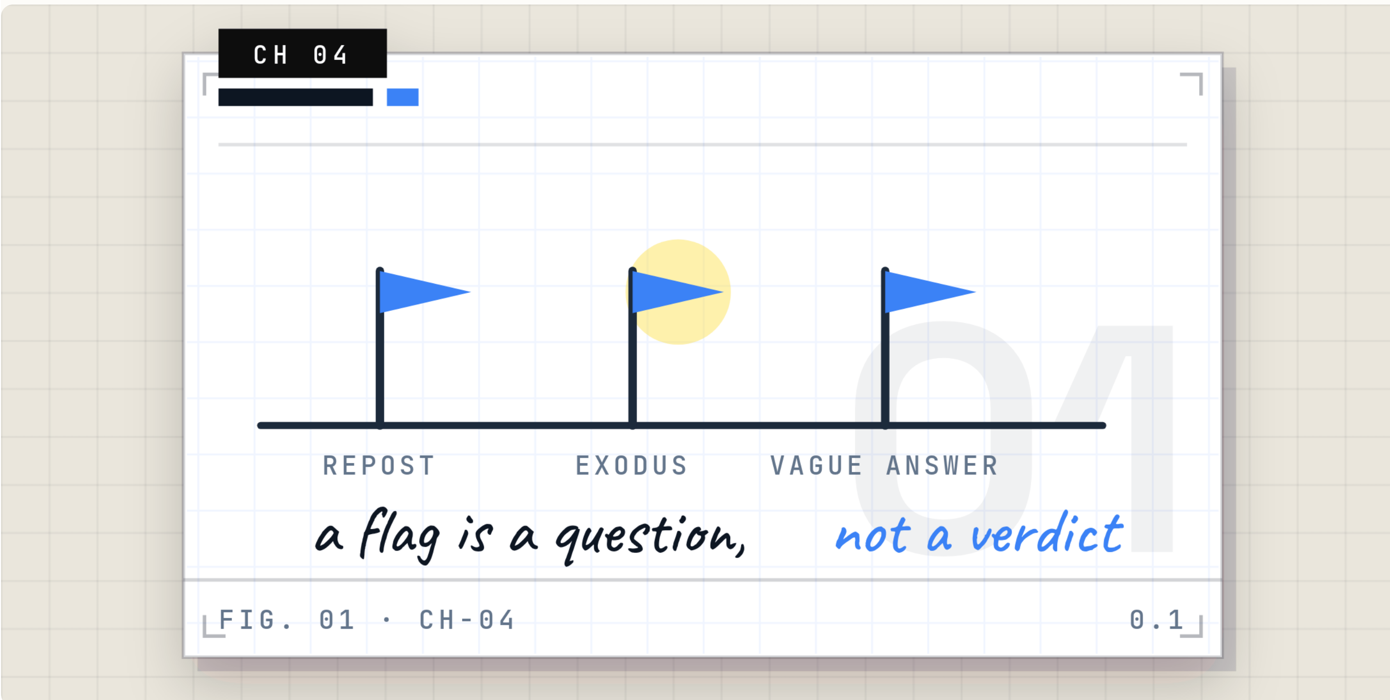
FIG. 01 · READING THE SIGNALS

NOTES, UPDATED JUL 18, 2026

How do I spot company red flags before I accept the interview?

By **Chris Baldwin** · Founder, Baldwin Blueprint · Updated July 2026



SHORT ANSWER

Identify company red flags by analyzing executive turnover, reading between the lines of recent job postings, checking SEC filings for declining growth, and tracking sudden shifts in ICP. Look for patterns of short tenure on LinkedIn rather than relying solely on angry anonymous reviews.

You are preparing for an interview, but you are secretly terrified of stepping out of the frying pan and into the fire. Finding company red flags during your research is the only way to protect your career and your sanity before you sign. I will show you how to read the hidden signals in job boards, public filings, and team profiles so you can spot a sinking ship early.

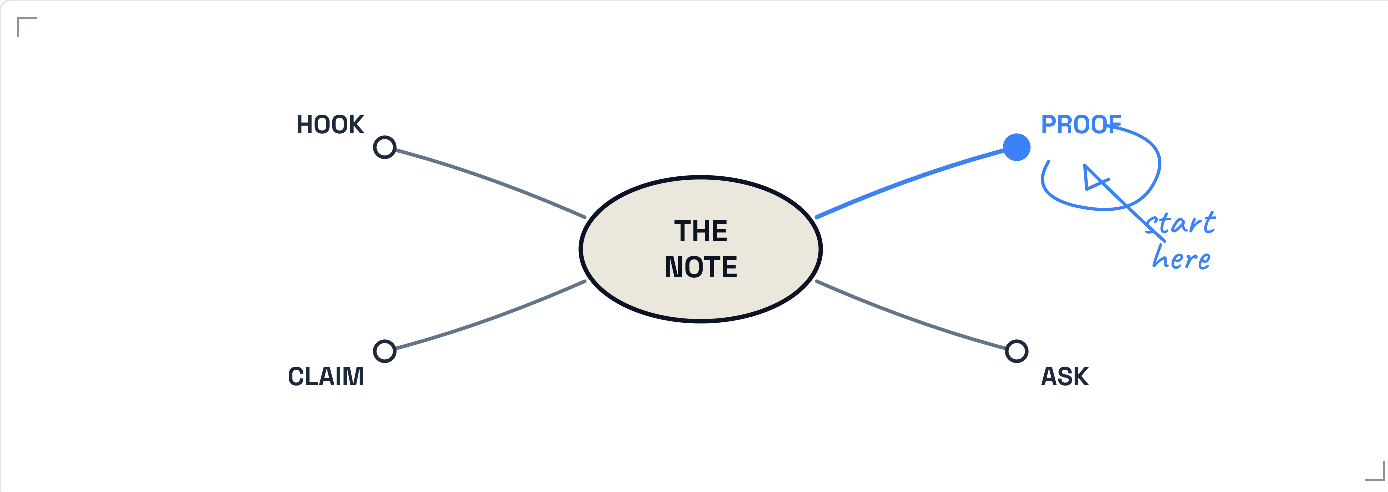


FIG. 02 One central idea with four short branches, an at a glance map of how a sheet is built. The proof branch is the one to start from.

§ 01

How do I spot high turnover in a sales department?

Look for a high density of sales reps with tenures under ten months on LinkedIn to spot systemic turnover. If more than a third of the team left within their first year, the quota is likely unachievable or the onboarding process is completely broken.

I always filter LinkedIn people searches by past company and current title. If you see ten account executives who all started and left within a nine month window, do not ignore it. That is not a coincidence. It is a pattern.

Ask the hiring manager about this directly but politely. You can say, I noticed a few recent departures in this territory, and I want to understand what support systems are in place to help the next rep hit their ramp targets. Their reaction tells you everything.

§ 02

What does a constantly reposted job ad mean?

A job posting that stays active or gets reposted every thirty days usually signals an unrealistic hiring bar, an undesirable compensation structure, or a toxic manager who cannot keep people. It means the company is either indecisive or unable to retain talent.

Do not fall for the hyper growth excuse. True expansion hiring looks like multiple distinct roles opening up at once, not the exact same mid level account executive role being recycled every month.

If you see this pattern, use your Baldwin Blueprint to test their clarity. Walk in with the free 30/60/90 day plan built from their posting. If they flinch at a structured plan, they do not actually know what they want.

FIG. 03 My real prep note has three things done and one still open, with the company research highlighted, because it is the item that actually changes the conversation.

§ 03

Should I trust anonymous negative reviews on Glassdoor?

Ignore individual angry rants on review sites and look instead for repetitive complaints about product quality or sudden shifts in target markets. Single bad reviews are often just personal gripes, but consistent complaints about product delivery mean you will struggle to close deals.

Most interview prep advice tells you to obsess over overall star ratings. That is lazy. A company can easily buy or pressure employees into writing fake positive reviews to inflate their score.

Look at the product complaints. If customers or former sales reps say the software is buggy or the implementation team is backed up, run away. As a sales rep, your reputation is tied to what you sell. You cannot sell vaporware for long.

§ 04

What do sudden changes in the ideal customer profile reveal?

Sudden shifts in target industries or pricing models in recent job postings indicate a company struggling to find product market fit. When a business constantly changes its target audience, sales reps face shifting quotas, messy pipelines, and erratic commissions.

Compare their older job postings with the current one. If they targeted enterprise banks six months ago but are suddenly hiring reps for small business retail, they are pivoting in panic.

When you show up with your Account Map from Baldwin Blueprint, ask them about this shift. Say, I noticed a transition from enterprise to mid market in your recent collateral, how has that impacted the average sales cycle? Watch if they give you a straight answer.

WORKED EXAMPLE · 30/60/90 LINE

BEFORE

I will spend my first thirty days learning your product and understanding our target market.

AFTER

I will validate our current mid market target profile by interviewing three existing customers to understand why they bought, ensuring we do not waste pipeline on the enterprise leads we recently abandoned.

PRE-INTERVIEW RESEARCH APPROACHES

What most people do	What actually works
Reading only the top three Glassdoor reviews	Analyzing average sales rep tenure on LinkedIn
Believing every growth claim in the interview	Verifying funding history and hiring patterns
Asking generic questions about company culture	Presenting a concrete 30/60/90 day plan to test their reactions

The takeaways

01 Track employee tenure patterns on LinkedIn to spot turnover.

02 Ignore star ratings and focus on specific product complaints.

03 Watch out for erratic shifts in target customer profiles.

04 Use a structured plan to test hiring manager clarity.

Questions people ask

Is a high number of open roles always a good sign?

Not necessarily. If a company has fifty open roles but no clear revenue growth, they may be overhiring due to poor planning. Look for balanced hiring across sales, engineering, and support to ensure you can actually deliver what you sell.

How do I ask about red flags without sounding negative?

Frame your questions around risk mitigation and business strategy. Instead of asking why turnaround is high, ask what qualities distinguished the top performers who stayed. This shows you are analytical and focused on long term success.

Is Baldwin Blueprint just a fancy cover letter tool?

No, it is a deep strategic analysis tool. It does not write generic cover letters. It builds a concrete 12 page blueprint including an Account Map and a 30/60/90 day plan. However, it cannot replace your own critical thinking during the actual live conversation.

SOURCES

- SEC EDGAR
- Glassdoor

BUILD SHEET

This is the plan a Blueprint drafts for your exact role.

Paste in a real job posting and your resume. Get a tailored 12 page Blueprint in minutes. Your first draft is free.

Start your free Blueprint

Free, no card. No account needed to draft.

Or read a real finished Blueprint first. Free, no signup.

MORE FROM THIS CHAPTER

What do job postings really say about a...

INSIDE THIS SHEET ›

4 MIN Read →