

The Job Interview Process

The Job Interview can be the most important part of getting a job. Making a good first impression can make or break your chances of getting the position. Below are some tips to help you prepare for a successful interview.

- **Do Your Homework!** - Learn about the job and the company. What would you be doing? What do they do? Who are they? Being informed will prepare you for what to expect and any questions they may ask.
- **Come Prepared** - It is important to bring the necessary paperwork and any additional items that may help. These include but are not limited to...
 - Your résumé
 - A copy of the job application
 - Qualifications such as school records, certificates or special awards relevant to the position as evidence of your ability to do the job.
 - Written references
 - Samples of your work or hobbies that may be related to the job such as an art portfolio, articles or reports written by you, models, etc.
- **Know Where You Are Going** - You don't want to be late for the interview as it can leave a bad impression. Check the address of the business, make sure you know where you are going upon arrival, research where to park and do a trial run if need be. You should plan to arrive AT LEAST 10 minutes early for your interview.
- **Dress for Success** - Again, first impressions are everything. Decide what you are going to wear and lay it out the night before. Make sure you look clean and tidy. Avoid inappropriate clothing and dress for the occasion. It is often better to be overdressed than underdressed.
- **Plan Out What You Want to Say** - Practice answers to questions that employers may ask. Give brief clear answers. Don't rely on just yes or no answers. Ask someone to play the role of the interviewer.
- **Be Positive** - Know that some questions may create "stumbling blocks" (such as questions about lack of experience, gaps in employment, weaknesses, etc.) but answer them as positively as you can and turn your negatives into a positive.
- **Don't Be Afraid to Ask Questions** - It is ok to prepare a few questions for your future employer. Keep the questions job related, not about money or holidays.

Interviewing Dos and Don'ts

DO

- Go alone
- Be well groomed
- Arrive early
- Introduce yourself to the receptionist if there is one. Give your name, time of interview and the person you are meeting with
- Smile
- Shake hand firmly
- Make eye contact
- Listen carefully
- Speak clearly
- Think before you answer
- Answer honestly
- Use proper grammar
- Ask for clarification if need be
- Be positive
- Be polite and courteous to others you come in contact with
- Express your interest in the position and readiness to do the duties required
- Watch your body language
- Thank interviewer for their time and opportunity to be there
- Follow up with interviewer if you have not heard back in a reasonable amount of time (1-2 weeks)

DON'T

- Fidget, chew gum or fiddle
- Talk too fast
- Interrupt the interviewer
- Fold your arms
- Slouch in chair
- Say you will take anything - it makes you seem desperate
- Criticize your former employer
- Discuss personal or financial issues
- Beg for position
- Hang around after the interview
- Stress yourself out
- Provide false information
- Sit down until invited to do so
- Use inappropriate language or slang
- Overstress your qualifications
- Be disheartened if you don't get the job
- Leave your cell phone on

Sample Interview Questions

Below are some questions that you may be asked during a standard interview...

- What can you tell me about yourself?
- What made you apply for this job or why do you want this position?
- What do you consider your strengths, special skills or abilities?
- What qualifications do you have for this job?
- Have you had any experience in this line of work?
- What do you know about our company?
- Are you active in any clubs or organizations?
- What school subjects interested you?
- What are your hobbies or interests?
- What are your plans after graduation?
- What are your long-term career plans?
- Would you take on further training if it is required for this situation?
- How do you handle new situations or procedures?
- How do you feel about working on a team?
- Would you be willing to work overtime or weekends if needed?
- When can you start?
- What are your weaknesses or faults?
- Why do you have a gap in employment or frequent job change history?
- How do you work under pressure?
- Why should we consider you over other applicants?
- What are your goals and how are you preparing to achieve them?
- Would you like to ask any questions?

Below are some questions you could ask of the interviewer...

- What further study could I do?
- Where would I be working?
- Who would I be working with?
- What training would I be given?
- What work hours are available?
- What is proper work attire?
- What is the timeline and steps involved in the hiring process?
- Why is the position vacant?
- What are the pros and cons of this type of work?
- What do day-to-day responsibilities look like?
- What are the company's values?
- What does success look like in this position and how do you measure it?
- Are there opportunities for professional development and growth?
- Is there anything about my background or resume that make you question if I am a good candidate?