

Twitter Thread by Patrick McKenzie



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If an employer is willing to be abusive to you prior to hiring you, when you have maximum leverage and they are maximally incentivized to play nice, I think that gives you **extremely actionable signal as to how they'll treat you when you're working there and dependent on them.**

For candidates: evaluate prospective employers accordingly.

For startups employing e.g. engineers: given that your candidates should evaluate you accordingly, be **extra special** careful to operate like professionals with regards to e.g. interviewing, offers, and negotiation.

"Can you be more explicit about 'abusive' here?"

Not without violating a confidence, but as someone who has been on hiring side of table and is a capitalist, there are **clearly** things you could do which would be "sharp operating, but we're all sharp operators" in some contexts.

Hiring employees is often not one of those contexts. The nature of the relationship, the asymmetry in power, and the social contract strongly counsel you to be a lot better there than you are minimally required by law / contract.

A thing which aesthetically frustrates me is that a lot of the things I've heard companies do here serve **no legitimate business purpose.** In some cases it's getting tens of dollars of advantage. TENS! On an engineering candidate!

Imagine the primal scream of a capitalist:

"WHY ARE YOU POISONING THE WELL FOR EVERYONE HIRING ENGINEERS OVER TENS OF DOLLARS. DO YOU THINK THAT WILL BE IN YOUR S-1 AS A SOURCE OF COMPETITIVE STRENGTH. DOES THIS REFLECT YOUR MANAGERIAL COMPETENCE WITH RESPECT TO YOUR AGENTS."