

INTERVIEW TIPS

Successful interviews start a long time before you actually sit down with a potential employer. Use these tips in your preparation. They'll help you present yourself as a strong candidate.

Do Your Research

Finding out more about the company and position helps you know if the job is a good fit for you. It also helps you answer an interviewer's questions and create informed questions for you to ask the interviewer. For your research, you should consult:

- The company website
- Newspaper and magazine articles (perform a search of the company on Google News)
- Employees at the company whom you know
- Job descriptions
- Career fairs
- For undergrads: your campus career center, counselors and professors

Create Your Personal 60-Second Commercial

At the beginning of every interview, there's an opportunity for you to tell the interviewer why you're excited about the interview. Think of it as a short commercial where you are the product that you're trying to sell. Your commercial should:

- Thank the person for the opportunity to interview.
- Tell them why you're excited about the position and the company.
- List three or four things that make you ideal for the position.
- Tell them that you look forward to sharing more about yourself during the interview.

Build Power Stories

Résumés share skills and abilities on paper. Power stories share them during the interview process. A power story is simply a 60-second example of your accomplishments and strengths. You should develop four or five stories for interviews. They should explain the situation you faced, explain the action you took and highlight the results. Practice telling these stories so that they sound natural once you're relating them in an interview.

Prepare Questions

Asking questions in an interview shows that you're interested in a company and a position. Create a list of questions that you're generally interested in having answered. These might include:

- What are the responsibilities of the position?
- What does a typical day look like for a person in this position?
- What kind of training would I get for this position?
- How would you describe the company's culture?
- What's the best thing about the company?

Before the Interview

- Dress neatly and appropriately. Don't dress too casually. Leave your jeans and tennis shoes at home.
- Have a pen and notebook with you so you can write down important things during the interview.
- Arrive fifteen minutes early.

During the Interview

- Smile and make eye contact all the way through your interview.
- Listen carefully.
- Share your power stories enthusiastically.
- Ask your questions after the interviewer has finished asking their questions.
- Thank the interviewer before you leave.
- Ask about timing when it comes to their making a decision.

- Get their business card.

After the Interview

Send a thank you note to the interviewer within 48 hours. Then, reflect on your interview and think about how you could improve your interviewing skills. Ask yourself a few questions:

- Who interviewed me? What was their role?
- What reaction did they seem to have to me?
- What was my overall impression of the interview?
- What did I do well?
- What would I do differently next time?
- What did I say that seemed to impress the interviewer?
- What are the duties of the job?
- Could I see myself in this position at this company?