



Preparing for a Job Interview

- ❖ The decision to hire can be made within the first 10 minutes—there is only one chance to make a great first impression!
- ❖ Companies want to hire prepared, confident people who demonstrate positive attitudes.
- ❖ Enthusiasm builds chemistry and common ground between you and your interviewer. This will increase your chances of success.
- ❖ Convey an interest – companies have egos.
- ❖ Remember what your goals are and put them into action.
- ❖ Make them want you!

Before the Interview:

- Learn the name and title of the person with whom you will interview.
- Acquire available background information on him or her to use to develop chemistry and rapport.
- Research the company to impress the interviewer and provide reasons why the company is attractive. Look at:
 - Annual reports
 - Recent articles from trade magazines and newspapers
 - Information from the internet or their website
 - Brochures on their products and services
- Review the original job description so you can speak to exactly what the company wants.
- Print enough copies of your resume for multiple interviewers and an extra to follow along with. Review it to ensure you can answer all questions relating to what, why, and when.
- Obtain exact directions to the location and find out the exact amount of time it will take to get there.
- Adjust your schedule so you can accommodate longer than the anticipated timeframe, if necessary.

The Day of the Interview:

- Dress one level above the position you are seeking.
Ideally:
 - Conservative, dark-colored suit freshly dry-cleaned
 - White, long-sleeved, shirt or blouse ironed
 - Men: Semi-traditional tie, preferably with some red
 - Women: Shirts or blouses that are not low-cut or revealing
 - Recent haircut and manicure
 - New or recently polished shoes
 - No heavy perfume or cologne
 - No dangling jewelry
 - No gum chewing or smoking
- Bring copies of your resume in a professional portfolio with a legal pad and two quality pens for note-taking.
- Put your mobile phone on vibrate or “do not disturb”.
- Arrive with plenty of time to spare, but do not go in more than 5-10 minutes early.
- Keep your recruiter’s phone number handy to call in case you are running late.



Upon Arrival:

- Greet administrative staff with the utmost respect. Smile, be friendly, and say hello to all you encounter.
- Receive your interviewer with a smile, a firm handshake, eye contact and a statement of gratitude for the time.
- Once the interview starts, ask out of courtesy, “May I take notes?” and offer the extra copies of your resume.

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Throughout the Interview:

- Be polite, alert, and relaxed with a consistent smile and eye contact.
- Project interest with your body language by leaning forward toward your interviewer and not slouching.
- Don't interrupt no matter how long the interviewer speaks. People like to talk so listen and let them!
- Do not respond to questions with just yes or no answers but with explanations. Provide career-oriented responses and communicate a desire to do a good job.
- Ask for clarification on tough, general or vague questions rather than risk inappropriate answers. You can then follow up with, "Did I respond to your question at the right level of detail?"

Take an Active Role:

- Come prepared to talk about the things you previously researched
- A good number of quality questions will indicate a high level of interest on your behalf.



- ASK QUESTIONS – About the company:
 - What are the company's current objectives?
 - What are the organization's strengths and opportunities?
 - What are the company's greatest challenges and how is it approaching them?
- ASK QUESTIONS – About the position:
 - What does a typical day look like?
 - What qualities does your ideal candidate have?
 - What type of growth potential follows success?
- ASK QUESTIONS – About your interviewer:
 - What is his or her background?
 - How long has he or she been with the company?
 - What does he or she like about the company?

Answering Questions:

- The interviewer may be taking several cues from what you say. From your conversational tone to your ability to present relevant facts in an organized manner, they are listening for confidence, motivation, honesty and enthusiasm.
- Keep these points in mind with certain questions:

“Tell me about yourself”

- The interviewer's intent is to find out whether your personality fits the environment and your background matches the job description.
- Establish your credentials with a 3-5 minute, clear, chronological recap of your employment history, even if it restates what is already on your resume.
- Frame each response so it applies to the potential job at hand. Your expertise, experience and motivation should directly relate to the company's needs.

“What experience do you have with the following technology?”

- Speak in terms of specifics! Rather than simply state you have done something, give examples of when, where, and to what extent.
- Illustrate your accomplishments with metrics; for example:
 - “I built a series of database queries to drop a report run-time from 24 hours to 30 minutes.”
 - “I reduced costs by 25% by designing and leading the development of a web-based solution.”
 - “I led a team of 10 java developers to complete a 12-month project within 8 months.”
- The more specific you are with exact technology names, versions, and project details, the more credible and capable you will appear.

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“What are your strengths and weaknesses?”

- Describe your strengths with specific examples to illustrate them.
- Mention weaknesses in a manner that may be viewed as positive, or focus on weaknesses that have improved. For example:
 - “I love to win and dislike losing. But if I do, I learn from my experience and apply that knowledge next time.”
 - “I identified my lack of comfort with Microsoft Excel, so I enrolled in a software seminar.”
 - “I always give 110% and get disappointed to see others in the organization that don’t.”

“What is the reason you are seeking a new opportunity?”

- Do not disparage previous employers! This only reflects poorly upon you and not them.
- Be pleasant, positive, and honest. For example:
 - “I’m looking for something more challenging.”
 - “I want more long-term stability.”
 - “I’d like more growth and leadership opportunities.”
- Ensure your reasons align with what they can offer.

“What are you seeking in terms of salary?”

- Avoid discussing compensation unless directly approached!
- If you are specifically asked how much you would want for the position, do not state a specific amount but honestly quote your current salary, including bonuses.
- Mention you are seeking something competitive and are confident that the right career move will be accompanied by a fair offer.
- Do not ask for specifics about vacation, benefits, hours, etc.

Prepare for other types of questions, such as:

- “What were the reasons you left your previous positions?”
- “How do you approach a project?”
- “What problems have you faced on previous projects and how did you resolve them?”
- “What are your short-term and long-term career goals?”
- “Why should we hire you?”

Closing the Interview:

- Give a lasting final impression! End things on a strong, positive, and confident note.
- Diplomatically seek feedback so you can resell yourself or address any areas of uncertainty. Ask:
 - “How do you see my skills and abilities fitting into this position/department?”
 - “What, if any, concerns do you have about my background?”
 - “Are there any areas of my experience I might further clarify for you?”
- Express interest in the position and briefly reiterate the reasons you are well-suited for it.
- Ask about next steps in the interview process and by when they would like to make a decision.
- Genuinely thank the interviewer for his or her time and send a thank you note to the interviewer within one day.

