



BLUEPRINTS

Buckingham
Institute.



DESIGN LOVE IN™ *to* **INTERVIEWING**

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“An interview is the first shared experience between two futures.

When every touchpoint is designed with love, we create a space where talent steps forward with confidence, stories open like chapters, and possibility fills the room. The candidate feels the power of being truly seen, and the organization feels the spark of discovering someone who can grow its mission. This is how we turn a simple conversation into a living promise - an invitation to flourish together, wherever the journey leads.”

— Marcus Buckingham

DLI BLUEPRINT - INTERVIEWING

Design Love In™ to every interview so candidates leave saying:

“I felt powerful, seen, and genuinely connected—before, during, and after the interview. Even if I’m not the one chosen, I’ll never forget how this made me feel. I got clearer, more confident, and walked away better than I arrived. I want to stay close to this brand, and I want everyone I know to experience what I did.”

1 | WHY THIS MATTERS

When the Five Feelings of Love show up in an interview, you see the **real human behind the résumé** - and they see the real heart of your brand.

- Better signal → better hires
- Unforgettable experience → future advocates (even if you say “no”)

2 | THE MAKER MINDSET

Put on your DLI LENS™ and decide:

“Which feeling(s) do I want this candidate to walk away with?”

POWER • HARMONY • SIGNIFICANCE • WARMTH • GROWTH

3 | THE B/D/A TOUCHPOINT MAP

- On a whiteboard - or 3 posterboards labeled **BEFORE** / **DURING** / **AFTER** - have the team rapid-fire every single touchpoint in the current process.

BEFORE (invite → arrival)	DURING (hello → goodbye)	AFTER (goodbye → follow up)
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- Brain-dump every touchpoint in the current process: Emails, greetings, silences, everything.
- STAR** any moment that feels clunky, cold, forgettable, generic, transactional.

4 | MMO Hunt - Major Missed Opportunities™

- Give everyone bright-pink stickies (or a different-color marker).
- ASK: “**Where is a touchpoint that should exist - but doesn’t?**”
- Tag/mark each gap with MMO. (Anywhere the group sees an unused or negative touchpoint)

| Examples: *radio-silence after final interview, confusing lobby wait, cryptic rejection email.*

You should now have:

-  Your current experience mapped
-  STARRED ‘blah’ touchpoints
-  TAGGED MMO’s (in Pink/Red)

5 | MET - Maximize Every Touchpoint™

This is where DLI™ Begins



Maximize Every Touchpoint with the FIVE FEELINGS of LOVE

The MET Checklist:

Walk the wall. For each touchpoint, ask:



- Have we designed for one of the Five Feelings?
- Could we design this moment to deliver more of it?
- What would this moment look like if it truly made someone feel loved?

DLI Feeling

“MET” Prompt

POWER

Where could we give the candidate more control, clarity, or confidence?

HARMONY

What would make this moment feel friction-free and fluid? Smoother, calmer, more consistent?

SIGNIFICANCE

How could we show them they’re seen, known, or valued here?

WARMTH

How might we spark genuine human connection right here? Even a small thing to spark deeper connection or humanity?

GROWTH

How could this touchpoint hint at future stretch, learning, or potential?

6 | BE A MAKER™

NEXT STEP:

- For each ★ or MMO, jump to Section 4 prompts (“Redesign with the Five Feelings”) and rewrite the moment so it radiates Power, Harmony, Significance, Warmth, or Growth.
- Below are **creative, deep-cut, high-impact prompts** to help you reimagine **any moment** - from email to exit - with intention and love.
- Use them to turn awkward, flat, or forgettable touchpoints into **feel-it-in-your-heart experiences**.

POWER

The experience says: “You are strong. You are trusted.”

Ask yourself...

- *Where could we give them a choice instead of a directive?*
- *How might we invite them to teach us something?*
- *What part of this experience could they co-own with us?*
- *Are we signaling “We trust you”—or “We’re testing you”?*
- *How can we make them feel **clear, prepared, and confident** before they ever log on or walk in?*

Ideas:

- *Let them set the tone: “What would you love us to ask today?”*
- *Invite them to reshape the format: “Would you like to walk us through your work visually or talk us through it live?”*
- *Give them a moment mid-interview to pause, reflect, and reset.*
- *Share the decision-making criteria up front—no hidden rules.*
- *Say out loud: “This isn’t a performance. This is a co-exploration.”*

HARMONY

The experience says: “You’re in sync with us. We’ve got you.”

Ask yourself...

- *Where could we remove friction or confusion?*
- *Do our hand-offs feel smooth—or like an awkward baton drop?*
- *How does the pacing feel to them—not just to us?*
- *Is every part of the process reinforcing a sense of flow?*
- *What does our process say about how we treat our own people?*

Ideas:

- *Offer a “who’s who” guide so they know who they’re meeting—and why.*
- *Turn the agenda into a scrollable visual journey.*
- *Play ambient music in the waiting area (even a Zoom “vibe” room!).*
- *Build in a rhythm break: “Let’s pause and breathe. Want some water?”*
- *Share the interview flow in advance with: “Here’s how we roll.”*

SIGNIFICANCE

The experience says: “You matter. We see you.”

Ask yourself...

- *Have we truly prepared for this person—or just skimmed their résumé?*
- *Where can we reflect something back to them they may not even realize is beautiful?*
- *How can we show we value their story, not just their skill set?*
- *Do they leave thinking, “Wow, they really got me”?*

Ideas:

- *Open with: “You wrote something on your portfolio that stuck with me...”*
- *Pull one detail from their background and celebrate it with specificity.*
- *Ask: “What’s something you wish more people noticed about your work?”*
- *If you pass, write: “Here are 3 things we admired—and one thing we hope you keep doing no matter where you go.”*
- *Invite them to write a short “about me” in their own voice before the interview—and actually talk about it.*

WARMTH of OTHERS

The experience says: "You belong. You're safe here."

Ask yourself...

- *How do we break the formality without losing professionalism?*
- *Are we making them feel like a person—or a performance?*
- *Where can we create an emotionally resonant moment—not just a polite one?*
- *Could we get a smile, a laugh, or a real sigh of relief?*

Ideas:

- *Share a real team inside joke, meme, or moment: "This is what Tuesday looks like here."*
- *Start with: "I know interviews can be weird. Let's make it human."*
- *End with: "We're rooting for you, wherever you land."*
- *Put a post-it on the chair or Zoom background: "Reserved for someone awesome."*
- *Let a peer do a 5-minute "this is what I wish I'd known" Q&A.*

GROWTH

The experience says: "You will evolve here. You are worth investing in."

Ask yourself...

- *Where do we talk about what they'll become—not just what they'll do?*
- *How can we show that learning is normal here—not just performance?*
- *What might they be afraid to ask—and how can we make space for it?*
- *Do they leave feeling stretched, not squeezed?*

Ideas:

- *Ask: "What do you want to be able to say about yourself a year from now?"*
- *Share: "This role is hard in the best way. Want to hear how I grew in it?"*
- *Offer a growth map: "Here's where people in this role have gone in 6–12 months."*
- *Invite them to "audit" a real team meeting or retro.*
- *Build in a 3-minute coaching moment: "If you want to grow X, here's one thing I'd suggest trying."*

Look at you mastering Design Love In™

- Take one of your touchpoints.
 - Pick one of these deep prompts.
 - Rethink it. Remix it. Make it matter.
- That's what MAKERS™ do.**

The MAKER's Companion Tool

Red Thread™ Questions for Deeper Discovery

Let's face it—at the heart of every interview is the question.

And that's exactly where things can go flat... or come fully alive.

This **MAKER's Companion Tool** gives you a ready-to-use set of Red Thread™ prompts to transform your interview skills.

These compelling questions are designed to help someone surface the work they love, the strengths they lead with, and the moments that matter most.

They reveal someone's Red Threads™ - those unique activities, situations, or interactions that give them energy, spark mastery, and drive growth.

When you spot a candidate's Red Threads, you see not just what they can do, but what they're made to do.

Use these questions to:

- Break the script and go deeper
- Spark genuine connection and insight
- Surface their truest strengths
- Evaluate for fit in a way that feels deeply human

What Makes a Great Red Thread™ Question?

- *It invites story (not just an answer).*
- *It reveals energy (not just skill).*
- *It makes them say, “No one's ever asked me that before.”*



Your Red Thread™ Question Set

Ask these anytime during the interview—but especially when you want to shift from surface to depth. You can also use them to start strong or close with heart.

Discovery Prompts

- “Tell me about a workday you didn’t want to end.”
- “What’s something you’ve done that made you think, ‘I was made for this’?”
- “When do you lose track of time at work?”
- “What kind of praise means the most to you?”
- “What’s one part of your job you’d happily do more of?”
- “If I followed you around on your best workday, what would I see you doing?”
- “What were you doing the last time someone said, ‘You’re really good at that’?”
- “What kind of work makes you feel most alive?”

Self-Awareness & Reflection

- “What’s a challenge you loved tackling—not because it was easy, but because it stretched you in the right ways?”
- “What do you know now about yourself that you wish you’d known five years ago?”
- “What are you learning to protect more in your work or life?”
- “When do you feel most like yourself?”
- “What’s something you do so instinctively, you forget it’s a skill?”
- “What do you want your next team or leader to understand about how you work best?”

Values & Drive

- “What do you never get tired of learning about?”
- “What’s one value you will never compromise on at work?”
- “What does meaningful work look like to you?”
- “What’s something you’ve built or contributed to that made you proud?”
- “What kind of future are you excited to help create?”

Hot Tip: Do less talking.

The interviewee should talk MORE than the interviewer. Ask, then listen.

Final Tip:

Listen Like a MAKER™

Don’t just listen for the answer—listen for energy:

Eyes light up

Voice quickens or softens

Posture shifts

A story that spills out unprompted

That’s where the Red Thread™ is hiding.

Reflect it back. Capture it. And if this person joins your team—**honor it.**



“

*Your life, well lived,
is a scavenger hunt
for love.*

Marcus Buckingham