

# Interviews & Negotiations The RaiseMe Way

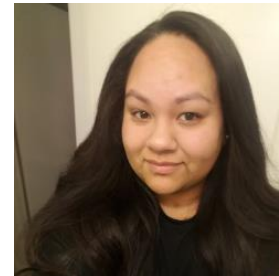
## ShellCon U 2019



**Clinic by  
Lori Barfield  
Merissa Villalobos  
October 12, 2019**

# About Us

- Lori Barfield, con organizer
- Hiring Contrarian
- Team Builder
- Merissa Villalobos
- Cybersecurity Recruiter
- Team Builder



# This Workshop



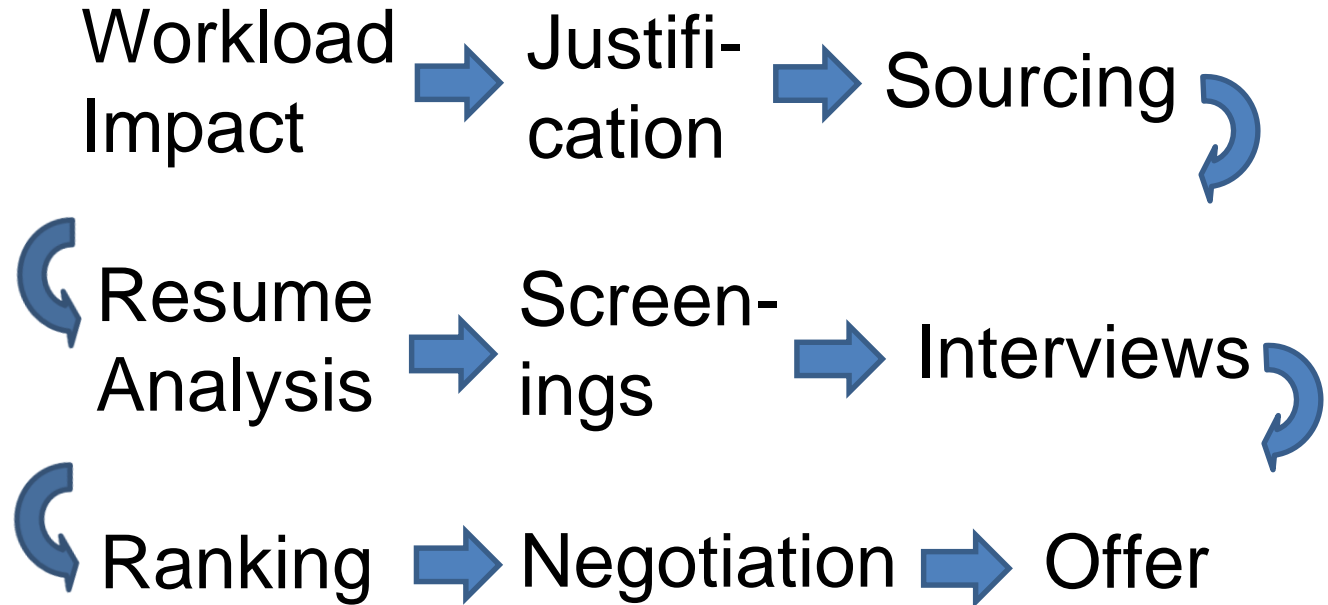
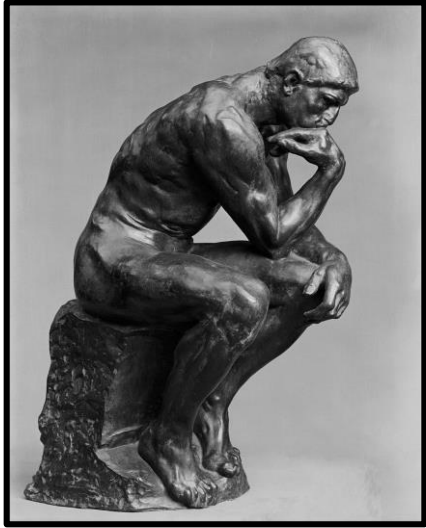
## What this Workshop Is

- Perspectives from both sides of the table
- Actionable advice in the competition to win a role
- Clarification on how to evaluate total compensation packages

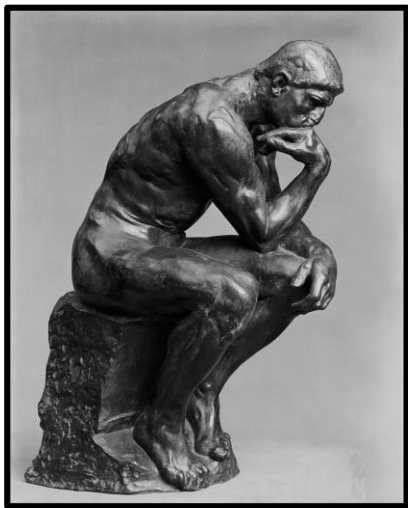
## What this Workshop Isn't

- The answer to which job is the right one for you

# The Hiring Manager's Process



# The Job Hunter's Process



## Serialized Steps

Resume → Call Back → Interview → Negotiation → Offer

# Interviews



We Love Interviews

# Where To Get Information



- Glassdoor
- Kununu
- Facebook
- LinkedIn
- Paysa
- Indeed
- Blind
- Hire

# Characteristics Engineering Managers Value

- Technical skills
- Spectrum of experience
- Robust under pressure
- Clear communication
- Creative problem solving
- More...



# Characteristics of a Good Fit

1. Role on Team Previously Demonstrated
2. Role on Team they Want
3. Growth Potential
4. Qualifications
5. Compensation Needs
6. Other Needs: Schedule/Telecommute



# Qualifications



1. Skills
2. Experience
3. Accomplishments
4. Education

# Conventional Qualifications

- Lean over in current role
- Casual consulting on 1099
- College degrees, certificate programs
- Industry, vendor certifications and training



# Unconventional Qualifications



- Open Source
- Volunteer work
- Speak at meetups
- Online skill builder sites
- Competitions  
(infosec skills)

# What You Communicate in the Interview

- Location
- Team chemistry
- Personality
- Talent
- Technical skillset
- Seasoning
- Communication skills
- Certifications
- Work ethic/productivity
- Career path
- Troubleshooting skills
- Architecting skills
- Experience in role
- Experience with critical type of project

# What Makes a Good Fit

- Role on Team Previously Demonstrated <sub>vs</sub> Role You Seek
- Growth Potential
- Qualifications
- Compensation Needs
- Other Needs: schedule, telecommute, etc.



# Interview Rules

- You interview them
- Short 30-second responses
- Don't go negative
- Practice, until you avoid “apologies”
- Stuck? Make a case that avoids prejudices
- Gather information about match, don't negotiate

# Managers: Recruiting Senior Talent

- Likely baby boomers
- Emphasize job security
- Know retirement plan details
- Put them with long time team members
- History of acquisitions and re-orgs will be a red flag



# Managers: Recruiting Millennials

- Millennials want flexibility, remote work
- Idealized mobility at 12-18 months
- Talk about growth opportunities to craft a picture of them staying long term
- Put them with someone who moved up the ladder quickly

# Managers: Recruiting Women

- Watch interviewers for eye contact, engagement, interview time
- Not asking harder questions, or providing answer in the question, indicates bias about failure
- Women are more influenced by presence of female role models because they are more rare
- Emphasize career advancement opportunities
- Diversity departments and mentoring programs

# Managers: What if My Organization is All White?

- Embrace that breaking any Catch-22 requires effort
- Be aware that the only one of an underrepresented group carries a subconscious weight
- Not seeing other people of color signals candidates that they may have to challenge existing ideas
- Interviewers with ethnic last names will be asked “How do you feel about working here?” (even though they might be a racial mix)
- **DO:** Emphasize culture of appreciation for uniqueness

# Negotiating



# Never Lose Situational Awareness



- Don't start until needs are well understood
- Match their needs, don't "Win"
- Leave room for growth

# Salary Isn't Everything

1. Industry
2. Type of Company
3. Role on Team
4. Growth Potential


- Challenges
- Career Path

Salary Isn't Everything


# Negotiate a Role on Your Career Progression

Observe the industry: Is this role the next one in a typical career path?


Experience




**Senior Director Of Technology Operations and Security**  
Heal Inc.  
May 2017 - Present • 1 yr 4 mos




**Director of DevOps**  
eHarmony  
Jun 2016 - Apr 2017 • 11 mos



**Director of Operations**  
TrueCar, Inc.  
Jun 2011 - Jun 2016 • 5 yrs 1 mo




**Principal Engineer**  
DIRECTV  
Apr 2008 - Jun 2011 • 3 yrs 3 mos



**Sr. Systems Administrator**  
Ticketmaster  
Aug 2006 - Apr 2008 • 1 yr 9 mos

[4 MORE POSITIONS](#)

Education



University of South Carolina

- Long term growth
- More confidence
- Higher offer

# Fit Redux: Better Fit, Higher Salary Offer

- Do your previous role(s) match this role?
- Growth Potential
- Qualifications
- They want reduced risk and greatest value of contribution





# Not About the Money: “Reborns” and “Restarts”

- Lower cost during ramp-up but not paying to season a professional
- Previous training and experience informs new career
- Balance Team Strengths
- Mentoring mindset
- More willing to get certs
- Tough to fill positions
- IBM Returnship Program
- Prowess Project Returnship Course

# Total Compensation

- Is complex; startup situations can be very complex
- Negotiable perks like per diems may be taxable
- When it's not apples-to-apples, take extra time and seek opinions

# Employment Contracts

- For senior talent and managers
- The bigger the company, the bigger the role has to be in order to do this kind of negotiating
- USE A LAWYER if you are big bux enough
- The nice guy who hires you might be gone next year

# Negotiating Advantages

- The best time to look for a job is when you have a job
- Competing offers
- Coming from a competitor
- Evaluate time criticalities
- If time criticality doesn't exist, create one

# Should I Stay or Should I Go?

- Using an offer letter as leverage to improve current situation

# Help & Mentoring



# Attributions

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/vickyvalet/2019/01/15/americas-best-employers-for-diversity-2019>

<https://www.forbes.com/lists/best-employers-diversity>

Uncle Sam by James Montgomery Flagg: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Uncle-Sam>

Diversity Wheel: <https://www.cogo.co.nz/diversity-counts/>

<http://www.commissionbestpractices.com/home/2017/7/26/recruit-talent-in-todays-market-a-guide-to-diversity-and-inclusion-in-the-workplace>

Interviews with hiring managers and recruiters who graciously agreed to share their wisdom.

# First Exercise: Interviewing for Fit





This is a Senior Engineer position in the DevOps/Cloud/CM team, requiring highly skilled and versatile individual with strong ability to work independently taking high level directions and putting the solution in place.

**Responsibilities:**

- Manage, monitor, maintain and enhance company's AWS / Azure infrastructure, covering CM/CI/CD servers, development servers, internal and external application servers, supporting development and other teams, to meet company's fast-growing business needs.

**Minimum Qualifications:**

- Bachelor's Engineering/Science degree in Computers/Information Technologies/Electrical/Electronic or equivalent with relevant skills
- Five (5) to Ten (10) years of relevant experience
- Three (3) to Five (5) years of experience with installation, maintenance and administering Linux servers, and applications
- Must have strong knowledge of Linux including CentOS/RedHat
- Must have strong scripting skills including Bash, other scripting/programming languages

**Preferred Qualifications:**

- Good understanding of CM tools, processes and best practices, including Git
- Manage AWS / Azure infrastructure, including EC2, VPC, creating and managing AMIs
- Manage CI/CD setup including Jenkins, build agents, automation scripts
- Virtualization technologies, including Docker, others like Xen, VMWare etc. a plus
- Setting up and managing Chef, Nagios, Nginx, PostgreSQL, Elasticsearch
- Good knowledge of TLS, SSH, Security Certificates, GPG, encryption, networking and security
- Backups and restores, experience in disaster recovery and high availability a plus
- Managing Atlassian servers and cloud hosted services, including JIRA, Bitbucket
- Managing yum repos, Docker registry, Sonatype Nexus repository manager
- Supporting Java development, good knowledge of Maven and poms
- Software packaging, including rpm, Install4j
- Familiarity supporting Agile software development teams
- Strong ability to work independently taking high level directions and putting the solution in place
- Understanding and ability to support always-on, always up services
- Fast learner, ability to research and pick up new technologies and skills

# Software Engineer, Site Reliability Engineer

XXX

Software Engineering, Technical Infrastructure  
Mountain View, CA, United States

*Hope is not a strategy. Engineering solutions to design, build, and maintain efficient large-scale systems is a true strategy, and a good one.*

Site Reliability Engineering (SRE) is an engineering discipline that combines software and systems engineering to build and run large-scale, massively distributed, fault-tolerant systems. SRE ensures that XXX's services—both our internally critical and our externally-visible systems—have reliability and uptime appropriate to users' needs and a fast rate of improvement while keeping an ever-watchful eye on capacity and performance.

SRE is also a mindset and a set of engineering approaches [...]

|

**To learn more:** check out [Site Reliability Engineering](#), written by XXX SREs, watch a recorded [Hangout on Air](#) to meet some of our SREs, or read a [career profile](#) about why a software engineer chose to join SRE.

Behind everything our users see online is the architecture built by [...]

## Responsibilities

- Engage in and improve the whole lifecycle of services—from inception and design, through deployment, operation and refinement.
- Support services before they go live through activities such as system design consulting, developing software platforms and frameworks, capacity planning and launch reviews.
- Maintain services once they are live by measuring and monitoring availability, latency and overall system health.
- Scale systems sustainably through mechanisms like [automation](#), and evolve systems by pushing for changes that improve reliability and velocity.
- Practice sustainable incident response and blameless postmortems.

## Qualifications

Minimum qualifications:

- BS degree in Computer Science or related technical field involving coding (e.g., physics or mathematics), or equivalent practical experience.
- Experience with algorithms, data structures, complexity analysis and software design.
- Experience in one or more of the following: C, C++, Java, Python, Go, Perl or Ruby.

Preferred qualifications:

- Interest in designing, analyzing and troubleshooting large-scale distributed systems.
- Systematic problem-solving approach, coupled with strong communication skills and a sense of ownership and drive.
- Ability to debug and optimize code and automate routine tasks



**RaiseMe@shellcon.io**

## Second Exercise: Evaluating the Fit



# Manager's Selection Process

- Prioritize
- Compare
- Easier to choose *least desirable* than *best*, which is why some candidates get stuck

## ITDirector@gmail.com



**RANK: 1**

**Weight**

	Weight								
Characteristic	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0	Notes
Exp: 5+ years, 2 as senior	1								5 years, senior now
Experience troubleshooting large operation		1							
Knowledge of financial institutions									
DevOps experience				1					
RHEL									strong CentOS
Ansible/YAML									
Docker/Kubernetes							1		
Vagrant									
	1	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	
	120	64	32	16	8	4	2	1	
	210								

**Weight**

Characteristic	Weight								Notes
	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0	
Exp: 5+ years, 2 as senior	1								has 6 years, recently promoted but senior in role for long time
Experience troubleshooting large operation		1							multiple war stories
Knowledge of financial institutions									
Knowledge of Terraform/HCL									
Leader of DevOps automation project									
Willingness to do OnCall duty									only as emergency fill-in, has small child
Location within 10 miles							1		
Career path								1	will attend graduate school with our education policy
	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	
	139	64	32	16	8	4	2	1	

That's All, Folks!



**RaiseMe@shellcon.io**