

Title: How to Get Hired at a Private Practice

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APA Speaker: Hello, and welcome to our latest installment of *Supercharge Your Presence*. Today's webinar focuses on how to get hired at a private practice. Some important points before we get started, this program does not offer CE, however, we will e-mail everyone watching live today a certificate of attendance. Attendees must watch for a minimum of 45 minutes to receive the certificate.

This presentation is being recorded and everyone who registered will be e-mailed the recording in about two weeks. We will chat out a link to the slide presentation during the webinar. If you miss it, don't worry. We'll include a link to the slides with the recording. As soon as the webinar has ended, a short survey will appear on your screen. We hope you'll take a few minutes to complete the survey and give us feedback on how we did and how we can improve. During our time together, as you will be on mute, you can communicate to us using the questions box located in your webinar screen. Now, let's begin.

Kyler: Hello, APA. Welcome to the latest edition of the *Supercharge Your Presence* series where today we're going to be talking about how to get hired in a private practice. I'm Dr. Kyler Shumway, and I am joined remotely by my best friend and colleague, Dr. Daniel Wendler.

Daniel: I know that you're probably excited to jump into the content that Kyler and I have put together for you and learn some really good practical tips for finding a job at a private practice, getting hired and expanding your career after you've gotten that offer, but before we jump into all of that, I wanted to take just a little bit of a time to introduce to you who you would be learning from, so that you don't have to wonder, "Well, what are these ideas based on? Can I really trust these concepts?"

Instead, you could know the credibility that we bring to the table. On my end, I'm the founder of MarketingForTherapists.org, which is an online resource and marketing agency that helps private practice therapists grow their marketing and reach new clients. I work with private practice therapists all day, every day, and I help them with all aspects of their business, including reaching new clients and moving to the next level of their goals for the practice.

I understand a lot about what private practice leaders are looking for, and then obviously I also know a lot about marketing, putting your best foot forward, crafting a message that's going to get results, all of those sorts of things. I also have learned a lot about promoting oneself through my own career. I'm the founder of ImproveYourSocialSkills.com, the author of three books and a two times TEDx speaker.

I've done a lot of work personally in becoming a thought leader, sharing a lot of ideas with the world, and putting myself in positions where people might want to give me opportunities, and so I can take a lot of the concepts that I've learned from my own journey and package them to help you. Of course, I'm a clinical psychologist myself, and so I'm not just some guy that's giving general advice, but everything that I do is

coming from my experience within the field of psychology, and so it's targeted for you as a psychologist also.

Kyler: Thank you, Dan. Just a little about me, I'm the CEO of Deep Eddy Psychotherapy, which is one of the largest outpatient private practices in the state of Texas. We have 150 clinicians on staff and growing, and we serve 10,000 clients per month. We have quite a bit of reach. We're based in Austin as well as Dallas, Houston, and San Antonio, and continuing to expand across the state.

Over the years, I've done more than 400 interviews with clinicians who are looking to join Deep Eddy and other settings where I've served in the hiring position. Over those experiences, I've learned some things that work really well for prospective applicants as well as things that really don't. I'm hoping that during our time today we can highlight both of those things so that you know what to do and what to not do. I've also written a few books and given a TED Talk myself, as well as been featured in a few neat places like CNN and New York Times.

Daniel: Here's our roadmap for today. First, we're going to talk about the search. We're going to talk about how do you find a private practice that's going to be a good fit for you, that's going to be hiring, that's going to be looking for the gifts and talents that you bring to the table, and how do you get their attention? How do you craft a cover letter and a CV that are really going to get them to want to give you an interview?

Maybe how do you even get the opportunity to do an interview, even if they're not officially hiring? We're going to talk you through all of those ideas. We're also going to talk about the choice, which refers to the process of the interview where both the interviewer is making a choice about whether to hire you, but you're also making a choice about whether or not this is a good place for you to work.

We're going to talk about everything that goes into that, whether that is wowing the interviewer, working on some of your nerves and social anxiety, or handling the negotiation part of the process, including maybe even walking away if you have to. Then finally, we're going to talk about the next level of your career, because obviously your career doesn't end the day that you get an offer to be hired at a great private practice.

That's just the beginning, and so we're going to talk about how you can grow your career at a private practice, find opportunities for more leadership, more impact, things like that. Then we're also going to talk about how you can grow your career as a psychologist outside of the private practice in the wider community, making an impact in the world at large. That's what we got in store for you.

I guess let's jump in starting with the search. The first part of what we want to get into today is the search, and this encompasses really the process of looking for an amazing job opportunity at a private practice and then filling out the application, putting together your cover letter, sort of everything up until the point where they offer you that interview. Before we can jump into the search, I want to offer a little bit of a metaphor that will help you understand some of the ideas that I'm going to be talking about.

The metaphor is the classic piece of television fun, the show, *The Bachelor*, or *The Bachelorette*, if that's your preferred style. If you've never seen that show, that's maybe for the best. Basically, the idea behind *The Bachelor* or *The Bachelorette* is that you have one bachelor, or bachelorette, and then you have like 30 other people that are all trying to get that person to fall in love with them and live happily ever after.

The thing is, it's pretty fun to be the bachelor or the bachelorette, but you don't really want to be one of those 30 random people because your odds are not very good. Also, you have to spend so much time trying to convince the bachelor or bachelorette to fall in love with you that you never really get the chance to think about, Is this person right for me? Is this actually what I want to be doing?

The reason why I bring that up is because it's pretty common for people in the job search to fall into *The Bachelor* trap, where, number one, they go and they apply to the same kind of jobs that everybody else is applying to, the same private practices that maybe have hundreds of applicants. They just want to throw their name in the pile because they're like, "Oh, they're hiring. I got to participate in that." That's really a problem because you don't have an easy way to stand out when you are part of a massive crowd and it's easy for your value to be overlooked.

Then also, you might find yourself applying to positions that aren't really a great fit for you, just because you're like, "Well, I just want somebody to pick me." That's the second part of *The Bachelor* trap, is just trying to get that bachelor or bachelorette to fall for you even though you don't really know them, you don't really know if they're the right fit for you. You don't want to do that with your career, so all of my strategies for the search revolve around avoiding *The Bachelor* trap.

To avoid *The Bachelor* trap, the first step that you got to do that a lot of people skip is to look inwards. Instead of starting by hunting for opportunities and just responding to the opportunities, you first want to spend a little bit time thinking through your own needs, your own values, and identifying what it is that you're looking for before you start searching. There's a couple of different ways that you can do that. The first way is that you start by identifying your practical needs, just like the nuts and bolts stuff, where it's very clear if that's there or if it's not.

If it's not there, then the job isn't going to be offering you as much as you need. You can start by thinking about compensation. Obviously, we'd all prefer to be earning a billion dollars a year but it's not about just the more is better. It's about, "Well, what's the amount that I need to just get by? What's the amount that is-- covers my basic expenses? It's okay." Maybe you identify, "What's an amount that might allow me to achieve some financial goals?" If you like, "It's really important to me to start paying down my student loans," or, "I really want to be able to save up for a vacation," or, "I want to put some money into my kids' college fund."

Maybe you're able to say, "Well, this is what I need to just take care of myself. This is what I need to meet that goal," and you can have a couple of different numbers in mind, but I think once you can identify that, then that gives you a sense for what sort of positions are going to be within the ballpark of what I need from compensation and what are maybe going to be below that.

It's also worth thinking about benefits. Are you in a position where you really need health insurance or do you maybe have a partner that can provide health insurance to you? Are you in a position where you really want to be thinking about retirement? Then it's important that your position is going to offer retirement benefits. Or is that not so important to you? Things of that nature where, again, you're not just trying to list everything that would be nice to have. You're trying to list the things that are really important, really genuine needs for you so that you can know that if you come across a job and it doesn't seem to meet those needs, you can just keep looking and you don't have to pursue it.

Finally, it's worth thinking about flexibility. Obviously, with COVID, a lot of us moved to remote work, we moved to online work. For some people that worked really great and you want to maybe maintain the ability to work remotely or work from-- or have flexibility about when you're in person and when you're not. Then for some other people, maybe what you really want is to be back in a clinic surrounded by colleagues, and so you really want to make sure that it's a position where they can guarantee that you're going to be able to have an in-person office and see clients in person, have colleagues around you.

Whatever you need there, you want to make sure that you can define it. Again, it's not the like, "Oh, it'd be preferable if I could have this." It's the like, "What do I really need to feel fulfilled, to feel okay about this?" You also want to think about flexibility. You might want to think about that in terms of remote work versus in-person work. Maybe for you, you really would prefer to have the ability to do all of your work remotely or maybe you really want to be in person, or maybe you want to have a hybrid model, where it's a position where you can be in the clinic sometimes and then sometimes work from wherever you happen to be.

If that's something that's important to you, you want to make sure that you've identified that and you've written that down, and you know for sure that that's something that you're looking for. Another part of flexibility that might be important to you is the idea of flexibility over your schedule. Perhaps you're just not a morning person and you want the ability to start your day later, is that a perk that a particular job offers or not?

Well, a lot of them will say that. Well, you can ask about it in the interview. If you can write that down and know that that's important for you, that's going to help you know what to look for and what to filter. The other thing that you want to be thinking about is your cultural non-negotiables because I'm sure that we would all agree that even if we could get a job at like a tobacco company, for instance, that paid us well, had great benefits, et cetera, we probably wouldn't be very happy at that company because culturally, it just doesn't align with our values and things of that nature.

Obviously, a private practice is probably going to be closer to your values than a tobacco company, but it's still worth thinking about, "What do I really need to feel like I am aligned with the mission, the values, the culture of the organization so that I can show up to work and be proud of where I am every day rather than feeling like there's this big disconnect between myself and the mission and values of the organization?" Spend some time thinking about what are the organizational values that you really want to see in an organization that you're a part of.

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Maybe that's something related to cultural awareness and multicultural humility, like you want to be at a place that really values those things, that maybe has a statement that supports them, really takes seriously that commitment. Maybe you want to be at a place that has a really strong commitment to giving everybody access to opportunities and growth, even if they maybe don't come from the dominant culture, or they don't have as traditional of a career path. Some place that really takes seriously valuing all sorts of people could be something that's really important to you.

Or you might think, "Well, I really want to be a part of a place that has a lot of support for advocacy and societal change. I don't want to be working at a clinic where it feels like we're just here to collect a paycheck and go home. I want to feel like my private practice is involved in advocating for things that are important, showing leadership in the community, making an impact in ways that matter to me." Think through those things.

Again, it's not about like, "Oh, yes, I guess it'd be great if my private practice happened to have a recycling policy or something like that, but I don't really care." It's about what is the stuff that's really going to be important to you, and trying to map that out. Then finally, you want to do a variant of the miracle question. You've probably run across this question before in your clinical work where you ask a client, "Okay, if there was a miracle and overnight everything changed, and then you woke up in the morning and you went through your day, what are the things that you would notice that would show you that things would have changed and that things are better?"

You want to ask that same kind of question for you in your career. You want to imagine a career where you wake up and you go to work and you are fully thriving the whole day. You are getting your maximum fulfillment from your job, you are doing your best possible work, your gifts and talents are fully utilized and developed and you're part of a community where you feel connected and supported. What would that look like for you? What are the key ingredients that would allow that to happen?

Obviously, you're probably not going to find all of those things in the job that you might be looking at, but if you have a vision for what the ideal would look for, you're going to have much more of a sense of like, "Okay, what are the opportunities that are extra special? What are the places that seem like they're pretty close to what I'm really looking for? Those are maybe the places that I'm really going to prioritize applying for or reaching out to."

Once you've finished step one and you've spent a little bit of time looking inwards, then it's time to start looking outwards. It's time to start hunting for some opportunities. When you do this, you really want to go beyond the job listings because with a lot of people, the start and end of their job search is to just go to indeed.com or monster.com, or something like that, and just search for psychology jobs or therapist jobs or things like that. That's okay, you can find jobs on there but I would really limit the amount of time that you spend on the job boards. There's a couple of reasons for that.

The first one is that lots of people go on the job boards and so there's a lot of visibility for any posts that you come across. That means that there's a lot of

competition. Any job listing that you're applying to, there's probably 100 other people that are also applying to it. It's really difficult for your application to stand out in that kind of crowd because the hiring manager is just overwhelmed by the number of applications. It's very easy for them to maybe skim through your application and throw it in the trash for some small reason, rather than really giving you the full chance.

Also, there's diminishing returns. There's just not that many amazing positions available on these job boards, and so chances are once you've looked for a little bit, if you just keep scrolling, you're going to find worse and worse and worse opportunities. Sometimes that can feel productive, that can feel like you're not sure what else to do and so you can just put more and more time to the job boards. You don't want to fall into that trap. Don't let yourself chase diminishing returns.

Instead, put limits on how much time you're going to put on the job boards and hold to those limits. You might say, "I'm going to spend three or four hours a week, tops," or, "Once a week, I'm going to go on and I'm going to refresh. I'm going to see what's there and then I'm not going to think about it again for another week." Something like that, where you are able to limit the amount of time that you're putting in and you're not just getting sucked in and scrolling endlessly.

Then you're probably saying, "Okay. Well, Daniel, if I limit my time on the job boards, then what am I supposed to do? How am I supposed to find a potential private practice to work for?" The secret trick that I want to propose to you is to search from a client's perspective. Imagine that you are your ideal client, whether that's based on population, whether that's based on the type of issue that you'd like to work with. Imagine that you are a client that would be a really good fit for you and that that client is going to be looking for a therapist.

What would that client type into Google? Where would that client go to look? Would they check it out on Psychology Today? Would they go on Yelp? Go search in the same way as if you were a client and see what comes up, because the fact is if you are searching and you're finding a certain practice or therapists from a certain practice showing up to your search, that's a practice that's doing a pretty good job at reaching your ideal client, the kind of people that you are wanting to work with. If they're showing up a lot, then they're probably attracting a lot of clients.

They're probably growing, they're probably thriving, and they could probably use more therapists on the team to be able to serve their clients. This is a great way to find thriving practices that might be flying under the radar in terms of their hiring needs but that could still really use you on their team. It's also a really good way to look for values and sort of lie a vibe concurrence. See how is this practice promoting themselves to the prospective client that you're pretending to be. What kind of messaging are they providing? What sort of culture do they seem to be signaling? What sort of values seem to be baked into their website, or their Psychology Today profiles, or things like that?

I think that this is going to help you identify either, like, "This practice doesn't seem like it's quite the right fit for me. It seems like the therapeutic modality that they do is different than me, or it seems they have some different values." Or you might be able

to say, "Wow, this is really an incredible practice. I feel like I'm reading all of these bios of these therapists and I kind of want them all to be my friends." That's a situation where you're like, "Okay, this is going to be something that's really special for me."

Once you've identified some of these private practices that are doing a good job at reaching prospective clients, you want to actually put your name in the hat and go and apply to them. If you go to their website and they have a job page, then that's easy. Just go and look at their listings and apply if they have an option for that, but what if you go to their site and there's no career page, and it's not clear whether or not they're hiring? Well, in that case, you want to give yourself the ability to knock on closed doors.

What I mean by that is just reach out and see if there's an opportunity. It's not enough to just say, "Hi, are you hiring?" You want to show value. You want to spend a little bit of time reading through the website, getting a sense for like, "What are they probably looking for? What would be a really good contributor to them?" Then write a short e-mail that shares how you might be able to bring something strong to the table for them.

Be able to say something like, "Hey, I can see that you guys really value evidence-based practice and here's some information about the training that I've done in evidence-based approaches and how I could really bring a lot to the table here." Or, "Hey, I see that you guys have a really strong commitment to working with a diverse client base. Here's a particular population that I have a lot of expertise with, and I would be able to help you reach that population and maybe even provide some trainings around that."

Or maybe just, "Hey, I think that I really align with the values of your organization. Here's why I think that I could be a really good fit for you." Show your value in some way. Don't write a huge essay but have a couple of sentences, include a couple of details, and then say, "Could I send you a cover letter? Could I send you my CV? Could we possibly do an interview and just see what happens?"

Worst that'll happen is they'll say no, or they'll ignore you, but this gives you a really good chance to stand out and maybe be one of the only applicants that they're considering, rather than being lost in the crowd of some indeed listing where you're one of 100 people applying. Finally, we want to talk about Step Three of avoiding *The Bachelor* trap, which is to rise above the crowd.

What we mean here is once you finally found a place where you want to put in an application, whether you got lucky and you stumbled across a listing that was actually really good or you went searching and you found a practice that was kind of flying under the radar but seemed like it was a really good fit for you, well, now you got to put in an application. How do you do that in a way that causes you to be seen as a unique contributor? Not just a commodity, not just a psychologist like every other psychologist, but somebody who's really going to bring something unique and valuable to the table.

Well, there's three different components to really nailing that goal. The first one is to tell a story with your cover letter. It's very common for people to write cover letters that are just sort of like a mishmash of, "Here's a bunch of stuff about me." That's okay, but it doesn't really sell you to the hiring manager or make a strong argument for why they should consider you. Instead, you want to include a couple of things in your cover letter that tell a strong story.

First, you want to start by saying why you specifically want to work there, because the hiring manager, they don't really want to have an application from somebody that's just applying to every single private practice in the city. They want to feel like you are choosing them to a degree. That you see something about them that has alignment with you, rather than just seeing them as the source of a paycheck.

You want to sort of say, "Hey, here's why I'm specifically reaching out to you. Here's why I think that I would be really happy at your practice, why I would really bring a lot to the table," et cetera. You also want to make sure that you mention what you might offer-- you want to mention what you offer that many psychologists might not. Again, just about everybody applying for the position is going to meet the basic standards of having a license and being able to practice and things like that, so how do you go above and beyond that?

How do you offer something that's actually kind of special? You might want to talk about some specific kind of training or certification that you have. You might want to talk about some specific populations you have expertise with. You might want to talk about something about your own values and your commitments that maybe is going to allow you to contribute at a strong level. You want to make sure that you are offering things that are going to be of value to the private practice.

If you just say, "Hey, I have this certification." They might think, "Okay, well, that's cool, but why do I really care?" If you say, "Hey, I have this certification, and this training is going to allow me to serve these kinds of clients in a way that's really powerful," or, "This demonstrates my commitment to continuing education, training, being the best therapist that I can be, and so you can trust that I'm always going to be improving and working hard to give really quality service," those are the sorts of things that a potential employer is going to look at and really take notice of.

Obviously, anybody can write a cover letter and just say, "Oh, I'm the best. I bring a lot of value. I'm amazing," and so you also want to make sure that you are including specific facts and details that help them trust that you're going to make a strong contribution. The idea here is to kind of show, not tell. Don't just say, "Oh, yes, I believe in evidence-based practice," but to be like, "I believe in evidence-based practice, and that's why I got this certification. I did this training, I did these actions that are verifiable," or something of that nature.

You want to be able to mention specific things that you've done that will-- or tell stories about specific experiences that you've had that will give them confidence that you are able to bring the value that you actually say that you want to bring. Also, the second part of this is that you want to build a CV that backs up your cover letter. Again, the story that you're telling with your cover letter is, "Here is why I am

specifically a good fit for your practice, and why I'm going to bring you some amazing value that many other psychologists might not bring."

You want your CV to really fortify and back that up. The best way that you can do that is to lead with what matters most. Some psychologists have CVs that they kind of built it in grad school and then they just sort of kept updating it and they never really thought to revise the format to fit the needs of the new chapter of their life. For instance, the amount of research that you did or the student government organization that you were part of, that was probably pretty important when you were in grad school, but it might not be very important now, and so it might not want to be the thing that is at the very beginning of your CV.

You want to look at everything that you accomplished in your CV and think, "If I was the hiring manager for a private practice, what are the things that I would care about the most?" Put them at the top, and the things that are less important, put them further down. Then the stuff that's at the very end of the CV is the stuff that's the least important. Also, you want to claim concrete accomplishments in your CV. Sometimes people will write down, "Oh, I was a staff therapist here," or, "Oh, I had this position here," and they won't really include what they did as a part of that.

That doesn't really help you stand out. Instead, you want to sort of say, "Well, when I was here, I was able to work with this kind of acuity," or, "I was able to see these numbers of clients," or, "I was able to participate in this special project that advocated for something important in this way." You want to make sure that you are identifying what did you do that was the most impressive and the most demonstrative of your gifts and talents and strengths, and make sure that that is explicitly listed in the CV.

Finally, it's possible that as you're putting your CV together, there might be some gaps in your experience, or some things that a hiring manager might look at and have some concern. For instance, maybe you had a gap year where you took some time off of work to have a new baby or to backpack through Europe, or something like that. Or perhaps you had your grad program, you took an extra year to complete it for whatever reason. You don't just want to have those details be in there on their own so that the hiring manager can make whatever conclusion they want from that.

Instead, you want to explain it. You want to be able to say-- instead of just having a gap in your resume, between two different hiring things, you want to be able to say, "Okay, well, let me add a work experience that is like, I was on maternity leave because I was raising my new baby." Or, "I took a gap year," or something like that. Make sure that you've included information that will address concerns and questions in advance so that it's not left up to their imagination to think of something that might concern them.

Finally, one of your easiest ways to really stand out and impress a potential employer is to create a work sample. If you're applying for a therapy position, record a 5 to 10-minute long mock therapy clip. Get your friend or your partner or your neighbor to pretend to be your client. Obviously, you don't use a real client, and just do some fake therapy on them. The nice thing about having it be a mock therapy clip

is that you can do a therapy session and you can record the whole thing and then just take out the strongest 5 minutes.

Or if there's not really any good 5-minute clip that demonstrates your skills, you can re-record it. It's not live. You can just do it as many times as you want until you have something that does a really good job of demonstrating your therapeutic approach, your style, your skills, things of that nature. It's very easy to just host it on YouTube, something like that, to make it available for employers. If you're applying for an assessment position, make a de-identified assessment report.

Show people the skills of your analysis, your ability to draw conclusions from data, things of that nature. If you're applying for some other kinds of private practice position, put in a work sample that demonstrates whatever kind of work that is that you're applying for. Some private practices will require a work sample, but even ones that don't, still include it, because the worst thing that they'll do is they'll ignore it, but chances are it will be something that will make you stand out just that you went through the extra step of including it.

If you're a good therapist or you're a good assessment clinician, they're going to be impressed by the quality of your work. They're also going to be able to see if you're a fit for their style, their culture, et cetera, and that can go a long way towards also helping you get that interview.

Kyler: You've done your due diligence, you've made it through the search process, and you found some great opportunities that really fit your needs and your goals. Now what? Well, now it's time to move into the interview phase, the pre-interview, the interview itself, and the post-interview process. There are some ways to do this really well, there are some ways to do this not so well. Really, this all comes down to you making the right choice for yourself and your future. I want to throw up a couple of pictures. This is a picture of me growing up as young farm boy in the middle of nowhere in Idaho, which is the center of nowhere. Growing up at that age, I had no idea what my future had in store. I had big hopes and big dream but never saw myself as being somebody who would have such a significant leadership role. Somebody who would be impacting the world in the way that I had the incredible privilege to do today. The path leading between Young Farm Boy Kyler and CEO Kyler was not linear. It wasn't always clear at every moment but I do remember one moment of deep clarity where it was end of my internship year as a psychology intern trying to figure out where I was going to go for my postdoc fellowship. Many of you know what that process is like some of you might be in that process now.

I was obsessed. I was looking through all of the different options. I spent way too much time on the job listings, trying to figure out all of the opportunities that there might be. Ultimately, I found Deep Eddy Psychotherapy. Through the interview process, through getting to know this community and everything that it stood for, I knew without a shadow of a doubt that this was the right choice for me. I was fortunate enough to get an offer and one thing leads to another. Here I am in the role that I have currently. A big part of the reason why I was able to get in the door in the first place was because of the work that I did before the interview, during the interview, and after the interview. I want to share some things that worked well for

me as well as things that have worked well for the people who I've brought on board to my team.

First, let's talk about the pre-interview. There are some really easy wins that you can do during this pre-interview stage that will set you apart from your fellow applicants in a really positive way. First and foremost, what I ask of you as a reviewer, is that you please read and follow the application instructions. This may seem incredibly basic and a no-brainer to those of us listening to this presentation but I'll tell you that roughly half of the people who apply to work at my practice don't do this and that can send two very strong messages. Message one, you're not very attentive and you don't follow instructions well, which is concerning to me as a potential future employer, because if you're not going to follow the employee handbook, if you're not going to document and proceed and engage in a way that's ethical and best practices, then that's a liability.

No matter how valuable you may seem based on your CV, no matter how amazing your other materials might look, if you're not following the instructions then that's going to be a concern on my mind as your potential future employer. The second concerning message that comes across is that you don't really care enough to follow the instructions. You're applying to a thousand other places and you're just copy-pasting the same application for everyone. You figure if we're interested enough, then we're going to make that push and try to bring you in and ask for more materials and so on and so forth. That's not a great feeling for me as your reviewer. I really want to feel like you've taken an interest in my organization, that you're invested enough to read through what we're asking for and send us the right materials.

That really is a bare minimum for being able to move on to the next step. Make sure that you read and follow the application instructions and that can move you to the upper half of the pile. Easy-peasy. Next, you want to make sure that you're really trying to respect the time and energy of the people who are reviewing your applications. There's an old hiring myth out there that as an applicant, what you want to do is you want to get in the door early and you want to be asking questions and getting the reviewer invested in you in some way. While that has some truth to it, what's worse is people typically will do that by reaching out with really basic questions that are answered in the job application itself or the job description or the website.

I'll get questions from people saying, "Hey, is this a W2 position or a 1099 position?" When that's the first thing in the job description for the posting. You want to make sure that you're doing your research, you want to make sure that you understand whether or not the company has answered your question before you ask it and start there. Of course, you do want to be asking questions if they're not listed anywhere else or if it's not clear. If a job says we have employee benefits, for example, and it doesn't say what those benefits are, then it's wise to follow up and ask about those things. That's one way that you're helping respect the reviewer's time and also doing your due diligence to make sure that this has everything that you need in terms of the basic needs and the non-negotiables.

Next, let's talk about the keys to having a meaningful successful interview. It all starts off, I know this is going to be a surprise for some people, with actually showing up to

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said interview. There's a chunk of folks who ghost me. They don't even show up. There's also a group of people who show up late and unprepared. Again, it's all about sending those messages and even if life happens, if there's some crisis going on, if there's something that's pulling you behind then what you just need to do is be a communicator.

Send a message to the interviewer, hey, I'm running late. I needed to drop my kid off at school and there's some traffic, and so I'm running a few minutes behind. A quick text message, a quick email. Those things can be really helpful and explain the circumstance. If there's no reason for the lateness and if you ghost without good reason then that's not a great way to kick off a relationship with your potential employer. Those are things that you want to be keeping in mind. Again, this is something that's well within your control. You can plan ahead and create some margin. You can make sure that Zoom is fully updated and your technology is on par so that you can show up to the interview and do well.

The last piece to showing up to an interview is showing up and appearing like you want to be there. This might be professional dress and grooming. That doesn't mean you need to go out and buy a fancy blazer or get a snappy button-up or anything like that. What this really means is trying to blend and be congruent with the organization itself and showing that you're putting some intentionality behind how you're presenting yourself. The best way to figure out what to wear for an interview by the way, is to go on the company website and look at the professional headshots that they hopefully have for their staff and their employees.

If everybody's wearing suit and tie, show up wearing a suit and tie. If everybody's wearing t-shirts, then you might want to consider wearing a t-shirt. It's risky but that's one way that you can show that you understand the community and you were trying to match the vibe, so to speak. The second key is to be prepared to share. What I mean by this is your interviewer will have questions and things that they are curious about and it's typically the same kinds of things.

There are themes that go through most types of interviews and every once in a while you're going to be given a weird question or a highly specific question and that's okay. It's okay to not be completely prepared for those kinds of curve balls. That's not what this is about and the organization may have its own reasons for asking those questions but it's not helpful to spend all of your time trying to prepare for the fringe questions that may be thrown your way.

Instead, you want to be prepared to give really strong, clear succinct answers to some of the common questions that many interviewers are going to be curious about. One of those questions is just give me a little bit about you, tell me about your backstory, help me get to know you better. You'll want to be prepared to give a short but memorable version of your backstory that gives the interviewer some framework of understanding and ways of relating to you.

Think about sharing maybe a three-point backstory. This is where I'm from and where I grew up. Here are some aspects of my story where I had some incredible experiences or discovered passions and fell in love with psychology, so on and so forth. This is where I've been more recently and why I'm interested in joining your

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organization. Nice little three-point thing. Doesn't need to be more than 60 seconds or so but it is helpful to do a little bit of rehearsing and practicing so that it comes out smoothly.

You'll also want to be prepared to address any potential concerns or questions that the interviewer might have about your work history. If there are any gaps, if there are any positions that didn't last very long, you'll want to make sure that you're ready to talk about what happened and explain some of those things. It's helpful if you're able to introduce those without the interviewer needing to ask about it. For example, if you took a couple of years off because you were a parent and you were raising a kid, it's perfectly fine to say, you might have noticed that between 2014 and 2016, I wasn't working. The reason for that was I became a dad. I wasn't invested in work at that time. I wanted to prioritize my family and so that explains the gap. It's perfectly okay to talk about those things in an interview.

Really, if you are addressing it, that's a great move and a great message for the interviewer. It shows that you're conscientious. It shows that you were thinking ahead and anticipating some of the needs of the interviewer coming in, all great signs. Lastly, you'll want to be prepared to talk about what you're looking for in your career and why you're applying for this position now. You'll notice there's an asterisk on this bullet point and the reason for that is if you're not planning to stay long, if this isn't your long-term goal to stay at this organization, that might not be something you'll want to share in the interview.

It's totally up to you. If you don't feel comfortable not being forthright with that, that's okay. Just my recommendation in terms of your investment in the company and your goodness of fit. Most private practices want people who will be staying on longer term. If that's not true of you then you don't need to just offer that up. If they ask specifically, are you planning to stay here long term? An honest answer might be I'm not sure yet. I'll have to see how things go as I join the community and figure out if it's a good fit and leave it at that.

Those are the main things that'll probably be asked of you in the interview. Again, there might be some weird questions that are thrown in there as well, but as long as you're prepared to talk about these four things, you'll be pretty well set. Keep in mind the questions that are being asked of you have a purpose. You want to be thinking about why these questions are being asked.

What about the organization and their values has informed the questions that are being brought to the table? That's really important for you in figuring out if they're a good fit because if they're not asking the right questions, if the questions are really shallow, if you don't feel like you're getting a chance to share enough about yourself for them to make a good choice, that should tell you something about the organization that, maybe they're too spread thin or maybe they don't really value the individual and they're just looking for mass growth. Who knows? All of that is important for you as the applicant to keep in mind.

The third and final key to having a meaningful interview is to keep in mind that it is your interview too. Just as much as they're interviewing you for the job, you're interviewing them as a potential partner, somebody that you'd want to work with. It's

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important to keep in mind that this is your space to get to know them, to make the decision for yourself just as much as it is theirs about you. I want to take a moment to give a word of caution about going on Google and searching for best questions to ask in an interview because guess what? Everybody does that. Everybody does that same Google search, everybody comes into the interview with that list.

If the interviewer's been doing this for a while, then they can pick out the people who are real, who are asking genuine questions that come from themselves, and the people who just googled it and brought in a list. You don't want to ask the question of what does a day in the life look like at your organization? You don't want to ask the question of tell me about the work environment. Those are questions that you can still get to by asking differently, by asking about the interviewer themselves, by asking about feedback that they've gotten from the community and learning that way. Don't go with the Google list, go with your own.

There are some things that you'll want to be keeping in mind, and you'll want to bring into the interview so that you're well-prepared and you can get a good sense of whether or not this is the right place for you. The first thing to do is to be ready to ask questions that are not answered elsewhere in the materials provided. If there are things in the job description or the job listing, if there are things on the website that are unclear or not immediately available, be ready to ask about those things, especially if those things are needs of yours or non-negotiables. Be willing to ask them about their company culture.

Be willing to ask them about the benefits that they offer. Be willing to talk about pay and what compensation looks like. All of those things are fair game in an interview setting, at least in a healthy system. If the interviewer isn't willing to talk about compensation, if they're not willing to talk about company culture, those might be some red flags that you'll want to watch out for. You'll also want to be curious about your interviewer. They're a person too with their own story, and they can give you a lot of really rich data about the organization just by talking about themselves. You can ask them where they came from and how they ended up at the private practice that you're applying to.

What was it that got them interested in mental health? What are the things that they enjoy most about working where they work? What are the things that stress them out? What are the things they wish they could change? Those kinds of questions can give you really rich data about where you're trying to apply and potentially join. Then lastly, if it's not offered in the interview, I strongly recommend asking to meet with a community member who is not in charge of hiring, who is not the boss, who's able to represent what it's like to be an employee of that private practice. If they're not willing to do that, that's a big red flag.

If they're concerned or anxious about what their employees are saying to prospective candidates, that should tell you something. It's a really healthy green flag for them to be willing to partner you with somebody to pick their brain and learn more about the community. It's also a good sign when there are volunteers who really want to meet other people and welcome them to the private practice. That's something that you'll absolutely want to ask for. Now, let's talk about what to do after the interview, both to

improve your chances of getting an offer as well as to improve the chances of that offer being one that you're willing to accept.

First and foremost, be the person who sends a thank you note. Most people, the vast majority don't, and it doesn't need to be fancy, just a short email or even a text message thanking the interviewer for their time. Again, most people don't do this. It's a small gesture of courtesy. The interviewer did have to set aside time to get to know you, and even if they're getting paid for that, it feels nice to get some small reminder, some expression of gratitude. Make sure that you're doing that. If you do that, that gives you an opportunity to share more about something that you didn't have the chance to clarify if there were any answers that you feel you bombed and you wanted to give a better answer.

A thank you letter can also be a way for you to go back and edit and make some improvements. Also with the thank you, you can ask if it wasn't discussed in the interview when the follow-up will be. When should they be getting back to you? When should you be expecting to hear the news about the decision with the offer? At this point, if all goes well, you'll have received an offer from the place where you'd like to work, and fingers crossed, the offer meets all of your needs and expectations, in which case you can fully skip the step.

If it's not meeting your needs and expectations, if let's say the pay isn't quite what it needs to be for you, if the benefits offered don't check all the boxes, then it's time to move into the negotiation phase. Negotiating in the private practice world is actually pretty simple. The first thing that you need to do is get a really strong sense of what you're actually being offered. Really understand what your pay will look like on a weekly basis, on a monthly basis and an annual basis. Get a good feel for the benefits that are being provided. Keeping in mind things like health insurance and other benefits can be expensive to get on your own and being able to get those free through your employer can be valuable.

Don't just look at the total salary, look at the full picture and what that value might be worth. Next, you want to do some research and identify your worth, not just based on your feelings, we want you to have a lot of self-worth, but we also want you to go and gather data about the competitive rates, pay, and benefits that are being offered to people of your license level, of your years of experience, and so on and so forth. You want to know both what are they offering and then what are you offering.

Once you've got a good sense of both of those things, what you'll want to do is play to your strengths or rather avoid your weaknesses. If you are a strong verbal communicator, who's good at navigating difficult conversations especially when it comes to money, then what you'll want to do is request a live meeting with the decision maker about pay to talk about your worth and have that conversation live.

If you're not good at that, then I would recommend connecting with friends, supports, an attorney, potentially, people who can coach you through the process and do written negotiation over email. Either of these can work. Either of these can be equally effective. It really just comes down to what you as the applicant think is most likely going to work based on your own strengths and abilities.

Lastly, it's wise to get creative and think beyond the dollar sign when it comes to asking for things in the negotiation process. Maybe they're pretty fixed with their salary. They can't pay you more than what they've offered, but maybe what they can do is they can give you first dibs on supervising new trainees in the next cohort that joins the practice, for example. There are things you can ask for that don't make a difference for the organization financially, but could make a big difference and would have value to you in your role and your work.

The final piece that I want to talk about regarding the post-interview is willingness to walk away from an offer. It's important to keep coming back to the table if things don't quite line up, if the organization isn't giving you what you need. You want to keep asking for that and keep advocating for yourself there's no harm in continuing to ask. Worst case scenario, they would withdraw the offer, which you weren't going to be able to take in the first place because they weren't meeting your needs.

That being said, you can also play a bit strategically. If it feels like a good-ish offer and you could probably make it work, but you want something better, then you can always buy for time. You can say, I need some time to think about this. When's the latest? I can let you know by, or let them know it'll be a couple of weeks before I'm able to make a final decision. Then take that time interview elsewhere, get to know other organizations, and figure out what your options might be. That's one way that you can make sure that any options that are viable or options that feel better than the rest if nothing else.

Lastly, keep in mind that just because you've been given an offer doesn't mean you have to accept it. It's nice to hear an answer one way or another, certainly. Just because the offer was given to you doesn't mean that it's the right fit. It doesn't mean that this is something that would ultimately bring you happiness and meet your goals. It just means that they offered and they're interested in you, which feels great, but it's important for you to be picky. It's important for you to value your priorities and keep yourself in mind.

We've covered a lot in this section and gone over so many important pieces. We started with things that you'll want to keep in mind before the interview even begins. Things that you can implement to help increase your chances of being invited for the interview. We talked about strategies for being in that interview room, making sure that you are getting the information that's important for you, and making your choice while also showing up well and making sure that the interviewer gets a good sense of the true you. Then we ended with a few important pointers that you'll want to keep in mind after the interview, both to ensure that you get an offer as well as make sure that that offer is one that you're willing to accept.

Now that you've landed your new position, things don't have to end there. There are so many opportunities for you to continue to learn and grow and move up in your career. Let's start by talking about some of the internal opportunities that you can access. These are opportunities within your organization, your new job. First off, you'll want to be looking for gaps. What are the areas of need or challenge that the organization struggles with?

Particularly for somebody who's just starting off, it's wise to think about what are the areas that aren't just challenged, but things that people really don't want to do. Nobody likes cleaning the gutters on their house. Many people just hire folks to come in and do it for them. Similarly, businesses have their own versions of cluttered gutters. These might be things like crisis situations. No clinician and private practice really loves handling crises, and it can be really stressful and hard. It's like having to clean the gutters.

If that's something that comes up regularly and there isn't a support structure in place within the private practice, that might be a gap, an opportunity that you could help fill if you have the training and expertise in that area. Then you'll want to be thinking about not just what does the community need, but what does the business need. How can you translate some of the needs that you're thinking about, some of these gaps, into things that the business owners and decision-makers would feel great about having somebody come in and solve?

Once you've identified a gap that you want help fill, then you can move into trying to make a pitch to the decision makers. I recommend asking for an intentional meeting, just 15 or 20 minutes time from somebody who's able to grant you an opportunity if you're able to make the pitch well. Then what you want to do is clearly describe the gap. What are you seeing that the organization needs? Then give them a game plan for how you can help meet that gap.

"Hey, I've been noticing that every single week there are typically 5 to 10 email requests from community members, from clinicians who are in a crisis situation. They need somebody to consult with. Sometimes people are available and they're able to help with that, but not always. What I would like to do is make myself available for an hour a day on every weekday to meet with people who are dealing with crisis situations and provide crisis consultation. The reason I'm able to help with that is because I have this specific training and this specific experience, and this is something I'd be willing to do to help your practice. Does that sound like something that would be valuable to you?"

That would be one example of a way that you could make that pitch. It's also wise to be thinking big, but starting off small when it comes to the pitch that you're making. Maybe you want to just be the crisis consultant, for example, but maybe you want something more than that. Maybe it would be more of a clinical director role or something that would have more responsibility or different responsibilities than what you're currently doing. You'll want to make sure that whatever it is that you are offering to do can fit into that bigger picture for yourself.

Again, you're prioritizing your own needs and your own values while keeping in mind that this might be your starter opportunity, your way in the door to getting to that larger opportunity. Let's say there aren't really any gaps that need to be met, maybe the decision-makers don't really want to have somebody take on something new, that's totally okay. There's still opportunities for you to become a leader in your own way within the organization. We call this leading without a title, which may sound familiar to those of you who tuned into our previous supercharge episode on how to lead without a title.

You're joining a community of clinicians who are hungry for connection, who want to make friends, who are looking to connect and have a space of belonging. That's something that you can offer in putting together parties, putting together round bag, lunch and learns, whatever it might be, those are things that you can just do. You don't have to ask permission, you don't have to get the blessing of the decision-makers because it benefits them, they don't have to pay you for it, and it's something that your fellow clinicians are really going to appreciate.

You can also be a first follower. Let's say somebody in the community is trying to start something new and they're struggling to get it off the ground, maybe it's a due program, maybe it's something to help the business. If you are willing to give some of your time to support them to help them with their project, that's you being a first follower. You're the first person to get behind their cause. By doing so, you can really help them thrive, which is another form of leadership.

The last way to lead without a title is to set an example. This doesn't mean that you are becoming the teacher's pet or brown-nosing the boss or anything like that. This just means that you're acting in a way that you wish your whole community acted. If that means you're introducing yourself with preferred pronouns, if that means that you dress in a certain way, then all of those things are ways that you can be an example of how you feel the community should be.

If the community connects with that, if they vibe with that idea, then lo and behold, you are becoming a leader for your community by establishing new norms. That doesn't require a formal leadership title and, again, it doesn't require permission from people and positions of authority. It's just something that you can do. Again, these are internal opportunities, ways that you can start to get your foot in the door for positions of leadership and growth, and ways that you can lead even if those opportunities aren't available to you.

Daniel: Let's talk about external opportunities for how you can continue to grow your career beyond the four walls of the opportunities that are available within your private practice itself. The first opportunity that you might want to look for is formal leadership. The fact is, as a psychologist, you bring a lot to the table. You know a lot about mental health, you know a lot about relationships, about communication.

All of those are really valuable things that a lot of community organizations and non-profits might really benefit from, and so you might be able to find a position on a board, a position in leadership, some volunteer opportunity where you can make a difference and start to gain some prestige and some experience that might benefit you later in your career.

You can also think about politics and advocacy. You might try to get involved in your local community, advocate for certain things politically, you might even think about running for something yourself. Probably it'd be a little bit hard to hold down a job as a private practice clinician if you're going to be running for governor or something, but you could probably run for a school board or a city council or something of that nature and bring all of the knowledge that you have in psychology and all of the values to make a difference in your community.

It's also worth thinking about thought leadership. Thought leadership basically means coming up with really good ideas that are helpful for people and sharing them with a wide audience. That can mean writing, whether that's writing a book, starting a blog, something like that. It can mean speaking, whether that's speaking at a conference or starting a YouTube channel. It can mean building fellowship on social media, sharing ideas there. However you do it, the core idea is to solve real problems for free. It's easy to maybe start a blog or something where you just share your thoughts about whatever, but nobody's really going to read it if it's just your thoughts about whatever.

However, if you can offer something of real concrete value, if you can say, "Hey, here are some techniques that you can use to manage your anxiety at home," or, "Hey, here's some knowledge about autism that will destigmatize it. If you have autism, it'll help you understand yourself better." Those are things that will solve real problems for people and that builds loyalty. People are going to want to keep following somebody that delivers real value, solves real problems for them.

Of course, you want to do that for free. It's not impossible to maybe one day write a book that you sell or something like that, but as you're starting to just build an audience, you want to be really generous with your time, generous with your ideas so that you can build that followership. Then finally, you can think about self-leadership. This is a little bit more of a nebulous concept, but essentially it means looking for an opportunity to make a difference in yourself even if you might not have the opportunity immediately to influence a wider group of people. That might mean personally just looking for the chance to do some personal growth or skill development.

Maybe learn something new that is going to take you to the next level as a psychologist or as just a human being. The core idea with this self-leadership is to follow your North Star, even if there's no obvious payoff. What that means is that if there's something that you're drawn to, if there's something that you're passionate about but you're not quite sure how it fits within the wider path of your career or how it's going to make you money or whatever, just pursue it anyway, at least with a little bit of your time, because you never know where that might lead.

If you think about the story of Mister Rogers who made *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood* and impacted the lives for a whole bunch of kids, he was originally a musician. He worked as a puppeteer, he worked as a teacher, he worked as a pastor, he did all these different things that none of them were ultimately the right choice for him, but all of them gave him skills and abilities that then he was able to use in the *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood* and make a huge impact.

For you, maybe if you're like, "Man, I really love music but I don't exactly know how it fits within psychology." Maybe part of self-leadership is to empower yourself to go and pursue your love of music and spend a couple hours every day or every week working on that and who knows? Maybe one day you'll be the singing psychologist and you'll make an impact on the world by creating music that factors in psychological themes. Who knows? You want to just have hope that if you have a gift, if you have a passion, if you have something you want to pursue, by following

that part of yourself something might emerge that is even more amazing than you can even imagine.

Kyler: We want to wish you well with your job search and finding that place that's going to work best for you. We hope that you feel encouraged to enter the world of private practice and look into positions that may give you opportunities for growth in whatever way that means for you and that you'll find that place to call home.

Daniel: Kyler and I would love to stay connected with you. If you have any questions about the job search or if you want to learn more about us and the work that we do you can go to our websites down below, or if you just think that our cat photos are cool and you want to compliment us on that, then feel free to reach out. Thank you to APA for hosting us and for hopefully continuing to bring us back even though we ended with a cat joke. I guess we will see you all another time.

Kyler: Thanks, APA.

[music]

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