



### **Hiring Village - Tips from the Field**

“The [candidates] that I talk to that stand out are the ones that clearly enjoy the field and have projects that they’re excited about. They can provide examples, know what parts of cyber security they enjoy the most and know where their weaknesses are. You can tell it’s not just something they picked on a whim; they have lots of excitement for it.”

“1. Always go to an interview with a prepared list of questions to ask. This shows you have interest/preparedness and that you have done your company research; 2. Get involved (especially if you have a specialty). Whether it’s taking classes, certifications/bootcamps, participating in hack-a-thons, etc. Prove your passion!”

“I always ask candidates specific questions to see how engaged they are. If people can’t answer them (or give generic answers), I know that security stuff is just a job. If they are weird like me and hacking stuff is their passion, they will have very opinionated responses which will help me understand their character on a much deeper level.”

“Tell me three websites you frequent to keep up with security issues.”

“Do you follow twitter feeds of security industry people, and if so, who?”

“Is there any recent conference speech/white paper/blog article/etc. that you really liked, and why?”

“Understanding the basics of how networks work, systems and applications work and communicate is essential. Be sure you have a good understanding of these foundational concepts. Most folks in the entry level, myself included

back in the day want to run before they can crawl. Invest the time to understand how things work as well as the security concepts will serve you well throughout your career.”

“Stay hungry! Be a lifetime learner. Help others.”

“Knowledge available in books and web can be taught; however, the character is much harder to change. It is hard to teach grown individuals critical thinking and integrity. I generally start with asking about a recent challenging problem they have worked on, then try to dig in to understand how they solved it. This can tell you a lot about how they think and work - intuitive vs. systematic, loner vs. collaborative, etc.”

“It’s not always what you know but who you know.”

“Networking is critical! You must build a strong professional network and you need to give back to your network along the way.”

“Candidates need to be prepared. Lack of preparation tells recruiters that the candidate does not value the recruiter’s time. Almost as important was spelling and punctuation on the resume. Since many roles in cybersecurity involve attention to detail, the same attention to detail should be applied to presenting a work resume. These are messages from cybersecurity recruiters.”

“Don’t be afraid to break things.”

“Be a team player. Don’t hoard knowledge and learn from others. Give credit where it is due. These days, we don’t do it all... we have to work with others. Those that can’t work well with others tear down the rest of the team and hinder progress.”

“Read! There are so many facets to it and the industry and the top companies are shifting all the time. Get to know the industry and top publications (Dark Reading, InfoSecurity, etc.).”

“Follow several great cyber security resources on twitter. Read their posts daily. The industry moves lightning fast.”

“Do your research:”

“The position you’re looking to fill should be with a company that actually hires for that position. Seems like common sense, but many candidates come in looking for jobs we don’t do.”

“Make sure you meet the job qualifications. The “musts” are musts for a reason, but talk to them. Maybe there is some leeway in the minimum requirements, maybe there aren’t, but ask.”

“If you’re just getting started in the field, or still in school, take a look at job boards, company websites, and other resources online to see what’s out there. What skills and experience are those hiring entities looking for?”

“Be willing to invest in yourself:”

“Most companies offer tuition reimbursement and opportunity to attend conferences and other professional training, but sometimes, training and travel budgets are the first to get cut. Don’t sit there because your company doesn’t have funding: it’s your skill set and livelihood in jeopardy. Someone will hire the next person with the required and desired skills. If it’s important to you, send yourself or look for other alternative ways to feed yourself professionally. Yes, some cons are expensive, but many are not and have great content. Do some online webinars, listen to podcasts, read, send yourself to a con (*Yes, I personally have done all of these over the last 30 years*). Don’t be willing to put your future fully into someone else’s hands.”

“Be patient as the big data projects are always more complex than expected. Expect challenges along the path of your career.”

“Be persistent when tracking down an issue, particularly when your analysis depends on both the technical facts and the personal experience.”

“Be proud of your work by showing folks that you are interested in their point of view as part of the overall solution.”

“Be prepared for the forthcoming situation/future (look ahead).”

“Your professional experience (months) and the number of critical events (High, Medium, Low) you actually get to work on over a lifetime (years) defines the span (decades) of your career.”

“Gather a deep understanding of all aspects of your chosen career field. Realize that sometimes a lateral move will provide you a better opportunity than always looking to move up. Sometimes your next move is better as a lateral one because it affords you more opportunities in the future. If yo’re constantly learning, you become more well-rounded and that makes you more valuable. No one can pigeonhole you - only you can pigeonhole yourself.”