



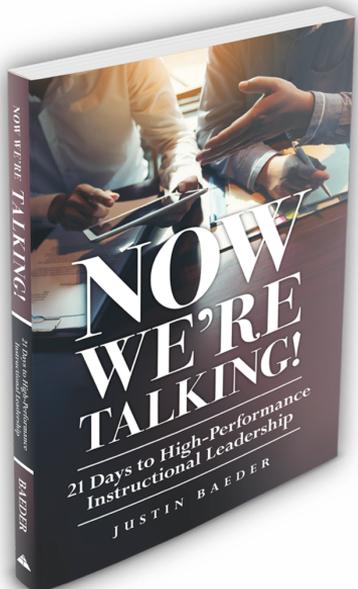
ASCEND

LANDING YOUR NEXT-LEVEL
INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP ROLE

WITH JUSTIN BAEDER, PhD.



Welcome!



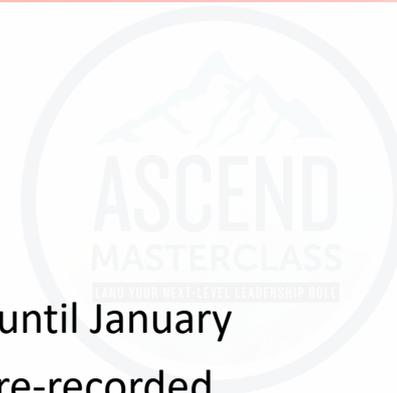
AS FEATURED BY





Our Focus

In this webinar, you'll discover your **5-stage path to victory** in the 2022 job search, so you can have the impact on student learning you're called to have.



What We'll Explore

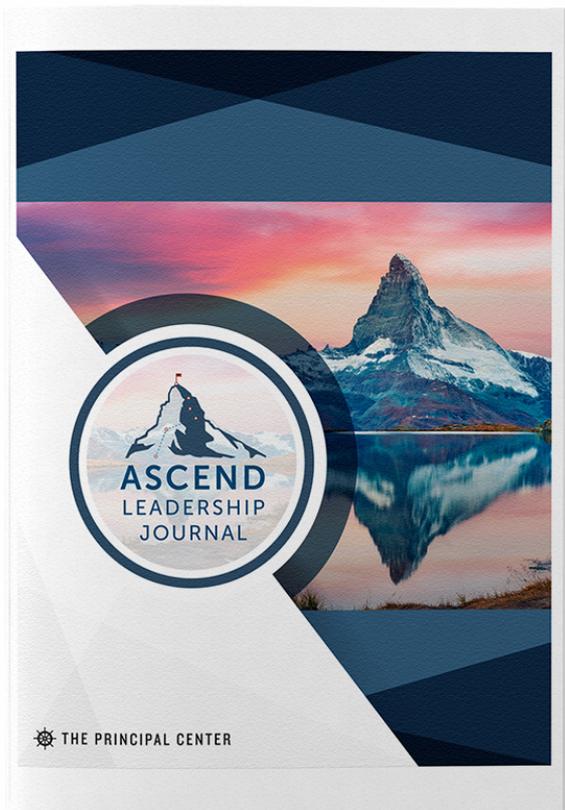
- Why top candidates are preparing for hiring season now—NOT waiting until January
- My "*3 levels of energy*" prep technique for standing out in virtual and pre-recorded screening interviews
- How to get your references in your corner NOW, so they aren't shocked when they start getting calls about you (get this right and they'll even start networking for you)
- How to get more interviews when you're an external candidate with less experience than everyone else

...plus, I'll be giving away copies of the new Ascend Leadership Journal, which helps my clients discover their superpowers and document the experience they're gaining right now



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Ascend Leadership Journal

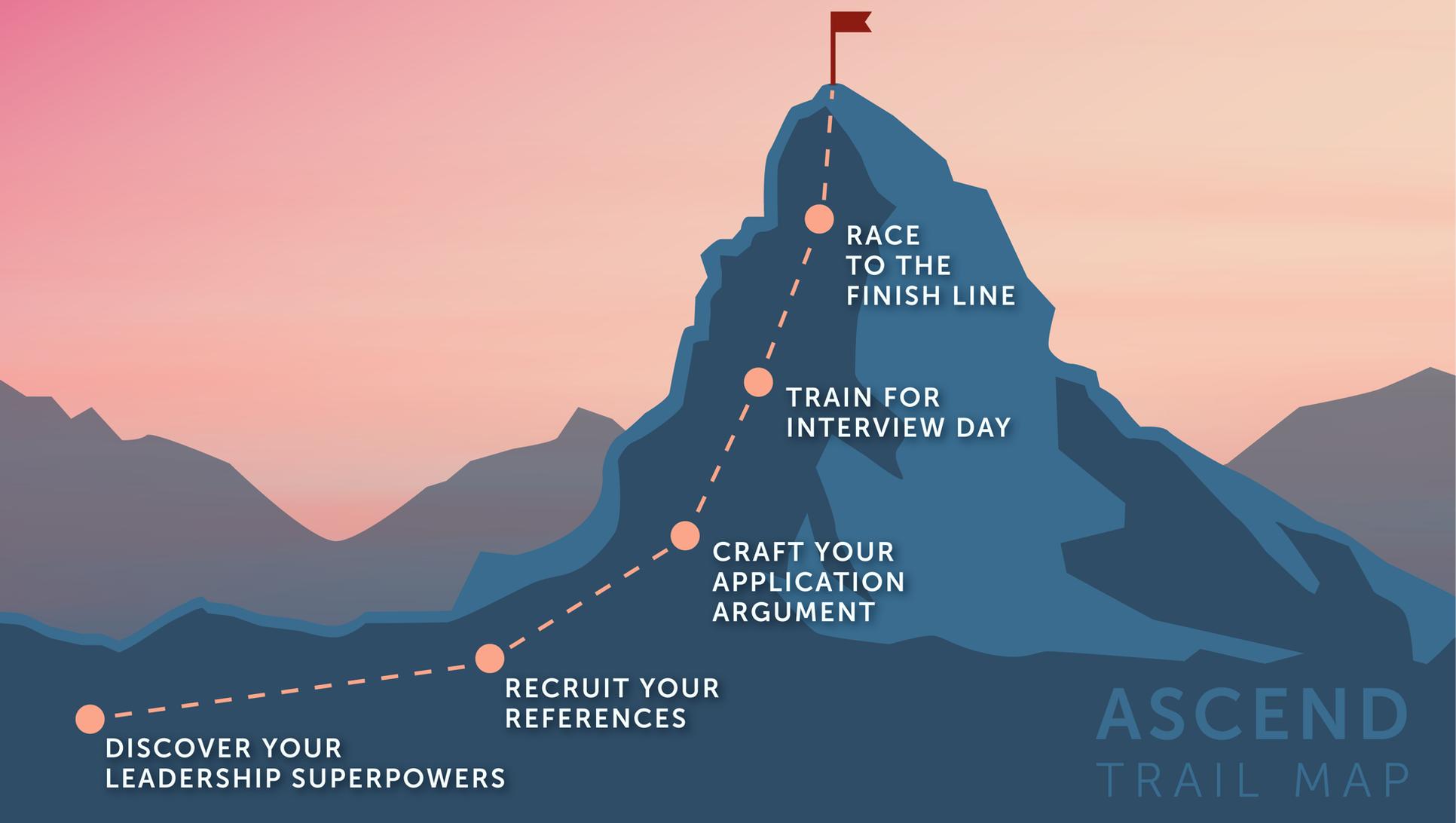




The Ascend Trail Map

Your 5-Stage Path to Victory in the 2021 Job Search





DISCOVER YOUR
LEADERSHIP SUPERPOWERS

RECRUIT YOUR
REFERENCES

CRAFT YOUR
APPLICATION
ARGUMENT

TRAIN FOR
INTERVIEW DAY

RACE
TO THE
FINISH LINE

ASCEND
TRAIL MAP

The Wrong Way To Prepare

“Oh, a job opening?
I guess I’ll apply!”



The Wrong Way To Prepare

“An interview
tomorrow? I guess I’d
better practice!”



The Wrong Way To Prepare

To prepare
at the last minute
is to **fail** to prepare.





Promise Yourself

**“I will be prepared for the
2022 hiring season.”**



Let's Work Backward

If you want 2 or more job offers...

You'll need to be a finalist at least twice...

Which means passing multiple screening interviews...

Which means *getting* enough interviews...

Which means applying for enough jobs.

What does “success” look like at each stage?



The Ideal Success Ratio

20%

If you move on to the next stage in the hiring process
 $1/5^{\text{th}}$ of the time, you're doing just fine.



The Numbers Game

Landing your next-level instructional leadership role is **not** like finding the love of your life.





The Numbers Game

- 25 applications
- 5 first-round interviews
- 1 second-round interview

*With a 20% success rate at each stage,
how can I get two offers?*



Working Backward

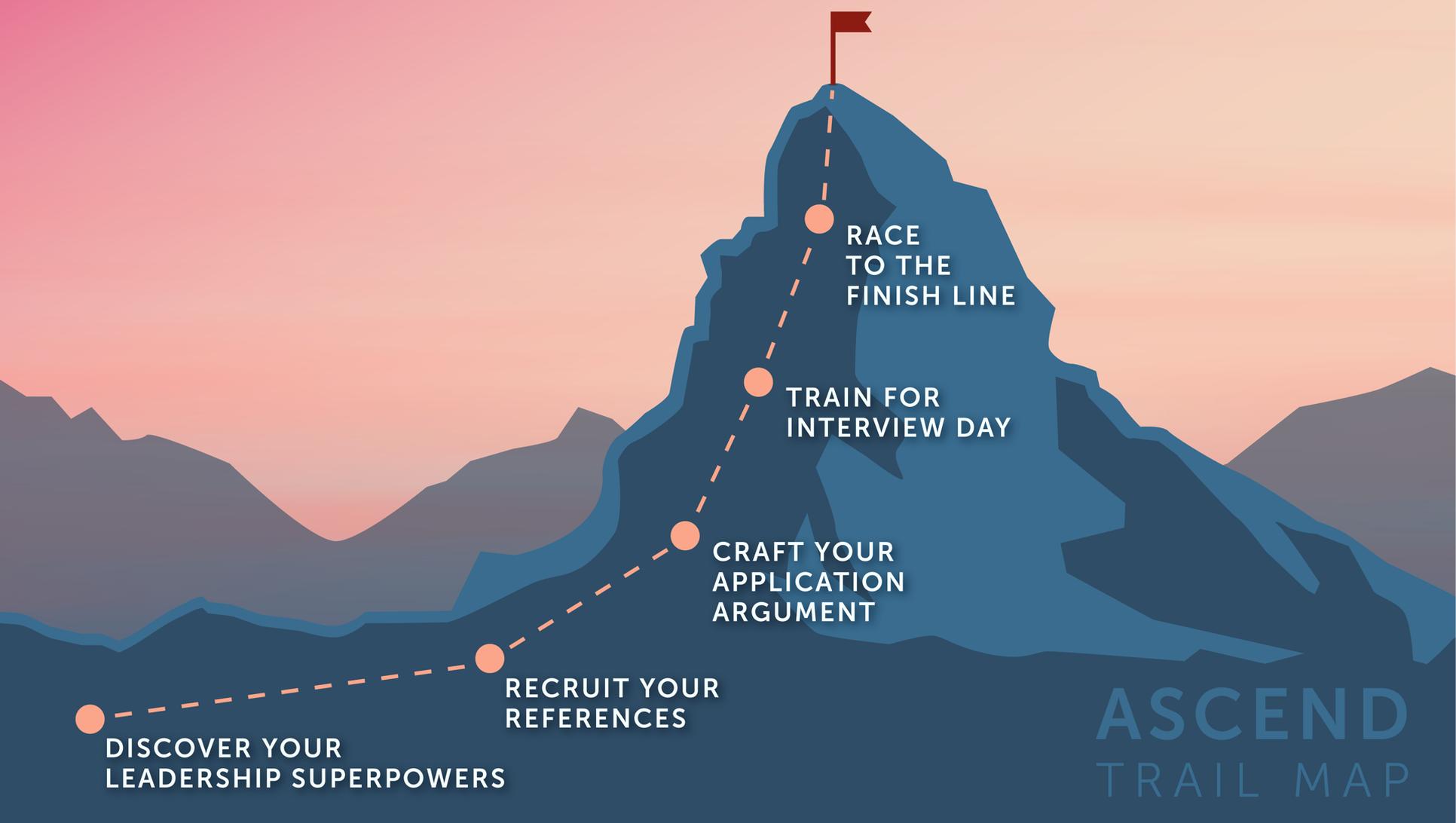
5. Race to the finish line
4. Train for interview day
3. Craft your application argument
2. Recruit your references
1. Discover your leadership superpowers



5. Race To The Finish Line

Persisting until you reach your goal





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What NOT To Expect

- Interview 100% of the time
- Useful feedback from interview team
- Details on why you didn't get the job
- First job you apply for
- “Perfect Fit” dream job



Beware of Wishing for “The One”

Too many people worry about “fit” or put too much hope in a single “dream job” instead of making themselves competitive for more jobs.



Why Didn't I Get The Job?

One reason:

Someone else did.



What TO Expect

- A long process
- With very little feedback
- And many setbacks
- That will require great persistence



What To Remember

You can do this.



Why Persistence Matters

At each stage of the hiring process, a serious candidate can expect to succeed

20%

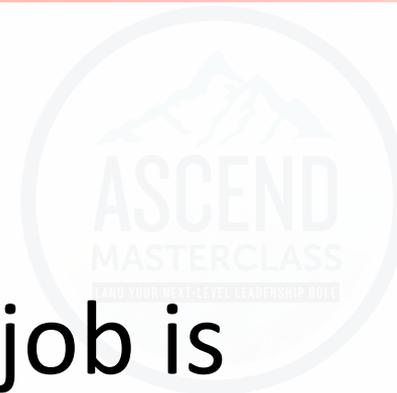
of the time.

Beware of “Feedback”



I just heard back from an AP interview: didn't get the job. The principal was kind enough to call and to offer feedback when I asked.

He mentioned that my lack of experience with budgets was an issue. Any thoughts on how to gain this type of experience when it's not at all part of my current role?



The Only Reason You Didn't Get Hired

The reason you didn't get the job is
simple: competition.

To beat the competition, be more
competitive.



Competing At Each Stage

- *Not getting interviews?* Improve your résumé, cover letter, and recommendation letters.
- *Not making it past the first round?* Practice your interview skills and stories.
- *Not making the final cut?* Keep applying, and check in with your references.

The Waiting Game



The Achievement Equation



Achievement = Assets x Actions



Assets & Actions

- What *actions* can I take now to improve my *assets*?
- What assets will make the biggest difference in my search?
- What assets can I *improve* in the next few months?
 - Network
 - Reputation
 - Résumé
 - Cover letter
 - Recommendation letters
 - Interview skills



Long-Term vs. Short-Term Assets

- Long-term building of assets determines your *qualifications*
- Short-term improvement of assets determines your *competitiveness*



Ask Yourself

Am I qualified?

If so, go ahead and apply.

Am I competitive?

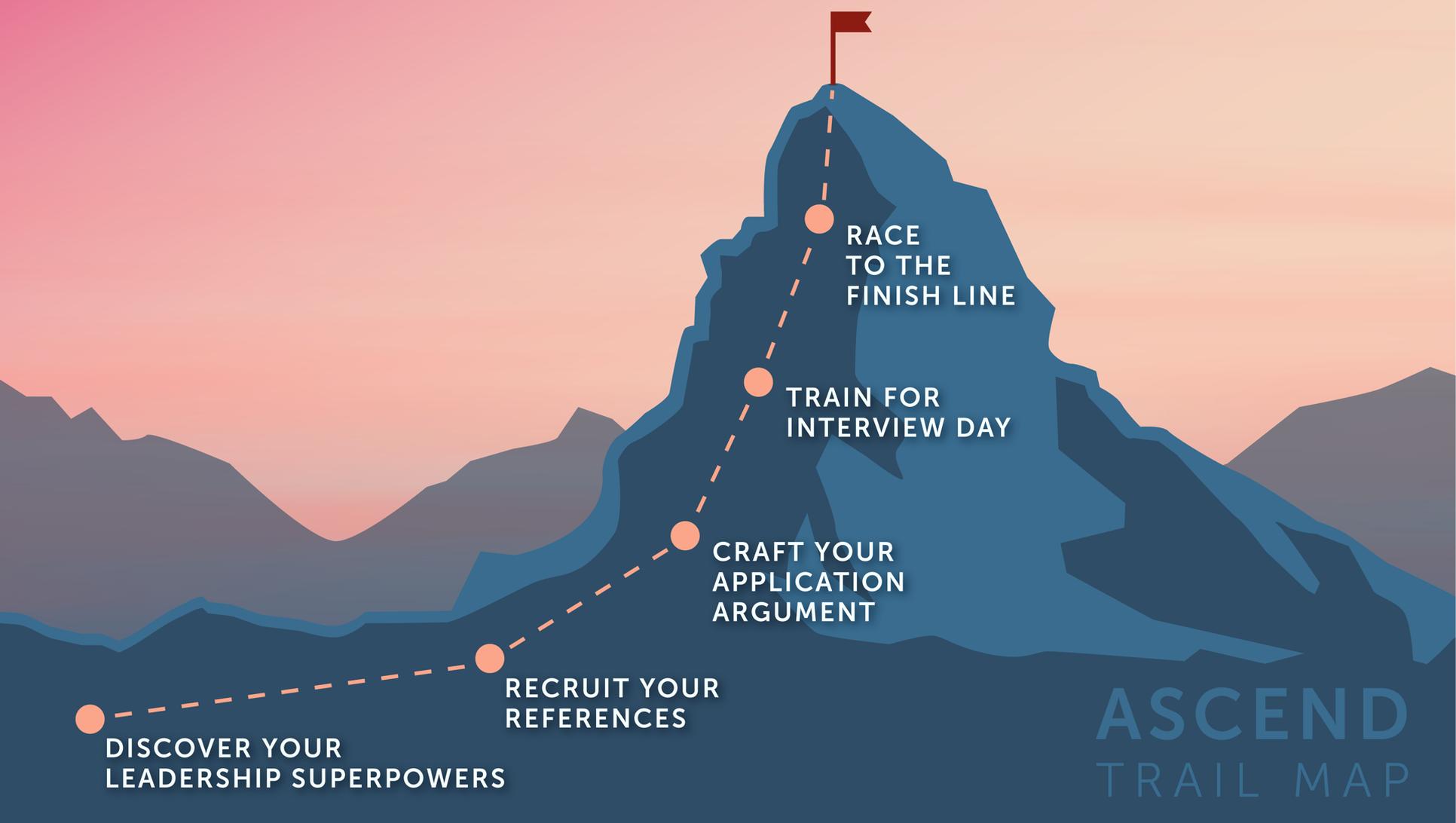
If not, take action to improve your assets.



4. Train for Interview Day

How to get dramatically better, faster





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Think Like An Athlete





How Much Is Enough Interview Practice?

Most people practice enough to
make themselves *feel* better, but
not enough to *perform* better.



4 Stages of Prep

No practice: 🦴 Unprepared

A little practice: 😊 Calm

A little more: 🤖 Robotic

Enough practice: 😎 Ready!



Practice On Video

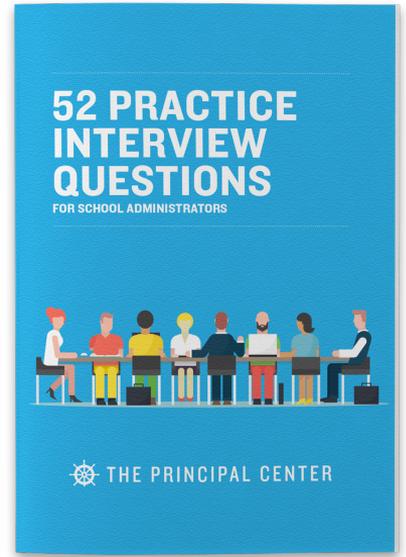
“Wanted to thank you for your amazing resources! I recently utilized your interview tips and practice questions. Watching myself was BRUTAL, but it made me very aware the importance of me to be myself. I applied as an internal candidate for an Assistant Principal position... This past week I was offered the position. Thank you again!”

—Erin, AP



How To Practice

- Use the 52 Practice Interview Questions: PrincipalCenter.com/interview
- Write out bullet-point answers
- Practice on video (3-5 minute answers)
- Watch the video, then delete
- Repeat
- Work on your stories







Stories

Every answer is more compelling with a story.

You only need about 10 good stories to fit any interview question.



Where Can I Find My Stories?

- Difficult situations
- Mistakes & Conflicts
- Committees & Projects
- Professional Development
- Moments of gratitude or high emotion



How To Practice Telling Interview Stories

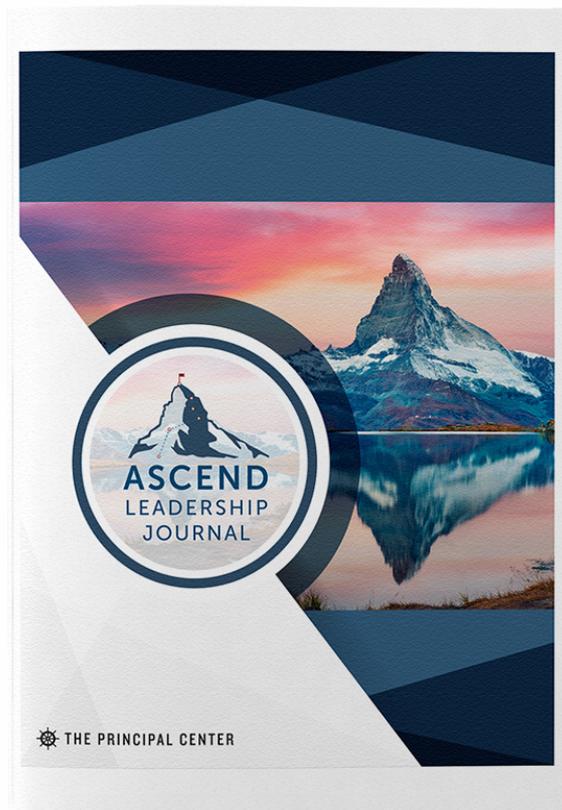
- Tell the story out loud to yourself—as long as it takes
- Brainstorm the leadership attributes it illustrates
- Find the key emotions
- Notice any distracting details, and retell without them
- Practice retelling in ~1 minute



Story Structure: STAR

- Situation—what was the context and issue?
- Tension—what concerns had to be balanced?
- Action—what did you do?
- Realization—what insight did you gain as a result?

Ascend Leadership Journal Giveaway





Preparing for Virtual Interviews

Connecting with the interviewer when you aren't in the same room



Two Challenges with Virtual Interviews

- Bringing the right level of energy
- Knowing when you've said enough





Energy Level

“My strength has always been my ability to engage with the people in the room and feed of the energy. I am not sure what to expect when interviews start.”



The “3 Levels of Energy” Prep Technique

Practice the same interview question or story at three different levels of energy:

- Level 1: Normal Energy
- Level 2: Maximum Energy
- Level 3: Slightly Deranged



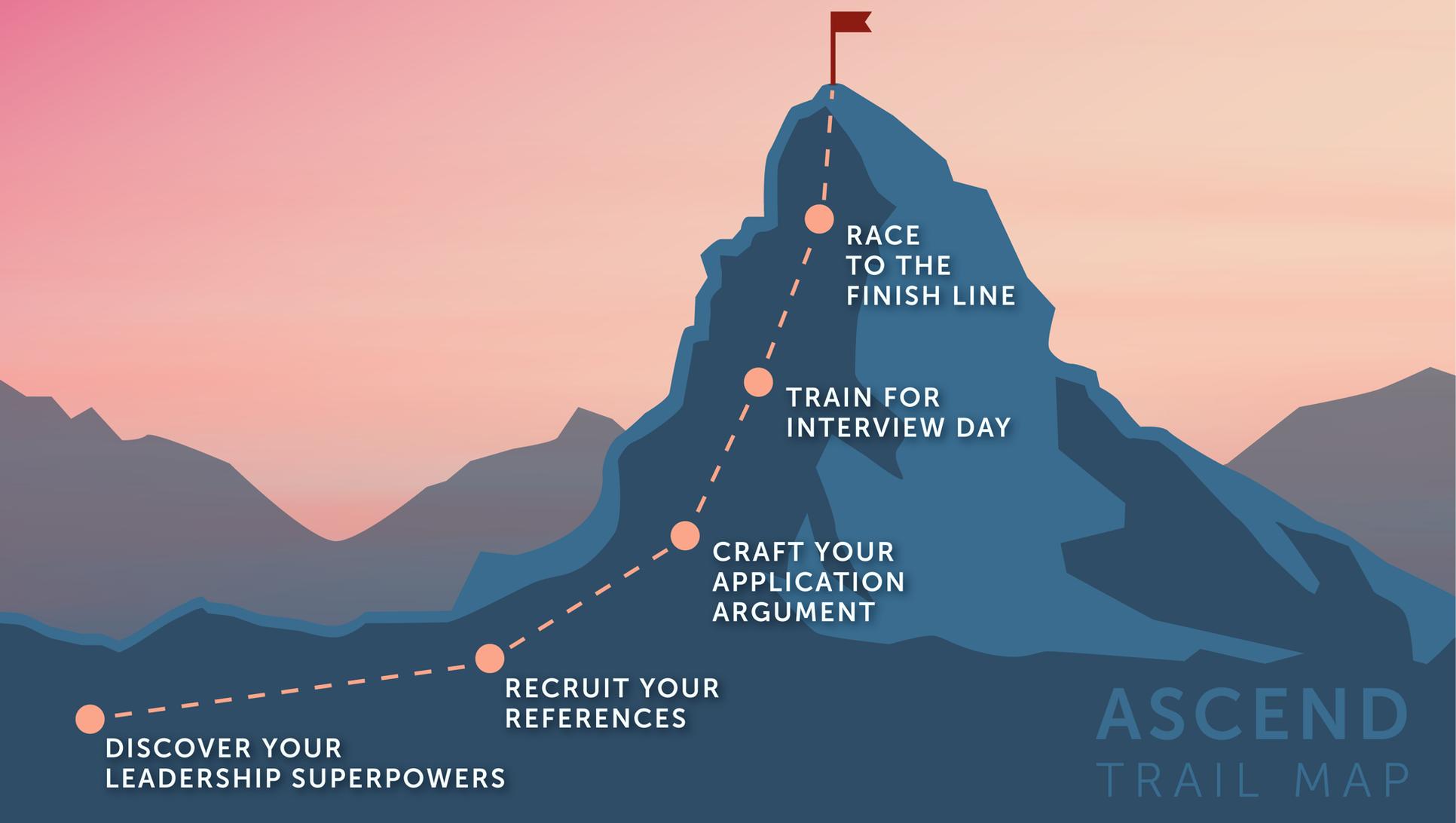
Review Video & Calibrate

- What really came through well at Level 3?
- What was a little bit off-putting that I don't need to include?
- How can I make people feel good about my energy?



3. Craft Your Application Argument

Maximize your chances at the screening stage



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Three Key Application Assets

1. **Résumé**

2. **Cover Letter**

3. **Recommendation Letters**



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The Experience Matrix Résumé

Get more mileage from the experience you've already gained





The Résumé's Job

At a minimum, your résumé should demonstrate that you are

qualified

for the job.



The Résumé's Job

Every résumé has room for improvement
that will make you a more

competitive

candidate—without any additional
experience.



Your Résumé Doesn't Need

- Candidate profile/overview
- Skills/proficiencies
- Normal duties listed under each role
- Hobbies/other interests
- “References available upon request”



Don't Make Unsupported Claims in Résumé

Avoid:

- Lists of skills
- Lists of adjectives
- Unsupported adverbs in accomplishments

Areas of Expertise: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Teacher and Staff Coaching, Professional Development, Training & Evaluation• Diverse Backgrounds, Cultures and Experiences• Curricula Design• Relationship Building• Fundraising & Capital Campaigns	Qualities: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Intellectual curiosity & a demonstrated passion for lifelong learning• Flexible, adaptable, resourceful, & open to the ideas of others• Proven ability to embrace change tolerate ambiguity & the capacity to see uncertainty, unfamiliarity, or risk as opportunity• Ability to self-reflect for continuous improvement• Open to feedback & improvement• Kind, compassionate & authentic
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A claim without evidence is worse than no claim at all.



The Experience Matrix Résumé

- Header—name & contact info
- Professional Objective
- Experience, most recent first
 - Role, School/Employer, Dates
 - Overview paragraph
 - Accomplishment bullets (NOT duties)
- Education & Certifications
- References



PrincipalCenter.com/template

LILLIAN WILLIAMSON

INSTRUCTIONAL LEADER

222.233.444
youenwill@gmail.com
123 STREET, CITY, ST 11111

Hiring Manager Name
District/Organization Name
Dear Hiring Manager Name,

In this cover letter, you will demonstrate that you are the most qualified candidate for the position, so the Hiring Manager has more choice but to invite you for an interview. You will present the best of your current skills and experience you have for an interview. You will present the best of your current skills and experience you have for an interview. You will present the best of your current skills and experience you have for an interview. You will present the best of your current skills and experience you have for an interview.

Use each paragraph to highlight a different aspect of your qualifications, linking related areas of accomplishments into a compelling portrait of your qualifications. It's important to describe both your actions and their impact, e.g. on student learning or staff culture. This will distinguish you from candidates who merely recite their duties, which is a waste of space since your duties can be inferred from your job title. For example, assistant principals commonly handle discipline, attendance, and transportation issues, so simply listing these duties does not convey any valuable information to the reader. Instead, describe the specific accomplishments and their impact, while implying or stating directly that you will have a similar impact in the job for which you're applying.

Be sure to take appropriate credit for your contributions toward collective efforts. Don't overlook team accomplishments, which may represent a large proportion of your recent experience. Highlight your specific role with active verbs and identify the impact of your efforts. Connect the dots for the reader and explicitly state what this experience says about you as a leader and what you will bring to the organization. Avoid passive wording such as "involved on the committee" and "helped with," in favor of stronger phrasing such as "led the development of..." or "orchestrated..."

In your closing paragraph, recap your qualifications and interest in the position and anticipate an interview without coming across as overconfident. If you'd like to use our drag-and-drop, multiple-choice, fill-in-the-blank Cover Letter Generator, visit PrincipalCenter.com/generator to learn more. Be sure to include a signature below. Best wishes in your search!

Sincerely,
Lillian Williamson

January 16, 2022

LILLIAN WILLIAMSON

INSTRUCTIONAL LEADER

CONTACT

222.233.444
youenwill@gmail.com
123 Street, City, ST 11111

PROFESSIONAL OBJECTIVE

Instructional leader seeking a specific position to have a certain impact, described in detail here. Avoid making unsupported claims in the form of skills or adjectives. Simply describe the type of position you are seeking and the impact you intend to have. NOTE: Most text in this template is enclosed in text boxes. Double-click to edit.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

SALLY CHOU

Instructional Leader

Hiring Manager Name
District/Organization Name

Dear Hiring Manager Name,

In this cover letter, you will demonstrate that you are the most qualified candidate for the position, so the Hiring Manager has more choice but to invite you for an interview. You will present the best of your current skills and experience you have for an interview. You will present the best of your current skills and experience you have for an interview. You will present the best of your current skills and experience you have for an interview. You will present the best of your current skills and experience you have for an interview.

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Sincerely,
Sally Chou

222.233.444
youenwill@gmail.com
123 Street, City, ST 11111

January 16, 2022

SALLY CHOU

Instructional Leader

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PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

CURRENT JOB TITLE

District Name | City, State | 2018 - Present

Briefly describe your current duties, and approach to the job in an introductory paragraph. E.g. Assistant principal in charge of 9th grade middle school with 700 students. Directed innovative success through innovative practices, effective instruction, and authentic relationships.

- Then list specific accomplishments in long, detailed bullets. Each bullet can contain multiple sentences, clustering related accomplishments together to give clear evidence of your qualifications in a specific area relevant to the role.
- Use 4-6 (ideally no more than 7) bullets per role, and ensure that they are all highly specific, "collaborative" or other associated skills. Give details about what you did and the impact it had.
- Be sure not to simply list routine duties that can be assumed based on your role; give specific examples of accomplishments that indicate not just your competencies, but your readiness for greater levels of "responsibility."

- Be sure to take appropriate credit for collaborative work, giving yourself a passive verb like "Developed" or "more as PrincipalCenter.com/generator"

PREVIOUS JOB TITLE

District Name | City, State | 2012 - 2018

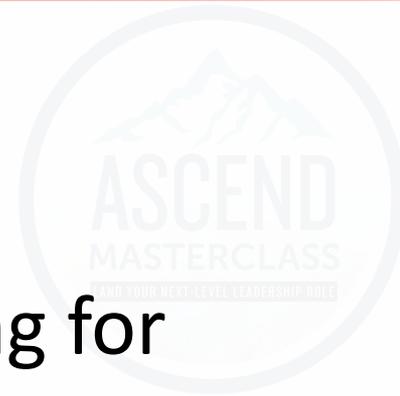
Served as 9th grade assistant principal in a diverse suburban high school. Faced a mandate to reduce out-of-school suspensions and office referrals for discipline behavior. I led a cohesive and relationship-building approach to improve discipline and student success.

- Then list specific accomplishments in long, detailed bullets. Each bullet can contain multiple sentences, clustering related accomplishments together to give clear evidence of your qualifications in a specific area relevant to the role.
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- For more sample language you can use, see the multiple-choice options in our Cover Letter Generator. Learn more at PrincipalCenter.com/generator





Professional Objective

- Describe the kind of role you're looking for and the contribution you want to make
- Give the reader a sense of how you're a fit for the position
- Don't make unsupported claims



Professional Objective Example

As an experienced instructional leader, my goal is to serve as principal in a diverse elementary school in the Plano area focused on closing achievement gaps and preparing all students for citizenship.



Professional Objective Format

As a ____, my goal is to ____ in a ____
school where I can ____.



The Experience Matrix Résumé

- Header—name & contact info
- Professional Objective
- **Experience, most recent first**
 - Role, School/Employer, Dates
 - Overview paragraph
 - Accomplishment bullets (NOT duties)
- Education & Certifications
- References



How To List Your Work History

- Most recent first—anchor in present
- More detail for more recent & relevant roles
- Condense/omit dates for older roles
- Omit most non-education roles
- Don't divide into teaching, leadership, etc.—stick with reverse-chronological order



Describing Each Role

- Role / Location / Dates:
Assistant Principal, Logantown High School, 2017–Present
- Overview Paragraph:
“Hired with a mandate to reduce out-of-school suspensions and office referrals for disruptive behavior, I have taken a restorative and relationship-building approach to improving climate and student success.”
- Accomplishment bullets:
4-6 detailed, sentence-length descriptions of specific accomplishments—not duties or efforts

LILLIAN WILLIAMSON

INSTRUCTIONAL LEADER

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📍 123 Street, City, ST 11111

EDUCATION & CERTIFICATIONS

YOUR DEGREE | University Name | 2005 – 2007
CERTIFICATION DETAILS

YOUR DEGREE | University Name | 2003 – 2005
CERTIFICATION DETAILS

PROFESSIONAL OBJECTIVE

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PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

CURRENT JOB TITLE

District Name | City, State | 2016 – Present

Briefly describe your context, duties, and approach to the role in an introductory paragraph, e.g. Assistant principal in an urban 6th-8th grade middle school with 788 students, devoted to student success through restorative practices, effective instruction, and authentic relationships.

- Then list specific accomplishments in long, detailed bullets. Each bullet can contain multiple sentences, clustering related accomplishments together to give clear evidence of your qualifications in a specific area relevant to the role.
- List 4-6 (absolutely no more than 7) bullets per role, and ensure that they aren't single words like "Collaborative" or other unsupported claims. Give details about what you did and the impact it had.
- Be sure not to simply list routine duties that can be assumed based on your role; give specific examples of accomplishments that indicate not just your competence, but your readiness for greater levels of responsibility.
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PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

NAME OF PROGRAM | Date
List only if notable and relevant for role

NAME OF PROGRAM | Date
List only if notable and relevant for role

NAME OF PROGRAM | Date
List only if notable and relevant for role

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE (CONTINUED)

PREVIOUS JOB TITLE

District Name | City, State | YEAR – YEAR

Be sure to list your admin internship as a role, describing what you accomplished and the impact you had.

- Then list specific accomplishments in long, detailed bullets. Each bullet can contain multiple sentences, clustering related accomplishments together to give clear evidence of your qualifications in a specific area relevant to the role.
- List 4-6 (absolutely no more than 7) bullets per role, and ensure that they aren't single words like "Collaborative" or other unsupported claims. Give details about what you did and the impact it had.
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PREVIOUS JOB TITLE

District Name | City, State | YEAR – YEAR

Be sure to include your teaching experience and any other experience in education. Do not include student teaching if you are applying for admin positions.

- It's ok to list less detail for older roles, especially if the accomplishments aren't as relevant
- In some cases you may want to condense multiple roles from the distant past, especially if they were similar roles within the same district
- Omit roles outside of education unless noteworthy, e.g. business or military experience
- Omit high school and college jobs in restaurants, retail, etc.
- Include only notable internships/fellowships
- If you have more than 20 years' experience, you may need a 3rd page for professional experience, but usually two pages will be enough
- For more sample language you can use, see the multiple-choice phrases in our Cover Letter Generator. Learn more at PrincipalCenter.com/generator



PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

CURRENT JOB TITLE

District Name | City, State | 2016 – Present

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What's Wrong With Duties?

- They don't distinguish you from other candidates with similar experience
- They're not new information to the hiring team
- They're about the job you *held*, and don't convey your readiness for the job you're *seeking*



Accomplishments, Not Duties

Which is a more compelling bullet?

- “Discipline”
- “Handled discipline for all 9th graders, applying consequences according to discipline matrix.”

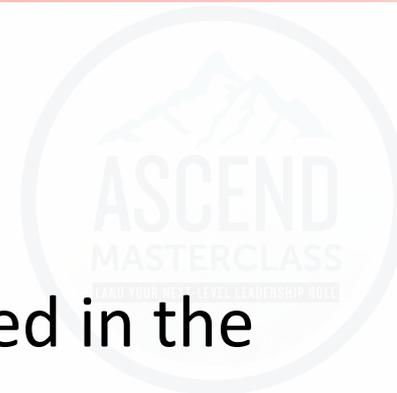


Accomplishments, Not Duties

Which is a more compelling bullet?

- “Discipline”
- “Handled discipline for all 9th graders, applying consequences according to discipline matrix.”

These are both bad, because they describe routine duties.



Accomplishments, Not Duties

- Specific projects that you completed, worded in the past tense
- Include results/outcomes, if compelling
- Give yourself an active role: *Developed, implemented, created, overhauled....NOT worked with, participated in, served on, collaborated to...*
- For interviews: turn it into a story



Accomplishments, Not Duties

Which is a more compelling bullet?

- “Discipline”
- “Handled discipline for all 9th graders, applying consequences according to discipline matrix.”
- “Implemented restorative justice program to reduce out-of-school suspensions, resulting in a 50% increase in peer mediation and a 63% decrease in the number of students receiving out-of-school suspension.”



Accomplishment Bullet Examples

- Reduced monthly out-of-school suspensions by 32% from Fall to Spring 2018 by implementing Innocent Classroom training for staff and working with students to develop personalized support plans.
- Developed an early attendance intervention system to identify and provide targeted support for students at risk of disengaging with school, increasing average daily attendance from 97.2% to 98.7%, and reducing active truancy cases from 17 to 4.
- Piloted and implemented Writing Workshop training and curriculum to improve writing instruction



Collaborative Accomplishments

Can you still list an accomplishment on your résumé if you worked as a team or committee?



Mining Your Committee Experience

Résumé bullets like *“Served on the _ committee”* are weak...but they are a great starting point for finding key accomplishments. Ask yourself:

- What problem/opportunity did the committee focus on?
- What did you do?
- What was the impact?



Let's Practice Now!

In the webinar chat, share a draft accomplishment that you might use in your résumé.



The “Perfect Fit” Argument

Why your cover letter is your single biggest opportunity for improvement



Your Biggest Opportunity

You can't change the basic facts of your résumé in the short term:

- Your experience is “fixed”
- Your education is “fixed”

...but you can make dramatic changes to your cover letter—immediately.



Cover Letter

- The cover letter is your best chance to make the argument that you're the ideal candidate
- Treat it as a 5-paragraph persuasive essay, not a formality
- Write as an evidence-based argument
- Don't settle for a 2nd draft—this should be the best professional writing you've ever done



The “Perfect Fit” Argument

Your cover letter’s job is to get your application in the “yes” pile.

It is an argument,
NOT a recap of your résumé.



Mutually Supporting Evidence

Make the same evidence-based arguments for your candidacy in:

- Résumé
- Cover letter
- Interview
- Recommendation letters



Revise, Revise, Revise

- Your first draft is likely a liability
- Your 2nd-3rd drafts are likely on par with other candidates'
- Competitive advantage: 4th draft & beyond
- OR start with Cover Letter Generator



No Shortcuts

- There are no tricks or shortcuts to writing a good cover letter—it's WORK
- If you are a great writer, you'll have an advantage
- If you get help, you'll have an advantage



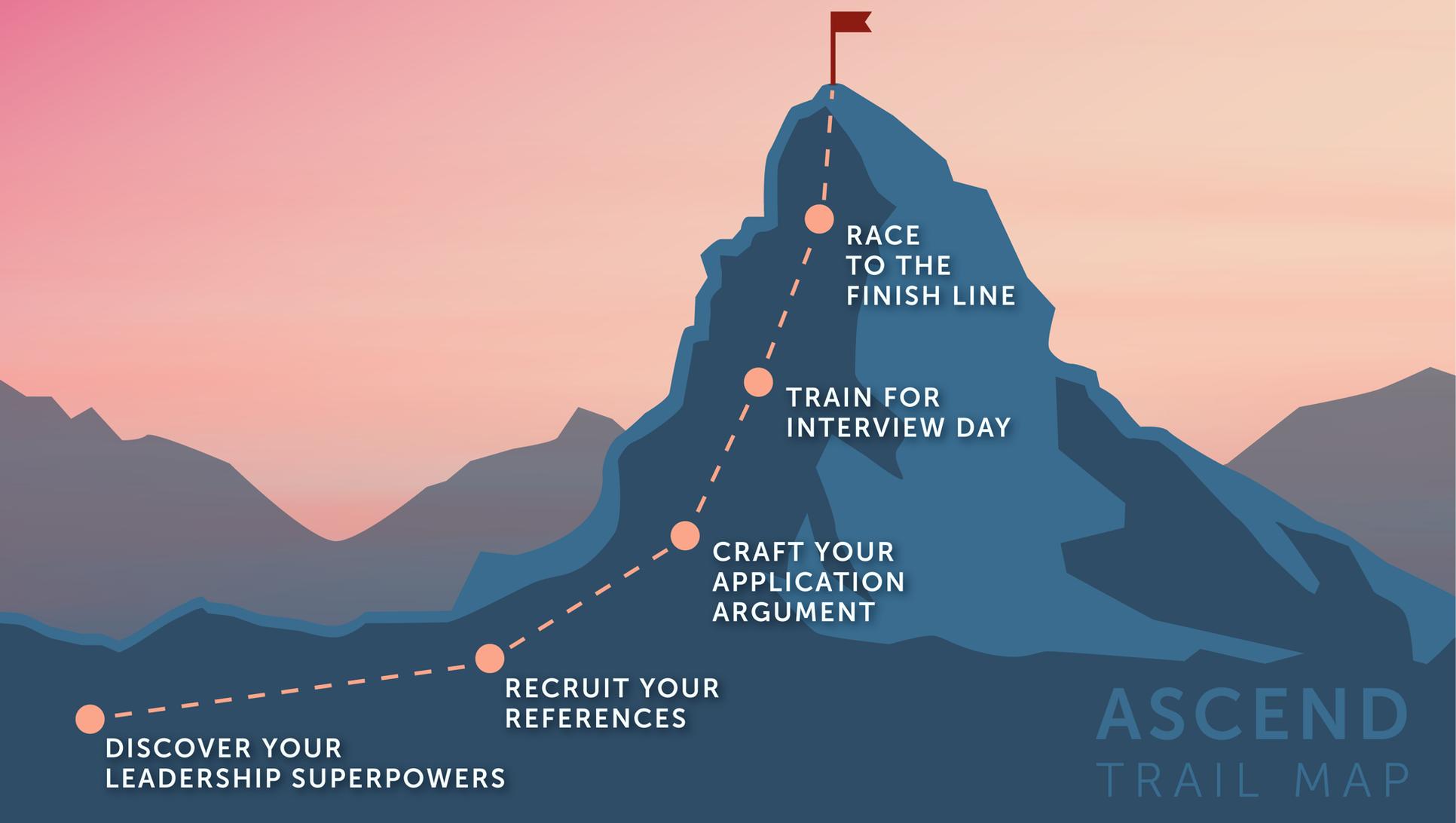
**COVER LETTER
GENERATOR**



2. Recruit Your References

Have “the talk” and get your references working for you now





DISCOVER YOUR
LEADERSHIP SUPERPOWERS

RECRUIT YOUR
REFERENCES

CRAFT YOUR
APPLICATION
ARGUMENT

TRAIN FOR
INTERVIEW DAY

RACE
TO THE
FINISH LINE

ASCEND
TRAIL MAP



Typical Reference Checks: Is This Person Qualified?

Usually, reference checks are a “just in case” step:

- Is this person crazy?
- Have they done something horrible that we need to know about?
- Is there something they're hiding?
- Are they really as great as they claim to be?

References are contacted in order to minimize risk...but they can do so much more for you, if you're willing to ask.

Recruit Your References Early





Make Your References A Competitive Advantage

You need references who won't just speak well of you during a reference check. You need references who will **mentor** and **advocate for you**—and the time to enlist their support is **now**.

The Awkward Conversation





The Awkward Conversation

- Sooner is better than later
- Warning is better than surprise
- Face-to-face is better than phone
- Phone is better than email



The Awkward Conversation: A Suggested Script

As you probably know, I've been planning to look for a ___ position, and I'll probably start applying when jobs are posted in ___ (month). I want you to know that I'm 100% committed to this school, and that this job has my full attention for as long as I'm in it. If there's a ___ job for me here, I'd take it in a heartbeat. But I also know there may not be an opening for me here, and becoming a ___ is a really important next step for me. I don't want to put all my eggs in one basket, so—and I know this is awkward to ask—I want to make sure I have your support as I take these next steps, even if it means going somewhere else, if that's where the opportunity is.

Between now and then, I want to make sure I'm demonstrating everything that you'd need to see in order to give me your highest endorsement without any hesitation. I know I'm probably not doing everything I could be, so I'd like to ask for your feedback now. What should I be doing to really make myself an outstanding candidate for ___?

And because I know it's always short notice when people ask for recommendation letters, what I'd like to ask for now is a draft—not something that's finished and ready to send, but just a rough outline of what you think of me and what I need to work on. Then, if you see me growing in those areas, you can revise the letter, and when I actually need to send one in, it should be a lot faster for you, because most of it is already written. Would that be OK? Could you write me a draft recommendation letter by ___?



How Your References Can Help

- Feedback on growth areas
- Special projects to gain experience
- Putting in a good word with their network
- Putting out feelers for jobs
- Recommendation letters
- Triangulating rec letters with application



Commit To Having The Talk

Are you willing to have the awkward conversation with your supervisor(s) in the next three weeks?

If Your Boss Won't Support You





Recommendation Letter Game Plan

- Ask for a “draft” in Word/Google Docs form
- Share ideas from your Ascend Leadership Journal—accomplishments, projects, etc.
- Ask for revisions as needed
- Align with résumé/cover letter



Who Can I Ask?

- Current supervisor
- Past supervisors
- Other admins who know you
- Colleagues within school
- Committee colleagues
- Associations/outside organizations



Your Recommendation Letter Goal

10 Letters

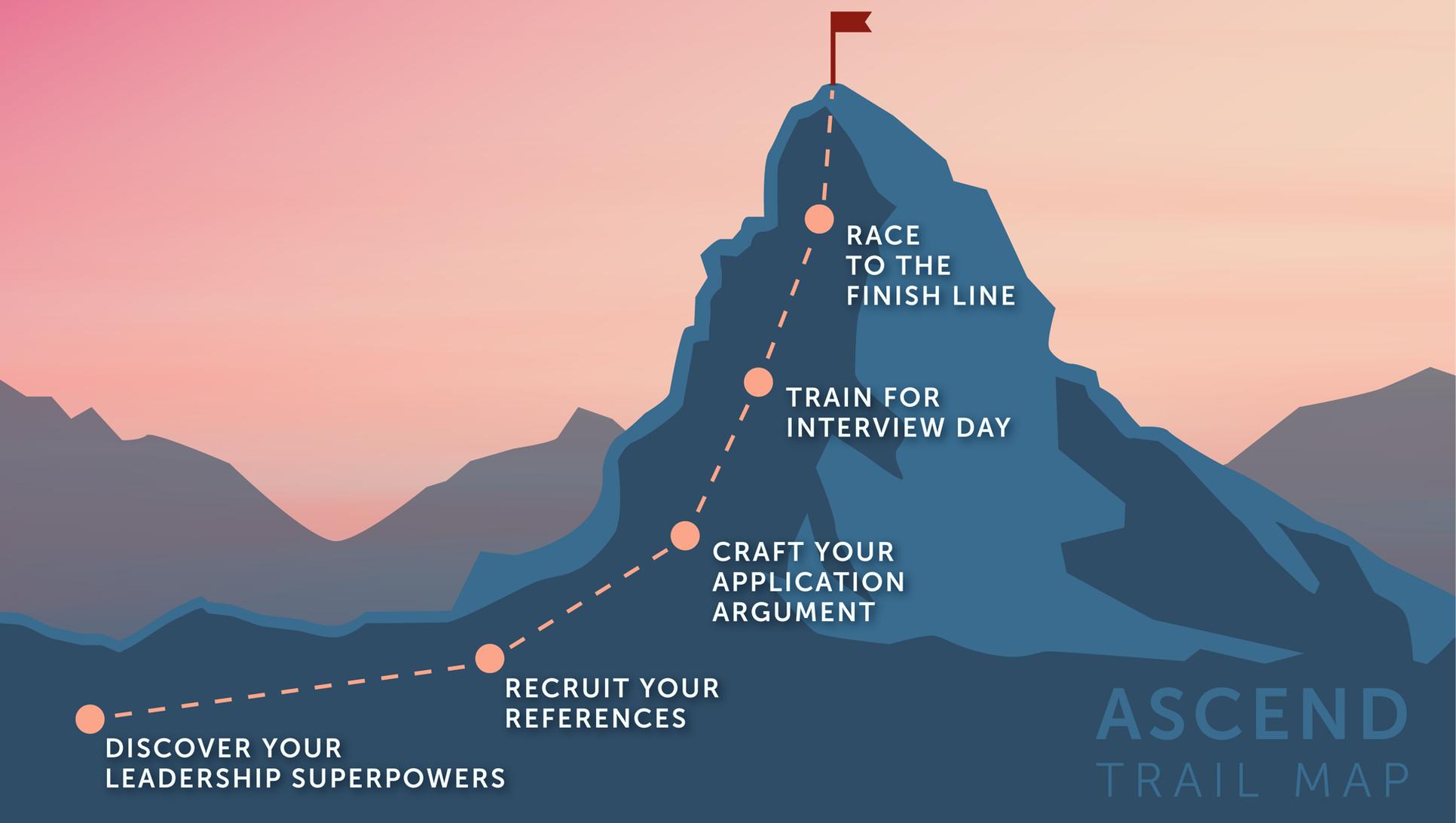
Are you in?

Yes? No?



1. Discover Your Leadership Superpowers

Figure out what makes you competitive



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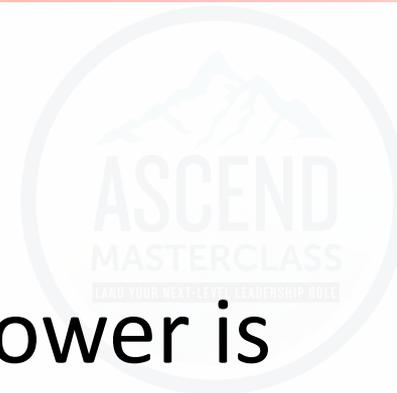
Competitive, Not Just Qualified

- The best leaders are too humble in the job search process
- Your qualifications are just that—they don't make you stand out from the competition



Caution: Admirable Traits Aren't Superpowers

- I care about kids
- I believe all students can learn
- I know good instruction
- I'm collaborative
- I'm willing to do whatever it takes



What Is A Superpower?

An instructional leadership superpower is a specific area of deep expertise makes you an outstanding competitor for the job you're seeking.



Ask Yourself:

- What am I especially passionate about?
- In what do I have deep expertise or advanced training?
- What unusual and valuable experience do I bring?
- What remarkable accomplishments can I highlight?
- What would another organization value most about what I'd bring?



Ask Your Mentors:

- What have I worked on that you were especially impressed by?
- What would I bring to the role that the typical candidate wouldn't?
- What about me would be hard to replace?



Ask Your Loved Ones:

- What am I all about?
- What would it crush me to NOT be able to do as a leader?
- What are my best qualities for this role?

Developing A New Superpower

- Listen to a podcast
- Read a book
- Attend a conference
- Try it yourself
- Give a presentation
- Lead an initiative





Time for Action

Why you can do this, and why the time to act is now

Take Responsibility & Take Action



- I am in control of my qualifications
- I am in control of my competitiveness as a candidate



Q&A

What should I do to improve my cover letter if I'm not a great writer?



**COVER LETTER
GENERATOR**



Q&A

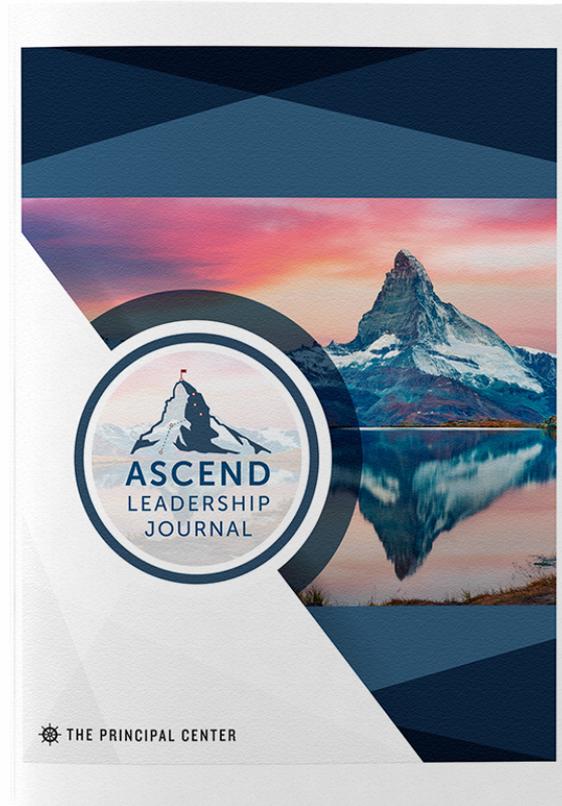
Who should I practice with?



Q&A

How can I figure out which of my “superpowers” will make me stand out?

Ascend Leadership Journal Giveaway





I Had To Add This...

“I got my Principal role after your Ascend trainings and reworking my résumé. In addition I did my 90-day plan and blew them away! It was a turnaround situation and my Dream principal job! I should also add that I knew no one in the organization!”



A Mid-Year Hiring Timeline

- July 25: Joined Ascend Masterclass
- August 3: First practice interview
- September 1: First real interview confirmed
- September 2: Second practice interview
- September 17: Second real interview
- October 26: Third real interview + offer
- December 2: First day in new district

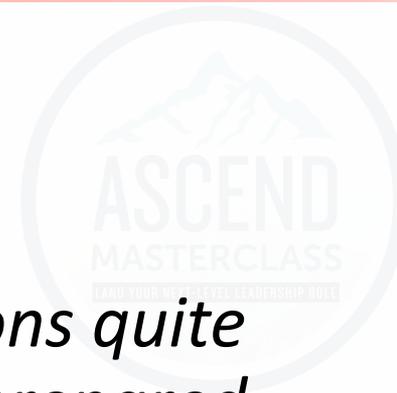


“I got the position I wanted and am now in my second year as an elementary principal! Your materials were the turning point for me in my job search. I’d interviewed and come in second three or four times. It was very discouraging. I watched your webinar about interviewing and it changed my game. I realized this was a competition, not just an interview. That realization changed my demeanor in the interview. I watched the webinar several times, practiced from the sample questions and had friends practice with me. Honestly your materials were the difference for me! Thanks!”



"I used your practice interview questions. I interviewed at a school where I already worked, and my principal was amazed at the confidence I projected during my interview, especially since it was my first admin interview. I did get the job, by the way.

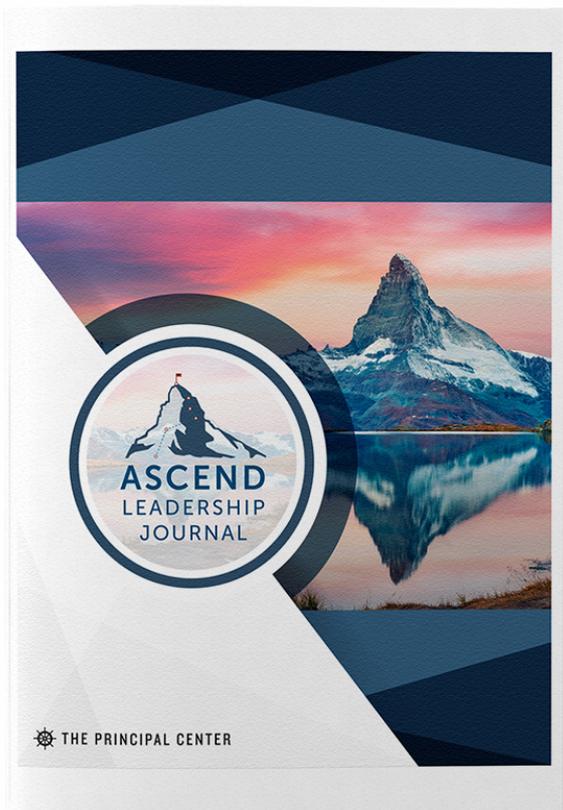
I also used what I learned to interview for my first principal job, and I got that job too. I used your material to help me develop an entry plan, and that has helped me be successful in my first year as principal at this school. Teachers tell me regularly that they appreciate my leadership and that this is the smoothest year they've had in the nearly 20 years they've worked at the school."



The Power of Stories

“I used and practiced your interview questions quite a bit. I also used your advice to have some prepared stories to help (which indeed, I did beat out an internal candidate).”

Ascend Leadership Journal Giveaway

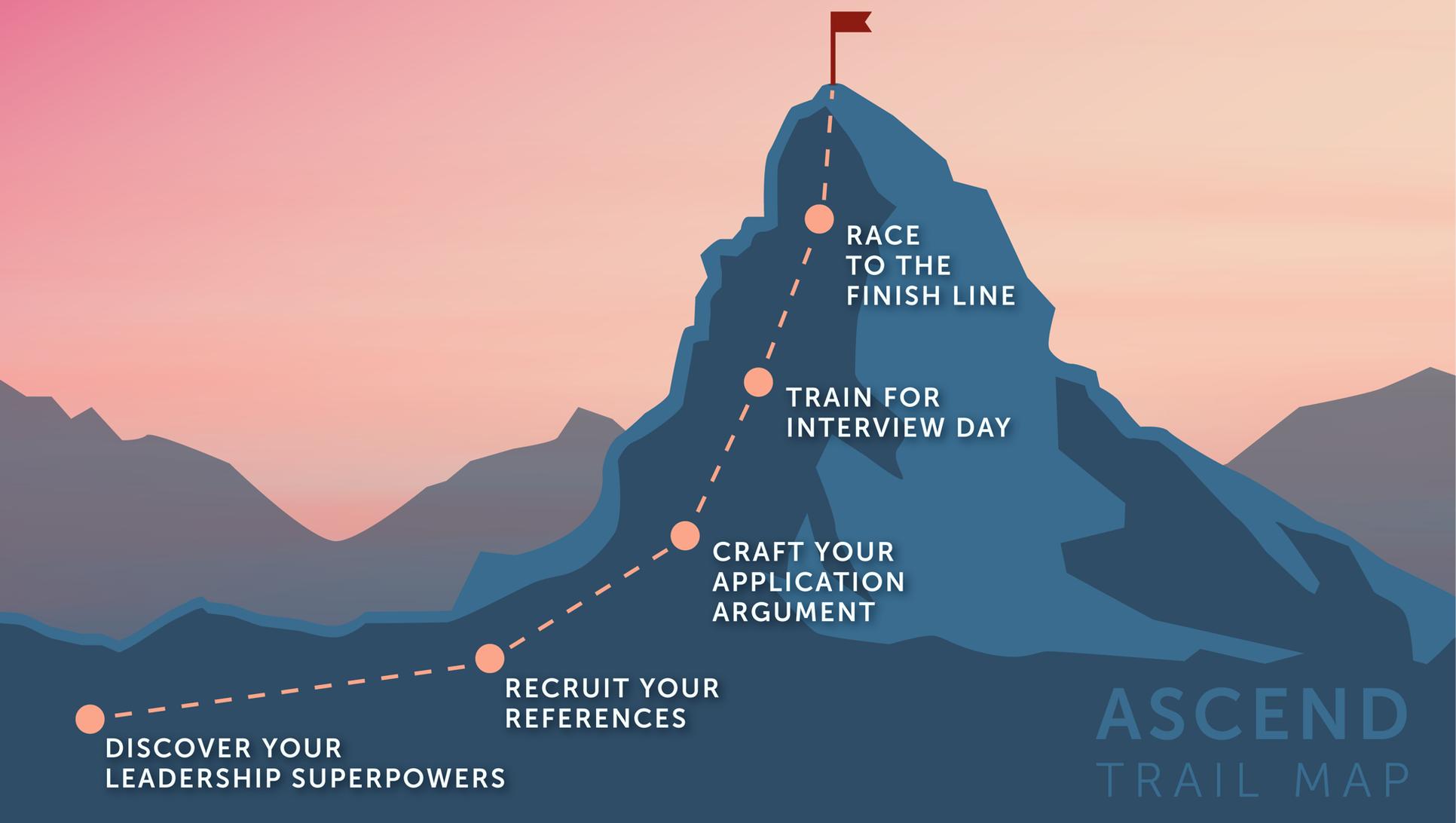




How Will Next Year Be Different?

- +1 year of experience on paper
 - +1 year of *experiences*
- ...but you'll be the same person.*

If this is your year...let's make it happen.



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TRAIL MAP



PrincipalCenter.com/template

LILLIAN WILLIAMSON

INSTRUCTIONAL LEADER

222 333 444
lwilliam@school.com
123 STREET, CITY, ST 11111

Hiring Manager Name
District/Organization Name

Dear Hiring Manager Name,

In this cover letter, you will demonstrate that you are the most qualified candidate for the position as the Hiring Manager has been chosen to invite candidates for the position as they value your unique skills and experience you bring to the role. You will make the most of your unique skills and experience by crafting a tightly argued, evidence-rich, 5-paragraph cover letter. You will share highlights of the experiences listed in your resume, but you will arrange the evidence in the form of a compelling argument rather than chronologically by date.

Use each paragraph to highlight a different aspect of your qualifications, linking related areas of accomplishment into a compelling portrait of your qualifications. It's important to describe both your actions and their impact, e.g. on students learning or staff culture. This will distinguish you from candidates who merely recite their duties, which is a waste of space since your duties can be inferred from your job title. For example, assistant principals commonly handle discipline, attendance, and transportation issues, so simply listing these duties does not attract attention and transportation issues, so simply listing these duties does not convey any valuable information to the reader. Instead, describe the specific accomplishments and how they impacted the organization, and state directly that you will continue to have a similar impact in the job for which you're applying.

Be sure to take appropriate credit for your contributions toward collective efforts and network team accomplishments, which may represent a large proportion of your leadership experience. Highlight your specific role with active verbs, and specify the impact of your efforts. Connect the dots for the reader, and explicitly state what this experience has about you as a leader and what you will bring to the organization's most pressing needs such as "based on the committee" and "helped with" in favor of stronger phrasing such as "led the development of..." or "Oversaw..."

In your closing paragraph, restate your qualifications and interest in the position and anticipate an interview without coming across as overconfident. If you'd like to use our drag-and-drop, multiple-choice, fill-in-the-blank Cover Letter Generator, visit [PrincipalCenter.com/generator](https://www.principalcenter.com/generator) to learn more. Be sure to use a real signature below (do not use a real signature).

Sincerely,
Lillian Williamson

January 16, 2022

LILLIAN WILLIAMSON

INSTRUCTIONAL LEADER

CONTACT

222 333 444
lwilliam@school.com
123 Street, City, ST 11111

PROFESSIONAL OBJECTIVE

Instructional leader seeking a specific position to have a certain impact, described in detail here. Avoid making unsupported claims in the form of skills or adjectives. Simply describe the kind of position you are seeking and the impact you intend to have. **NOTE:** Name text in this template is enclosed in text boxes. Double-click to edit.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

SALLY CHOU

Instructional Leader

Hiring Manager Name
District/Organization Name

Dear Hiring Manager Name,

In this cover letter, you will demonstrate that you are the most qualified candidate for the position, as the Hiring Manager has little choice but to invite you for an interview. You will make the most of your current skills and experience by crafting a tightly argued, evidence-rich, 5-paragraph cover letter. You will share highlights of the experience listed in your resume, but you will arrange this evidence in the form of a compelling argument rather than chronologically by date.

Use each paragraph to highlight a different aspect of your qualifications, linking related areas of accomplishment into a compelling portrait of your qualifications. It's important to describe both your actions and their impact, e.g. on students learning or staff culture. This will distinguish you from candidates who merely recite their duties, which is a waste of space since your duties can be inferred from your job title. For example, assistant principals commonly handle discipline, attendance, and transportation issues, so simply listing these duties does not convey any valuable information to the reader. Instead, describe specific accomplishments and their impact while implying or stating directly that you will have a similar impact in the job for which you're applying.

Be sure to take appropriate credit for your contributions toward collective efforts. Don't overlook team accomplishments, which may represent a large proportion of your leadership experience. Highlight your specific role with active verbs, and identify the impact of your efforts. Connect the dots for the reader, and explicitly state what this experience has about you as a leader and what you will bring to the organization, and explicitly state wording such as "based on the committee" and "helped with," in favor of stronger phrasing such as "led the development of..." or "Oversaw..."

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Sincerely,
Sally Chou

222 333 444
schoou@school.com
123 Street, City, ST 11111

January 16, 2022

SALLY CHOU

Instructional Leader

PROFESSIONAL OBJECTIVE

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PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

CURRENT JOB TITLE

District Name | City, State | 2018 - Present

Describe your current role, and approach to the role in an introductory paragraph, e.g. Assistant principal in an urban district, and without redundancy.

- Then list specific accomplishments in long, detailed bullets. Each bullet can contain multiple sentences, including related accomplishments together to give clear evidence of your qualifications in a specific area relevant to the role.
- Use 4-6 bullets for more than 75 bullets per role, and ensure that they aren't longer than 100 characters.
- Be sure not to simply list routine duties that can be assumed based on your role; give specific examples of accomplishments that indicate not just your competence, but your readiness for greater levels of "responsibility."
- For more sample language you can use, see the multiple-choice options in our Cover Letter Generator.

PREVIOUS JOB TITLE

District Name | City, State | 2012 - 2016

Describe your previous role in an introductory paragraph, e.g. Assistant principal in a diverse suburban high school. Detail with a headline to reduce use of school history and office referrals for discipline behavior. Just a narrative and relationship-building approach to discipline is the goal.

- Then list specific accomplishments in long, detailed bullets. Each bullet can contain multiple sentences, including related accomplishments together to give clear evidence of your qualifications in a specific area relevant to the role.
- Use 4-6 bullets for more than 75 bullets per role, and ensure that they aren't longer than 100 characters.
- Be sure not to simply list routine duties that can be assumed based on your role; give specific examples of accomplishments that indicate not just your competence, but your readiness for greater levels of "responsibility."
- For more sample language you can use, see the multiple-choice options in our Cover Letter Generator.



SALLY CHOU

222 333 444 📞

youremail@gmail.com 📧

123 Street, City, ST 11111 📍

Instructional Leader

Hiring Manager Name

District/Organization Name

January 16, 2022

Dear Hiring Manager Name,

In this cover letter, you will demonstrate that you are the most qualified candidate for the position, so the hiring manager has little choice but to invite you for an interview. You will make the most of your current skills and experience by crafting a tightly argued, evidence-rich, 5-paragraph cover letter. You will share highlights of the experience listed in your resumé, but you will arrange this evidence in the form of a compelling argument rather than chronologically by role.

Use each paragraph to highlight a different aspect of your qualifications, linking related areas of accomplishment into a compelling portrait of your qualifications. It's important to describe both your actions and their impact, e.g. on student learning or staff culture. This will distinguish you from candidates who merely recap their duties, which is a waste of space since your duties can be inferred from your job title. For example, assistant principals commonly handle discipline, attendance, and transportation issues, so simply listing these duties does not convey any valuable information to the reader. Instead, describe specific accomplishments and their impact, while implying or stating directly that you will have a similar impact in the job for which you're applying.

Be sure to take appropriate credit for your contributions toward collective efforts. Don't overlook team accomplishments, which may represent a large proportion of your leadership experience. Highlight your specific role with active verbs, and identify the impact of your efforts. Connect the dots for the reader, and explicitly state what this experience says about you as a leader and what you will bring to the organization. Avoid passive wording such as "served on the committee" and "helped with," in favor of stronger phrasing such as "Led the development of..." or "Overhauled...".

In your closing paragraph, recap your qualifications and interest in the position, and anticipate an interview without coming across as overconfident. If you'd like to use our drag-and-drop, multiple-choice, fill-in-the-blank Cover Letter Generator, visit PrincipalCenter.com/generator to learn more. Be sure to include a real signature below. Best wishes in your search!

Sincerely,
Sally Chou
Sally Chou

SALLY CHOU

222 333 444 📞

youremail@gmail.com 📧

123 Street, City, ST 11111 📍

Instructional Leader

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PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

CURRENT JOB TITLE

District Name | City, State | 2016 – Present

Briefly describe your context, duties, and approach to the role in an introductory paragraph, e.g. Assistant principal in an urban 6th-8th grade middle school with 788 students, devoted to student success through restorative practices, effective instruction, and authentic relationships.

- Then list specific accomplishments in long, detailed bullets. Each bullet can contain multiple sentences, clustering related accomplishments together to give clear evidence of your qualifications in a specific area relevant to the role.
- List 4-6 (absolutely no more than 7) bullets per role, and ensure that they aren't single words like "Collaborative" or other unsupported claims. Give details about what you did and the impact it had.
- Be sure not to simply list routine duties that can be assumed based on your role; give specific examples of accomplishments that indicate not just your competence, but your readiness for greater levels of responsibility.
- Be sure to take appropriate credit for collaborative work, giving yourself a passive verb like "Developed" or "Implemented."
- For more sample language you can use, see the multiple-choice phrases in our Cover Letter Generator. Learn more at PrincipalCenter.com/generator

PREVIOUS JOB TITLE

District Name | City, State | 2012 – 2016

Served as 9th grade assistant principal in a diverse suburban high school. Hired with a mandate to reduce out-of-school suspensions and office referrals for disruptive behavior, I took a restorative and relationship-building approach to improving climate and student success.

- Then list specific accomplishments in long, detailed bullets. Each bullet can contain multiple sentences, clustering related accomplishments together to give clear evidence of your qualifications in a specific area relevant to the role.
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LILLIAN WILLIAMSON

INSTRUCTIONAL LEADER

☎ 222 333 444

✉ yourname@email.com

📍 123 STREET, CITY, ST 11111

Hiring Manager Name

January 16, 2022

District/Organization Name

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Lillian Williamson

Lillian Williamson

LILLIAN WILLIAMSON

INSTRUCTIONAL LEADER

CONTACT

☎ 222 333 444

✉ youremail@gmail.com

📍 123 Street, City, ST 11111

EDUCATION & CERTIFICATIONS

YOUR DEGREE | University Name | 2005 – 2007
CERTIFICATION DETAILS

YOUR DEGREE | University Name | 2003 – 2005
CERTIFICATION DETAILS

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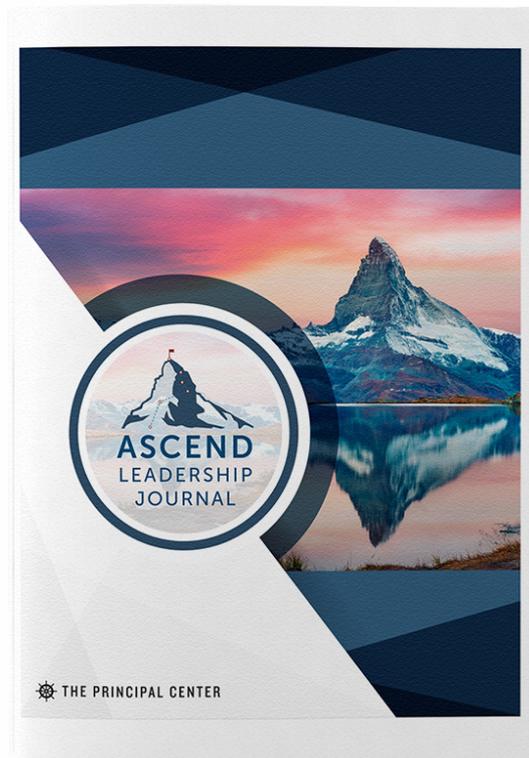


Want More Help?

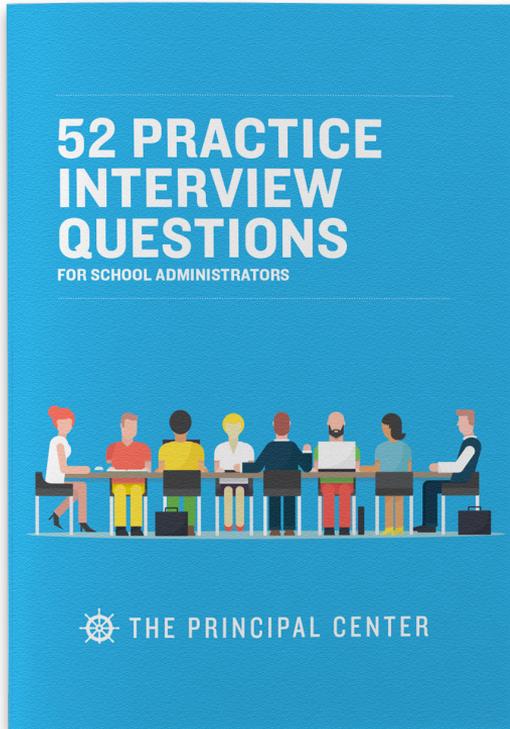


PrincipalCenter.com/application

Ascend Leadership Journal Giveaway



Practice Interview Questions



PrincipalCenter.com/interview