

TOP 10 JOB INTERVIEWING TIPS FOR JOB-SEEKERS



1. Conduct Research on the Employer and Job Opportunity.

Success in a job interview starts with a solid foundation of knowledge on the job-seeker's part. You should understand the employer and the requirements of the job. The more research you conduct, the more you will understand the employer, and the better you will be able to answer interview questions (as well as ask insightful questions — see No.8). Information sources include asking for a job description, review the companies website, internet articles and your network of contacts.

2. Review Common Interview Questions and Prepare Responses.

Another key to interview success is preparing responses to expected interview questions. Firstly enquire through the employer as to the type of interview to expect ~ will it be traditional style interview, behavioural or competency based (please ask your contact person within the organisation which style they will be using in order to help with your preparation). Your goal is to compose detailed yet concise responses, focusing on specific examples and accomplishments. A good tool for remembering your responses is to put them into story form that you can tell in the interview. No need to memorise responses (in fact, it's best not to). *Please ask for our information leaflet on "Most Popular Interview Questions to Prepare before an Interview" which is available through our offices.*

3. Dress for Success.

Plan out a wardrobe that fits the organisation and its culture, striving for the most professional appearance you can accomplish. Remember that it is always better to be overdressed than under — and to wear clothing that fits and is clean and pressed. Keep accessories and jewellery to a minimum. Try not to smoke or eat right before the interview and if possible, brush your teeth or use mouthwash.

4. Be Punctual - Arrive on Time for the Interview.

There is no excuse for ever arriving late for an interview — other than some sort of disaster. Strive to arrive about 15 minutes before your scheduled interview to complete additional paperwork and allow yourself time to get settled. Arriving a bit early is also a chance to observe the dynamics of the workplace.

The day before the interview, include extra copies of your CV in your folder to bring along with your reference list. Finally, as you get to the offices, please turn off your mobile and if you were chewing gum, get rid of it!

5. Make Good First Impressions — to Everyone You Encounter.

A cardinal rule of interviewing: Be polite and offer warm greetings to everyone you meet once you arrive at the company— from security or receptionist to the hiring manager. Employers often are curious how job applicants treat staff members — and your job offer could easily be derailed if you're rude or arrogant to any of the staff. When it is time for the interview, keep in mind that first impressions — the ones interviewers make in the first few seconds of greeting you — can make or break an interview. Make a strong first impression by dressing well, arriving early and when greeting your interviewer, stand, smile, make eye contact, and offer a firm (neither limp and nor bone-crushing) handshake. ***Remember that having a positive attitude and expressing enthusiasm for the job and employer are vital in the initial stages of the interview; studies show that hiring managers make critical decisions about job applicants in the first 20 minutes of the interview.***

6. Be Truthful, Upbeat, Enthusiastic, Focused, Confident and Concise.

Once the interview starts, the key to success is the quality and delivery of your responses. Your goal should always be authenticity, responding truthfully to interview questions. At the same time, your goal is to get to the next step, so you'll want to provide focused responses that showcase your skills, experience that fit with the job and the employer. Provide solid examples of solutions and accomplishments but keep your responses short and to the point. By preparing responses to common interview questions, you will ideally avoid long, rambling responses that bore interviewers.

Always attempt to keep your interview responses short and to the point. Finally, no matter how much an interviewer might bait you, never badmouth a previous employer, boss, or co-worker. The interview is about you — and making your case that you are the ideal candidate for the job.

7. Remember Body Language - Avoiding Bad Habits.

While the content of your interview responses is paramount, poor body language can be a distraction at best or a reason not to hire you at worst.

Effective forms of body language include: smiling, eye contact, solid posture, active listening and nodding.

Detrimental forms of body language include: slouching, looking off in the distance, playing with pen, fidgeting in chair, brushing back hair, touching face, chewing gum, mumbling

8. Ask Insightful Questions.

Studies continually show that employers make a judgment about an applicant's interest in the job by whether or not the interviewee asks questions. Even if the hiring manager was thorough in his or her discussions about the job opening and what is expected, you must ask a few questions. The smart job-seeker prepares questions to ask days before the interview, adding any additional queries that might arise from the interview. Here are some idea's of questions you could ask at the interview, please only use questions which are relevant to the role you are applying for.

- Can you please describe a typical day for someone in this position?
- What is the top priority of the person who accepts this job?
- What are the day-to-day expectations and responsibilities of this job?
- How will my leadership responsibilities and performance be measured? And by whom? How often?
- Can you describe the company's (or division's or department's) management style?

- Does the organisation support ongoing training and education for employees to stay current in their fields?
- What do you think is the greatest opportunity facing the organisation in the near future? The biggest threat?
- Is there a formal process for advancement within the organisation?
- What are the traits and skills of people who are the most successful within the organisation?
- What is the organisation's policy on transfers to other divisions or other offices?

9. Sell Yourself Throughout

An adage in interviewing says the most qualified applicant is not always the one who is hired — which means the hired candidate is often the job-seeker who does the best job in responding to interview questions and showcasing his or her fit with the job, department, and organisation. Some liken the job interview to a sales call. You are the salesperson — and the product you are selling to the employer is your ability to fill the organisation's needs, solve its problems, propel its success.

Finally, as the interview winds down, ask about the next steps in the process and the timetable the employer expects to use to make a decision about the position..

10. Thank Interviewer(s) in Person, by Email or by Letter.

As you have already seen from previous tips, common courtesy and politeness go far in interviewing; therefore, the importance of thanking each person who interviews you should come as no surprise. Start the process while at the interview, thanking each person who interviewed you. Writing thank-you emails and notes shortly after the interview will not get you the job offer, but doing so will certainly give you an edge over any of the other finalists who did not bother to send thank-you's.

Final Thoughts on Job Interview Success

Succeeding in job interviews takes research, practice, and persistence. The more effort you put into your interview preparation, the more success you will see in obtaining job offers — especially if you remember and follow these 10 job interviewing tips.

Wishing you the very best of luck and success.