

HUMAN RESOURCES

By Mike Folie

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HUMAN RESOURCES

CHARACTERS:

INTERVIEWER, can be played by a man
or a woman

COWBOY

INDIAN (non-speaking)

SETTING:

An office. A table, two chairs. An intercom
on the desk.

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AT RISE: Lights up on an office with a desk and two chairs. An INTERVIEWER and a COWBOY. (Note: INTERVIEWER can be cast male or female. If the INTERVIEWER is played by a woman, then all of the COWBOY's "Sirs" are changed to "Ma'ams.")

INTERVIEWER

(Slowly and deliberately, without emotion or enthusiasm, looking seriously into the eyes of the COWBOY.)

Yippee-eye-oh-ky-yay.

(The COWBOY just stares blankly.)

Yippee-eye-oh . . .

COWBOY

Ah . . ., yippee-eye-oh . . .

(Slight pause)

INTERVIEWER

(Prompting)

Ky-yay.

COWBOY

Ky-yay.

(INTERVIEWER nods slowly, somewhat satisfied, then picks up a sheet of paper from desk and studies it. COWBOY looks nervously around room.)

INTERVIEWER

(Suddenly, causing COWBOY to jump.)

So! You're a cowboy!

COWBOY

Yes, Sir.

INTERVIEWER

Statement.

COWBOY

Sir?

INTERVIEWER

Statement. "You're a cowboy." Not a question. No need to answer. I can see you're a cowboy from your very impressive resume.

COWBOY

Uh . . . , well, shucks, I . . .

Shh! Listen. You must learn to listen carefully if you want to be a member of our team here at Manifest Destiny Corp.

COWBOY

Yes, Sir.

INTERVIEWER

It's a big job, taming the West.

COWBOY

It sure is, Sir.

INTERVIEWER

Many companies competed for this contract. All White Men, Incorporated. Military Solutions-Dot-Com. But Manifest Destiny Corp beat them all. And do you know why?

COWBOY

Well, I reckon it's 'cause you bribed somebody.

INTERVIEWER

No! Well, yes, of course we did. But that's not why we won this contract. We won this contract because Manifest Destiny Corp has values.

COWBOY

Yes, Sir.

INTERVIEWER

It's not just about rape and plunder and grabbing land from savages.

COWBOY

No, Sir.

INTERVIEWER

It's about having a vision.

COWBOY

I can see that, Sir.

INTERVIEWER

And it's because we listen carefully.

COWBOY

Well, thank you, Sir.

INTERVIEWER

For what?

(COWBOY hesitates, unsure.)

Yes, yes! That's a question. Why are you thanking me?

COWBOY

Well I reckon I'm thankin' you for sayin' that my, uh, my cowboy resume is impressive.

INTERVIEWER

No.

COWBOY

No?

INTERVIEWER

No. You are thanking me because I am trying to impart learnings to you, valuable clues as to how you may ace this interview and subsequently advance within this organization.

COWBOY

That's most kind of you, Sir.

INTERVIEWER

My goal is to orient you to the corporate culture of Manifest Destiny Corp. The whys of our whats, the hows of our whys. But that means you must listen – not to what I say – but to what I mean. Do you understand?

COWBOY

Yes, Sir. I think I do, Sir. Thank you.

(INTERVIEWER looks sharply at COWBOY)

For all these valuable learnin's and all. Thanks a heap.

(Slight pause. INTERVIEWER goes back to resume.)

INTERVIEWER

Do you sing?

COWBOY

Not real good, no.

INTERVIEWER

Last cowboy I had in here insisted on singing. Drove me stark raving mad.

COWBOY

Yes, Sir, I can see that, Sir.

INTERVIEWER

(Reading resume)

So you've, uh, you've killed a few Indians here and there.

COWBOY

That statement is correct, Sir.

INTERVIEWER

And it says here you've herded cattle.

COWBOY

I've done my share.

INTERVIEWER

Done your share and mine, I should say. Clearly, you possess the basic skill sets. But let's go beyond the resume. What else have you done that might qualify you for this position? Have you had unprotected sex with prostitutes in the past twelve months?

COWBOY

Beg pardon?

INTERVIEWER

Have you ridden bareback with dancehall girls?

COWBOY

Uh, well. Yeah. Sure. Who hasn't?

INTERVIEWER

Excellent. Drink?

COWBOY

I wouldn't mind.

INTERVIEWER

I mean do you. Drink.

COWBOY

Well, . . . yeah!

INTERVIEWER

Have you, in the past six months, become sufficiently inebriated so as to gallop your horse through the main street of the town a whoopin' and a hollerin' and shooting off your six-shooter into the air?

COWBOY

Uh, . . . no?

INTERVIEWER

Pity. You won't make a very colorful cowboy then, will you?

COWBOY

I mean, yeah! Sure I have! Lotsa times.

INTERVIEWER

Let's hear it then?

COWBOY

Pardon?

INTERVIEWER

Whoop it up for me a little.

COWBOY

You mean, right here?

INTERVIEWER

Um-hm.

COWBOY

Hard to do that without my horse.

INTERVIEWER

Pretend.

COWBOY

I'd feel downright silly.

INTERVIEWER

My good Cowpoke Person, I have been charged with hiring fifty thousand cowboys to tame the American west. Now do you want to be one of those illustrious number, or do you not?

COWBOY

Oh, more than anything, Sir.

INTERVIEWER

Sleeping out under the stars?

COWBOY

Yeah!

INTERVIEWER

Bacon, beans and coffee in the morning?

COWBOY

You know it!

INTERVIEWER

Shooting off guns?

COWBOY

Yeee-hah!

INTERVIEWER

Singing?

COWBOY

You bet! Singin' up a . . . !

(Slight pause)

I mean . . . no singing.

INTERVIEWER

Well, the only way to gain that idyllic life is through me. If you do not pass this interview, you will find yourself slinging bolos at llamas on the Argentine plains. Is that clear?

COWBOY

Yes, Sir.

INTERVIEWER

So let's see how you whoop it up on a Saturday night in town. Come on.

COWBOY

You want me to shoot off my gun in here?

INTERVIEWER

No need for that just yet. Simply go “bang.”

COWBOY

Bang?

INTERVIEWER

Yes. Whoop and holler and spur on your trusty steed and point your finger in the air and go “bangity-bang-bang!” for me. That’s a good fellow.

(The COWBOY gamely tries to imitate being a boisterous, whooping, riding cowboy, pretending to shoot in the air. It lacks all conviction.)

COWBOY

Uh, yesiree! Whoop de do! Bang-bang! Yes, Sir, we’re having some fun now! Go fast little pony while I ride you hard and shoot in the air like a drunken fool! Bang-bang!

INTERVIEWER

That is pathetic! Sit down.

COWBOY

Sorry, Sir.

INTERVIEWER

And don’t cringe. Cowboys don’t cringe.

COWBOY

Yes, Sir. I mean, no Sir. I mean, go to hell, Sir!

INTERVIEWER

Oh, don’t bother. Look, I’m sorry, but . . .

COWBOY

Please, Sir! All I ever wanted was to be a cowboy. Give me another chance. Please!

INTERVIEWER

Well . . . perhaps if you can correctly answer this one last question.

COWBOY

Okay.

INTERVIEWER

And listen carefully.

(Slight pause)

INTERVIEWER (CONT.)

What do you think we should do about the noble Indians?

COWBOY

Kill 'em!

INTERVIEWER

(Pained)

No, no, no, no, no!

COWBOY

But . . . killin' Indians is what being a cowboy's all about!

INTERVIEWER

In the recent past, perhaps, yes! But not anymore. Here at Manifest Destiny Corp, we want our cowboys to engage with Native Americans, in an atmosphere of mutual respect and trust.

COWBOY

You do?

INTERVIEWER

Yes! To work for us you must learn to think of Native Americans, not as combatants, but as non-traditional stakeholders.

COWBOY

Say what?

INTERVIEWER

People. Human beings, like yourself.

COWBOY

But . . . , gee I dunno. Indians is in the way, ain't they? I mean, if we don't kill off the Indians, how we gonna have freeways and malls and stuff like that?

INTERVIEWER

Yes! You see the problem! On the one hand, these indigenous peoples are an impediment to progress. On the other, they are human beings with rights and feelings. How do we respond?

COWBOY

It's a conundrum.

INTERVIEWER

Indeed. Let me give you a little test. We are going to do what we in Human Resources like to call “role playing.” I am going to bring a Native American into the room. And I want you to engage with this person in the manner you think most likely to advance you within this organization, keeping in mind our primary goal of real estate accrual, coupled with our policy of respect and empowerment for all indigenous peoples. Are you game?

COWBOY

I hear you, Sir, and I am ready. Bring the Native American gentleman in.

(INTERVIEWER speaks into intercom)

INTERVIEWER

Terry, would you send in Mr. White Feather, please.

(INDIAN enters, stands facing COWBOY. COWBOY stands and addresses INDIAN.)

COWBOY

I feel your pain, Native American, and I want to engage with you in a way that respects your noble heritage and takes account of your unique and valuable point of view.

(COWBOY pulls HIS gun and shoots INDIAN, who falls dead. Pause.)

INTERVIEWER

Right! Let’s talk benefits.

(Blackout)

THE END