

INTERVIEWING INFORMATION

Preparing for the Interview

During the Interview

After the Interview

I. Interviewing

A. Purpose

1. During the interview, tell the employer about experiences, skills, and accomplishments that will make him or her want to hire you.
2. In return, you find out information that will help you know if the position is a good match for you.

B. Guidelines

1. There are no set rules for interviewing - just principles.
2. Interviewers are human. All react to situations differently and are impressed by different styles and types of people.
3. No set of rules is guaranteed to get you a job.

II. Preparing for the Interview

A. Self-Assessment (Identify what you want to communicate)

1. What strengths, skills, and accomplishments do you want to emphasize? What images do you want to convey?
 - a. List your qualifications under the following headings:
 - o Relevant coursework
 - o Work experience and acquired skills
 - o Extracurricular activities and positions of leadership
 - o Personal strengths
 - b. These listings provide you with a precise outline of what you must tell the interviewer about you.
2. Know what makes you different and better than the other applicants. Why does the employer need your expertise? What contribution will you make to organization?
3. We tend to overlook our most basic, inherent qualities. Remember, the employer is usually not aware of these traits. It is important to identify and articulate them. What if an employer asked you right now, "What are your greatest strengths?" Could you answer without hesitating?

B. Research the Organization and the Position

1. Find out as much pertinent and useful information as you can about the company, such as product or service, structure, size, outlook, etc.
2. Find out as much about the available position, for example, how the position fits into the whole structure of the company, desired qualifications, responsibilities, etc. Research salary range for this position in case the interviewer asks a salary-related question.
3. Review the ad or job description to determine all of the ways you fit the position.

C. Dress

1. *Women:* Wear a simply tailored, dark-colored suit or dress; be moderate in use of makeup and perfume; have a polished hairstyle; limit jewelry.
2. *Men:* Wear a clean, pressed, conservative suit with a subdued shirt and tie; wear plain socks and shined shoes; keep hair neat and trimmed; limit jewelry.

D. Time

1. Arrive approximately 15 minutes early.
2. Allot time to arrive 30 minutes early if the interview is a long distance away.

E. Resume and Examples of Past Performances

1. Prepare and bring copies of most current resume.
2. Bring examples of past performances if applicable (portfolios, brochure of program you've been responsible for, etc.)

III. During The Interview

A. Answering Questions

1. Before answering, determine what information the interviewer is trying to get. Think before answering. If the question is unclear, ask for clarification.
2. Your objective is to tell about your skills, abilities, strengths, and achievements in an effective way. Use the P.A.R. (problem, action, result) method to help you remember to communicate the entirety of your experiences.
3. The key to answering a question correctly is to relate work experience, educational training, and personal strengths to the particular job for which you are applying.
4. Convey all positive qualities. Try to anticipate any negative perceptions that the employer may address and determine how you will turn negatives into positives.
5. Throughout the interview emphasize what you can contribute to the job and the organization.
6. Be concise in your responses. Support your ideas with examples.
7. Know the employer's name and use it.
8. Practice. Ask a friend, spouse, or professional to help simulate an interview. Avoid memorizing what you want to say. Your words should flow naturally. Contact Career Services to schedule an appointment to conduct practice interviews.
9. Always be truthful.
10. Relax. Nervousness is natural, but you should not let it overtake you.
11. Don't be too humorous or too serious. Follow the natural flow of the interview.

B. Asking Questions

1. Your questions affect the employer's perception of you. Don't ask about salary, benefits or hours. Do ask about the company (those questions not answered through your own research) and advancement potential.
2. Ask questions that convey your strengths. Your questions should offer a sense of organized thought and analytical skills. (ex. "Will I be involved in decision-making?")
3. Have 5-7 questions written out that you want to ask.

C. Body Language

1. Messages are conveyed not only by what you say but also by how you say it.
2. Maintain good eye contact.
3. Smile and show enthusiasm.
4. Lean forward a bit.
5. Offer a firm handshake.

D. Effective Listening

1. Listen for ideas.
2. Avoid distractions.

IV. Concluding the Interview

A. Confirm your interest in the job

1. Be sure to express your continued interest in the position to the interviewer.
2. Express appreciation and exit confidently.

B. Determine future contact

1. Ask if you may call to find out about the status of the position.
2. Leaving the follow-up in your hands will give you the opportunity to call back and restate your interest as well as gain information about your candidacy.

V. After the Interview

A. Follow up

1. Send a brief, formal thank you letter to your interviewer(s) no more than 48 hours after your interview. It reminds the employer of your abilities and qualifications, conveys your interest and assertiveness, and may distinguish you from others who did not follow up.
2. Remember to e-mail or call if the interviewer has indicated that is appropriate.

B. Performance Evaluation

1. Soon after the interview, evaluate your interview performance.
2. Determine what you learned or what you might improve.