

Look at Your Job (or the Job You Are Seeking) from Your Employer's Point of View

By [Harrison Barnes](#)

One of the highest performing dental offices in Australia is that of Patty Lund, who takes his job very seriously. Some years ago, Dr. Lund studied the dental market and identified what people considered to be the three worst things about going to the dentist. These were pain, smell, and waiting time.

After identifying these three things, Dr. Lund and his dental hygienists did everything in their power to ensure people were extremely comfortable when getting [dental work](#) done.

His practice included making muffins and cookies for patients, which led to a small bakery being built on the premises, so that incoming patients would smell fresh bakery aromas instead of the antiseptic odor typical of a dental office. To ensure that patients did not have to wait for a long period of time, the office made a practice of only having one patient in the office at a time. The office actually ended up getting rid of three quarters of its patients, keeping only a small number with whom they wanted to work.

As a result, Dr. Lund's office became much more efficient and is now among the most profitable dental practices in Australia. He has a huge waiting list of people who want to be his patients.

This example shows that businesses that find out what their customers need end up doing very well. Businesses that concentrate on what their clients want—not just what the business thinks they want—tend to do much better than their competitors.

The same goes for your job—or the job you are trying to get.

The best thing you can do in any business or job is look at your service from the customer's point of view. I'm not just talking about [customer service jobs](#) here. I'm referring to a way of thinking about work that ensures your constant success. Try viewing your boss and the people you work for as customers, especially when you are seeking employment.

Every employer's priorities are different. At one of my first jobs, I worked for someone who cared almost entirely about making sure there was never a typographical error in any document. In another job interview, I noticed the person doing the hiring had the most organized office I had ever seen. During the interview I spoke about the importance of maintaining order in an office environment, and I was offered the job. At another job, I worked for a brilliant man who cared nothing about convention, typographical errors, or tidiness, but he was obsessed with the ability to think unconventionally. He judged people almost entirely on their ability to do this.

You always need to be aware of and understand what is most important to your employer or interviewer. Look for signs of these priorities when you meet with prospective employers. Find hints on their website or through any other source you can find. This is also something you should do in your current job.

While you may have ideas about what the priorities are at your company, chances are they differ in some way from the priorities that are actually vital to your employer. Your employer's needs and concerns trump your own in most cases. Being able to accept this and work toward those priorities is the key in helping you to land and hold on to a job.

Believe it or not, I have interviewed people who have basically told me they wanted to work at our company and, as part of their job, do whatever they wanted. They wanted to be the judge of what was important. This is not usually a welcome idea, nor is it what is needed in most employment situations.

I remember one time an attorney I was working for came into my office and gently rebuked me. I had been trying to sell him on an idea I believed was very important to a case on which I was working. The job I'd been given basically required me to do research, but I wanted to do much more on the case. The attorney told me that I needed to look at myself as a soldier and him as a general. I needed to do just what I was asked and not try to change the assignment. Basically, I needed to follow orders and honor his instructions. I remember this scenario quite well, and looking back on this, the attorney was absolutely right and what I learned has been a piece of lasting career advice.

One of my favorite film genres is submarine movies. These films usually have a very simple plot that involves an experienced captain and his much younger crew. Typically, the submarine is being pursued, more or less having a difficult time, and the captain always needs to give orders, which quite often seem counterintuitive—even crazy to his crew. The crews often mutiny because they disagree with the captain's instructions. But always, in these movies, the captain ends up being right despite what everyone else around him seemed to believe.

You need to find out what the people you are working for need and simply honor those needs. You should follow orders instead of making up your own. This is something very few people understand in the business world. Understand this and you will not only stay employed but you will really stand out when you are seeking a job as well.

THE LESSON

Businesses who understand what their clients want, rather than what they presume their clients want, tend to perform much better than their competitors. You must view your service from your client's point of view. In a job search you must view your potential employers as customer. You must find out what is important to your employer or interviewer, and you will stand out in your job search.

Read More About Not Understanding the Company and What it Does (or Only Understanding it Superficially):

- [Production Assistants and Assessing Your Employer's Needs](#)

- You Need to be Relevant to Your Employer

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