

Tales From the Dark Side:

What a developer learned when switching to recruiting

THE HIRING PROCESS OFTEN SEEMS OPAQUE AND QUIXOTIC TO DEVELOPERS.

THE BAD NEWS IS THAT IT'S EVEN WORSE THAN THAT.

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[HTTPS://CODEFOR.CASH](https://codefor.cash)

□ □ Background & Credibility

- 20+ years programming
- Could not get that first FTE coding job
- Finally got in through a QA job
- Became SWE, Sr SWE
- Now I run a recruiting business and a lot of frustrations are magically making sense

Fun Fact

⌚ If the job description asks for years of experience, they only count if you were full-time employed at a reputable company

Fun Fact



A recruiter's job
is to place you into a job

that you've already done

- FTE experience doing the same exact job at brand name co or respected industry peer company
- Experience doing a bigger job at a less respected peer company

Less important, but impactful:

- same personal interests as hiring manager
- same values as the company = ownership
- under-represented candidate
- special personal achievements
- brand name alma mater

Fun Fact

□ □ Magic number of FTE
experience years needed to
become extremely marketable:

3

Getting that FTE experience

- Go down a level
- Coding challenges
- Contract-to-hire
- Find a place that hires bootcamp grads
- Reset to entry level



Bootcamp Grads

- Focus on finding a company that has a history of hiring bootcamp grads
- Focus on finding a company that screens meritocratically, through challenge projects
- Get that first role, then pivot elsewhere



Freelancers

- This was my path
- Experience as a freelancer is not the same as FTE experience and will suppress your wages
- Good path into first FTE = contract to hire

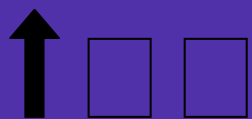
□ BigCo vs □ SmallCo

Big companies:

- Set up to run background checks
- “HRIS” metrics: retention, care more about job hopping + resume gaps

Small companies and startups:


- How do they feel about spending 8+ hours next to you in a cramped space?
- Can you wear many hats and do multiple roles?



Maximizing Compensation

- Only path to competitive compensation: synchronize the interviews and get multiple offers
- You want absolute top dollar? Learn the FAANG whiteboard. Medium leetcodes. 3 months of full-time study.

Some Tips For Dealing w/ Recruiters

- Have good reasons for job hopping
 - Don't make jokes. Answer all questions seriously – pro's respect the basics
 - Never badmouth anyone
- 



Resume Best Practices

- Clean filename: no “(01) - NEW”
- Save as a PDF
- Check your unfurling
- Native feeling grammar for the HR types

Fun Fact

□ All strangers see is your resume

They don't know
your value
unless you spoon
feed them



□ □ Insecure about technical qualifications?

- Admit what you don't know
- Share what you do know
- Journal fears into notepad before the interview
 - Beilock, et al. (2007). Stereotype threat and working memory: mechanisms, alleviation, and spillover.

Keep your eyes on the big picture

- The decision is made holistically: do we want this person to be part of our tribe
- You can't be the worst developer on the team even if you are supercool

□ Get special treatment

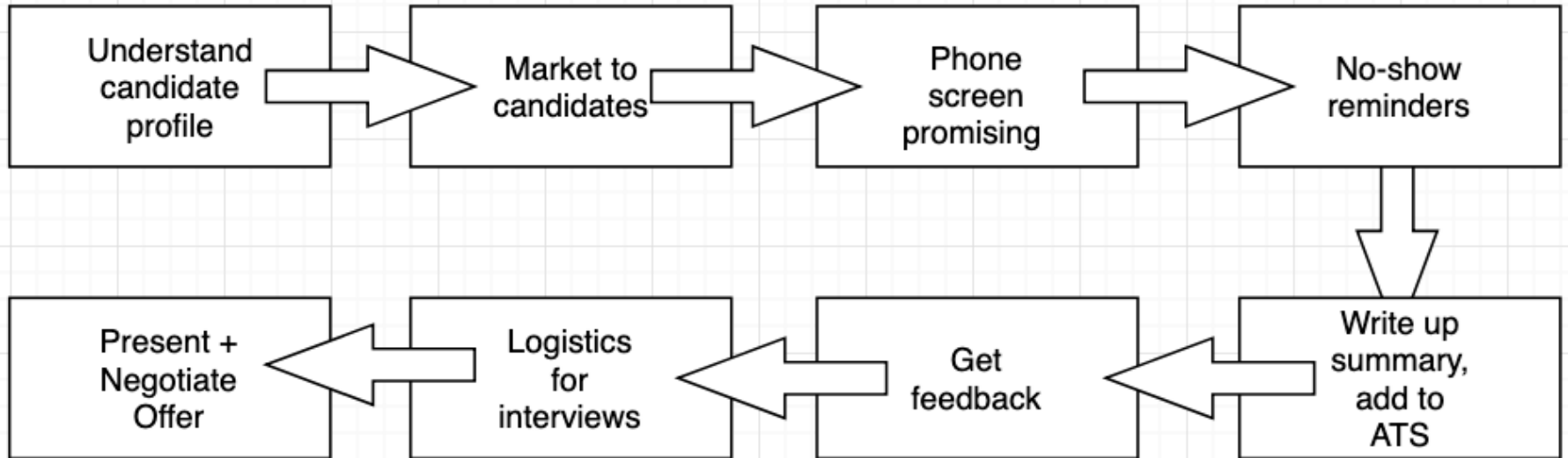
- Befriend someone at the company
- Mention that you're already in process at \$BRAND_NAME_CO

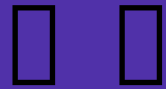
Conclusion/Self-Promotion Slide

- <https://codefor.cash> - sign up for alerts about tech jobs
- Time permitting, Appendix + Q&A
- zack@codefor.cash

APPENDIX: The day to day tasks of recruiting.

(Empathize with your recruiter)





APPENDIX: How to make your recruiter love you

- Work authorization status – do they require sponsorship
- Salary target
- Where else they are interviewing
- Vacation or anything else that might interrupt the interviewing process
- How long to start new role
- What are they doing now and what tech are they using for that
- Why are they looking to leave
- What do they want to do next
- Where on their resume can I see their qualifications for the role
- Where do they live and where are they available to commute to

Write all this in third person. 2-3 paragraphs. Include it with your applications.



APPENDIX: How to make your recruiter love you

“Sylvester is a Senior Software Engineer, Backend with FraudReduce- an adtech security company- where he is i) assisting with the switch from PHP to React/Python, ii) helps scan client websites for malware within ad bidding structure, and iii) develops software to block bids based on scans.

He is looking for a new role because he wants to get back to being a Technical Lead similar to what he was at Hearst. Unfortunately, Hearst let his whole team go in Oct 2016, and he has been at FraudReduce and NBC since then. He would love to work for an innovative company where he gets back to the managerial and IC Technical Lead position.

He lives in the Bronx (and can commute to Manhattan,) is a US Citizen, and is looking for \$160-\$170K base. He is currently interviewing with iHeart Radio, EMX, and OutBrain.”