

Detailed Recruiter Phone Screen (RPS) Guide

A step-by-step guide to asking all the right questions for our clients.

Candidate's Current Role

- Tell me about your current role and where you are working.
- What are some of the big projects you have worked on there?
- What are the biggest challenges you are working on?
- What do you enjoy most about the role?
- What do you enjoy least?
- What tech stack do you use daily?
- Are there any languages you don't want to work with?



Not Enough Context

- "Currently a backend engineer" or "working with backend java."

Great Context

- "Backend engineer on the payments team working on 3rd party integrations, APIs, and payments infrastructure. The main role is connecting e-commerce merchants to our platform."

Candidate's Previous Roles (Past 4 Years Most Relevant)

- If previous roles look significant, ask a bit about what they did there in addition to the current role.
- Can you tell me about the shorter job stint you had at ___?
- What made you leave that company to join your current role?
- What tech stack did you work with in these previous roles?

What Do They Want To Do Next?

- What do you like about (the company - you are getting their resume)?
- What are you looking for in a new company and team? Let them speak and ask them to elaborate if it's a one-word answer.
- Depending on the company you are specifically making the intake for, question them about their specific size and make sure they know the company logistics.

What Do They Want To Do Next?

Not Enough Context

- “Looking for a backend role next.”
- “No preference on industry or size, open to everything.”
- “Interested in Affirm because I like fintech.”

Great Context

- “Enjoys building backend distributed systems and infra. I Want to scale an application to millions of users. “I want to build something from scratch or with little users.”
- “Interested in Affirm because they know someone who has had a damaged credit score and has used the product.”

Why Are They Leaving Their Current Company?

- Laid off, fired, funding, team/leadership changes, projects ended?
- If they say: Looking for a more interesting opportunity – ask them what they mean by that. Can you elaborate?

Not Enough Context

- “Looking for something more interesting.”
- “Looking for something more challenging.”
- “I am not actively looking.” You then ask, “What does this company have to have that would make you leave your current company?”

Great Context

- “Been with the company through an IPO and would love to get back to a pre-IPO startup and do it all again.”

Their Current Job Search/Timeline/Interviews

- Have you done or scheduled any on-site already?
- If so, do you still have time to go through a whole new interview process?
- If they have an offer out:
- How much time do you have to make the decision?
- Why have you not accepted it already?
- What about the company and what role do you like and not like?
- Are you interviewing at FAANG or companies like Airbnb, Pinterest, Uber, or Doordash?
- Can you put in a two-week notice? How soon are you able to start?

Motivating and Logistical Factors

- What are the most important factors in your process of choosing a new job?
 - Whatever the answers are – ask them to elaborate.
- Where do you live? (not just South Bay if they live in the Bay Area, be city-specific)
 - Are you open to commuting from San Jose to SF? That is far, you can do that 5 days a week.
 - Do you take public transit?
 - Are you looking for a completely remote role? Is the company you are speaking with okay with a fully remote position?
- What is your work authorization?
 - If H1B visa – are you open to starting upon receipt? How many years are left on it?
 - If they have an i140 approved, do they expect their next employer to sponsor a Green Card?

Salary and Expectations

- What are you targeting in compensation?
- What is your current Total Comp? I would love a breakdown of this but it's getting more difficult based on laws in different states.
- Do you have any bonuses or vested equity?
- If the company you are pitching doesn't offer sign-on or bonuses make sure to let them know.
- That is probably higher than the range [our company] can offer. Do you still want to interview? Their range is around [salary].