships with a few co-workers instead of being part of a massive team. But they may have limited resources and job security, as well as fewer opportunities for growth.

**Large Corporations:** If stability is a major goal, a larger company might be your best bet. With structured career paths, comprehensive benefits packages, and plenty of resources, large corporations can provide relief to job seekers. But their inherent bureaucracy, limited autonomy, and lack of personal relationships won't work for everyone.

**Nonprofit Organizations:** People concerned with social impact or who want to make a difference in their communities often find fulfillment in working for nonprofits. However, they may have limited budgets and lower compensation than their for-profit counterparts.

**Government Agencies:** Some find government agencies to be a happy medium between corporations and nonprofits: they offer job security and competitive compensation alongside the chance to serve the public interest. But working for the government also involves heavy regulations and few opportunities for innovation.

Remember that, despite differing opinions and experiences, there's no single "best" type of employer. The only person who can decide which category is right for you is...you!



# Research Potential Employers

Once you've decided what type of employer you're most interested in working for, it's time to start researching options. Search online job boards for employers in your area who do the type of work you want to do. But before you click "Apply," do some more digging on the organization to make sure they'll be a good fit for you.

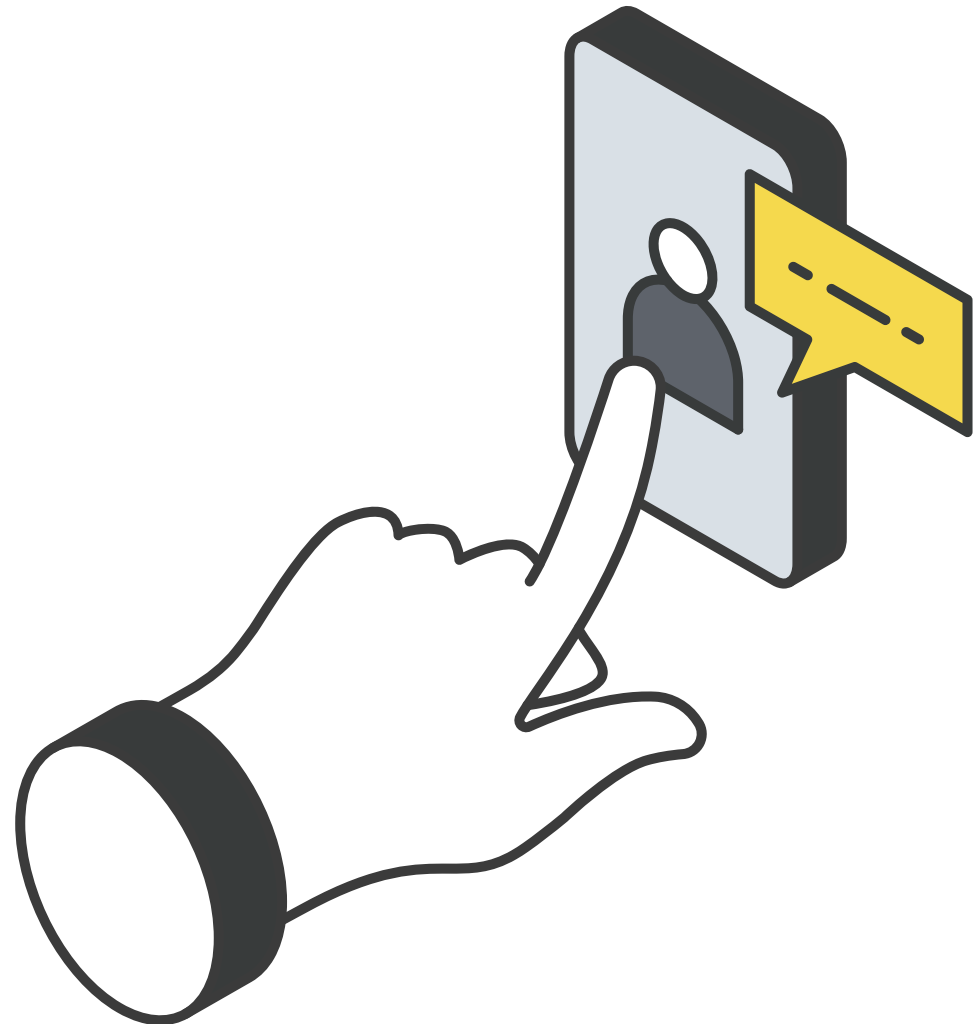
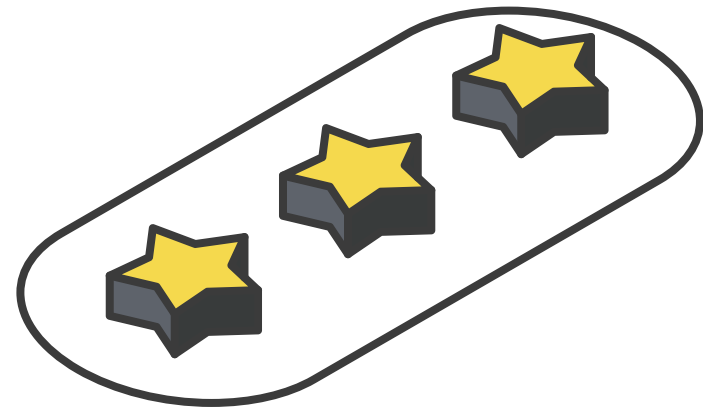
## Here are a few aspects of potential employers you'll want to research:

**Core values.** You'll have the best chance at long-term job satisfaction if you choose an employer whose values align with yours. Many organizations list their core values on their website. You can also check their press releases and social media accounts to see what charities and causes they've supported.

**Culture.** The best way to assess an employer's culture is to hear about it from people who have worked there. Check out an organization's reviews on sites like Glassdoor - the good and the bad. You might also use LinkedIn to reach out to people who currently work at the company and ask them what they like and dislike about their employer.

**Leadership team.** Research executives' history with their prior organizations as well as their current ones. You may be able to get a sense of their leadership style and personal values through their public-facing communications.

**Company history.** How long has the organization been in business? Are they currently in a growth or downsizing period? Have they made any standout contributions or innovations in their industry? Have they conducted recent layoffs or gained negative press for legal or financial woes?



# Watch for Red Flags in Job Postings

What can a job posting tell you about an employer? More than you might think. Be on the lookout for these potential red flags.

**Unrealistic job requirements.** Is the list of requirements for a position longer than a CVS receipt? If so, the employer might not understand the job – or might expect superhuman performance.

**Vague job descriptions.** If a job listing gives zero sense of what you'll be doing in the role, the company may not be serious about the position – or they might be hiding something.

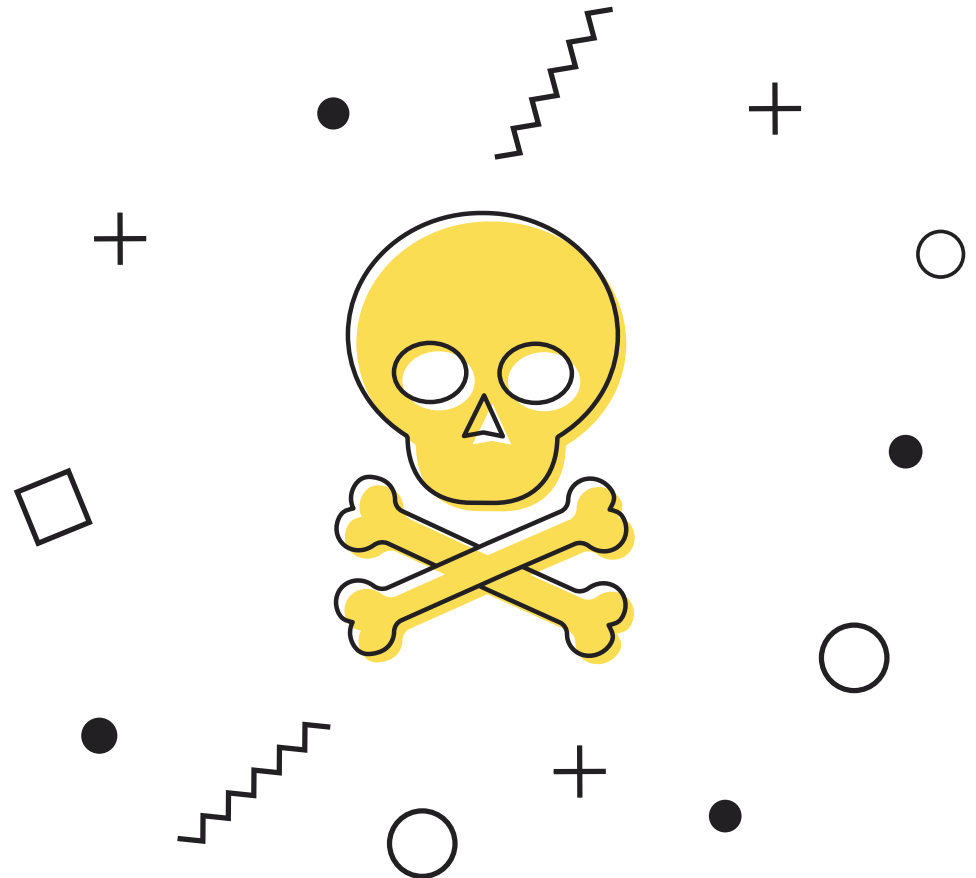
**Burnout language.** Terms like “work hard, play hard,” “self-starter,” “fast-paced environment,” or “obsessed with results” could be omens for poor work-life balance or a lack of proper training.

**Unprofessional tone.** While there's nothing wrong with leveraging a friendly brand voice, an extremely casual tone in job descriptions could signal future disrespect or unprofessionalism.

**Lack of pay transparency.** Now that pay transparency is becoming the norm – and in some states, the law - failing to list a specific pay range on a job description counts as a red flag.

**Rapid hiring process.** While no one likes drawn-out hiring processes, a job description that emphasizes the need to hire quickly could indicate a chaotic work environment.

**Unrealistic salary or benefits.** Sadly, if a job description sounds too good to be true, it probably is. Stay alert to protect yourself from dishonest organizations.



# Interview Your Potential Employer

Job interviews are a two-way street – you’re interviewing your potential employer just as much as they’re interviewing you.

- ? Not sure what questions to ask a potential employer? Here are some ideas.
- ? Why is the company hiring for this position right now?
- ? Can you tell me more about the company culture and what it’s like to work here?
- ? If I asked a few employees about what it’s like to work here, would their responses be the same as yours?
- ? How does the company support employee growth and professional development?
- ? What is the anticipated long-term career trajectory for this role within the company?
- ? Can you tell me how the company promotes a healthy work-life balance?
- ? What steps is the company taking to improve diversity and inclusion in the workplace?
- ? How is success measured in this role?
- ? Can you tell me about the company’s approach to employee mental health and well-being?
- ? What’s the most important thing I could do to help within the first 90 days of employment?
- ? Can you tell me what a typical workday in this position would look like?
- ? What are the characteristics of someone who would excel in this role?



Besides asking the right questions, pay close attention to how you’re treated during the interview – and your intuition. If you walk away feeling like something is off, it’s often best to trust your instincts.

# Evaluate Job Offers

You've officially received a job offer – congratulations! Before you accept, review what you've learned about the organization and to evaluate whether the job is one you truly want.

**Here are a few things to look out for when considering an offer:**

**Compensation.** Review the salary, benefits, bonuses, and any additional perks included in the compensation package. Measure it against your expectations and market standards for similar positions.

**Work-life balance.** What working hours, remote work options, and expectations for travel or overtime are included in the job offer? Are they the same as what was presented during the application process? How would they fit into your current lifestyle?

**Location.** For non-remote jobs, consider the company's geographic location and its impact on you regarding commute, cost of living, and potential relocation.

**Job description.** Even if you've read the original job posting several times, carefully review the job description included with your official offer. Reconsider whether it aligns with your skills, interests, and goals.





# How to Negotiate a Job Offer

Excited about a job offer, but not so excited about the compensation?

Here are tips on negotiating like a pro.

**Be clear about expectations.** Start by politely communicating what target salary or other compensation you had in mind for the position.

**Cite salary benchmarks.** Share industry data to demonstrate the market value for similar positions and suggest a fair salary.

**Highlight your value.** Remind your potential employer of the specific skills, qualifications, and relevant experience you demonstrated during the interview, and communicate how those skills will allow you to add value to the company.

**Negotiate beyond salary.** If there's no flexibility in the pay range, ask if there's room for movement on other aspects of the offer, such as vacation days, flexible work arrangements, or a signing bonus.

**Get a recruiter's help.** Staffing recruiters can give additional insight into industry trends, salary expectations, and negotiation strategies – and act as an intermediary between you and the employer.



# Make a Decision

Whether you're deciding between multiple offers or determining whether one job is right for you, here are steps to take if you're feeling unsure.

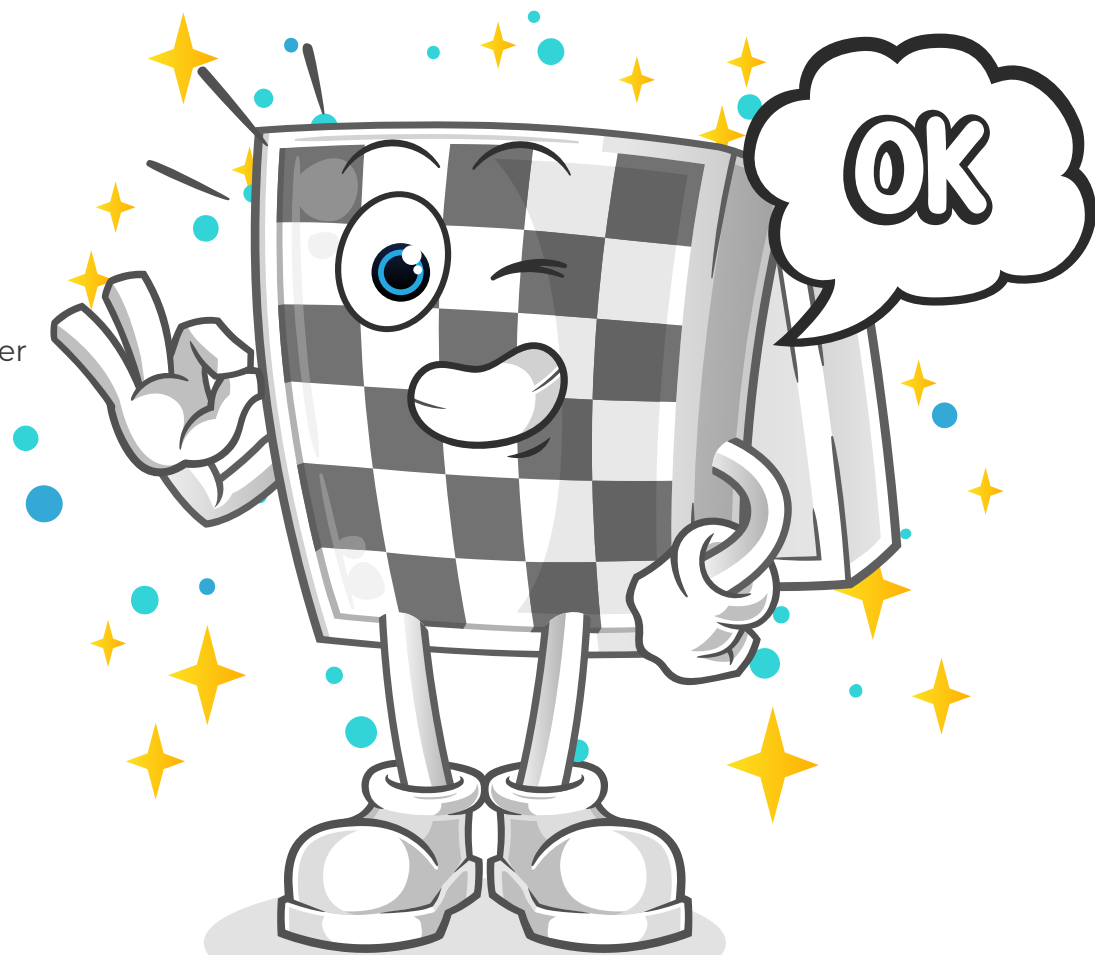
**Ask for clarification.** If there are specific aspects of the offer or employer you're not sure about, don't hesitate to reach out and get your questions answered before making a decision.

**Request another meeting.** An additional interview can give you a chance to ask final questions and gain the insight you need.

**Consider a trial period.** Discuss with your employer whether it would be possible to work for a short period before joining as a permanent team member.

**Seek out advice and opinions.** Consult industry professionals, trusted mentors or colleagues, or friends and family members who can give you objective perspectives.

**Trust your intuition.** At the end of the day, you know better than anyone else whether an opportunity will be a good fit.



# Declining an Offer

If you decide to go with another company or to otherwise reject an offer, here's how to let an employer down gently.

**Don't wait too long.** Let the employer know as soon as you've made your choice so they can contact an alternate candidate.

**Express gratitude.** Start by saying how appreciative you are of the opportunity and the time the employer took to consider your application.

**Give a brief explanation.** You don't need to give the employer your full life story, but provide a sentence or two explaining your reasoning – for instance, if you've decided to go with another offer, or if the compensation didn't meet your needs.

**Stay professional.** Thank the employer again, offer to stay in touch for future opportunities, and wish them the best in finding the ideal candidate.



# How a Staffing Agency Can Help

If you're looking for even more support in finding your ideal employer, consider reaching out to a staffing agency. These recruiting and hiring professionals have years of experience with connecting all kinds of job seekers with the best employers and opportunities for them.

**Wondering exactly how a staffing agency can help? Here are six ways:**

**More opportunities.** Recruiters often have access to a wider range of employers and jobs that aren't available through independent job searches.

**Personalized job matching.** A staffing professional will take the time to understand your skills, goals, and personality, and can suggest suitable jobs and career paths that you may not have known about before.

**Interview preparation.** Nervous about interviewing? A staffing agency can provide coaching, practice, and other resources to help you nail it.

**Negotiation support.** Most recruiters act as intermediaries between job seekers and employers when it comes to the negotiation stage, helping you gain a fair salary and other benefits.

**Temporary positions.** Many staffing agencies have options for temporary or contract positions that let you "test the waters" with a new employer before committing to a full-time role.

**Ongoing support.** After you've landed a job, a staffing agency should continue to follow up and ensure your new employer is a great match.

By combining the information in this eBook with the support of a staffing agency, you can get clear about what you want out of your career and find the employer who's right for you. Reach out today to learn more!