

# INTERVIEW TIPS

## Preparing for Your Interview



Always research the company you are interviewing with. This will give you the knowledge you need to frame your skillsets for their business. Some important facts to know:

- Names and roles of key people in the organization.
- Major products or services.
- Company size in terms of sales and employees.
- Additional locations.
- Organizational structure.
- Major competitors.
- View of the company by clients, suppliers and competitors.
- Latest local or national news reports on the company or news that may affect it.



Your interview attire should make you look like you would fit in at your prospective employer's office. When in doubt, dress conservatively.

- Traditional business attire means a dark, conservative suit and white, pressed dress shirt or a conservative dress.
- Ties should be silk and coordinate well with the suit. Avoid flashy patterns.
- Hair should be clean and well-groomed.
- Avoid loud jewelry, too much makeup or excessively long fingernails. Nail polish should be a subtle color.
- Avoid wearing too much cologne or perfume.
- Shoes should be polished and coordinate.

## During the Interview

### The Basics

- Bring multiple, recruiter-approved copies of your resume.
- Dress professionally.
- Arrive at the office on time.
- Introduce yourself in a courteous manner.
- Maintain a pleasant demeanor or smile throughout the interview process.
- Take notes.
- Read company materials while you wait.
- Have a firm handshake.
- Listen intently.
- Smile, nod and give nonverbal feedback.
- Ask about the next step in the process.
- Ask about the job responsibilities. Mention these in your answers.
- Answer the questions asked.
- Keep responses short and to the point.
- Don't use "I" too often, unless you are interviewing for a technical position.
- Don't speak negatively about current or past employers, bosses or coworkers.
- Thank the interviewer sincerely.
- Write a thank-you letter to the interviewer(s).

### What to Ask

#### THE HR MANAGER

- Are employees encouraged to express ideas and concerns?
- What do employees like best and least about the company?
- What is the rate of employee turnover?
- How large is the department where the opening exists?
- Why is the position open?
- Does the job require much travel?
- What are the chances of being relocated?
- What type of training do new employees receive?
- How often are performance reviews given?
- Who determines raises and promotions?
- What are the long-term possibilities for employees who perform above expectations?
- What employee benefits does the company offer?

#### PROSPECTIVE SUPERVISOR

- What would be my primary responsibilities?
- What would I be expected to accomplish in the first 6 months on the job? In the first year?
- What are some of the department's ongoing and anticipated special projects?
- How much contact does the department and staff have with management?

#### PROSPECTIVE CO-WORKER

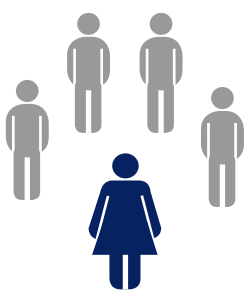
- What do you like best/least about working for this company?
- Can you describe a typical workday in this department?
- Do you feel free to express your ideas and concerns?
- What are the possibilities for professional growth and promotion?

At the end of the interview ask when you can expect a decision.

### Be Observant

- Do other employees seem happy?
- Are the employees helpful?
- Are employees enthusiastic about their work?
- Are employees enthusiastic about the organization?
- Do you feel welcome?
- Are you comfortable with the people?
- Do you like the facilities?
- Are you comfortable with the management style?
- Does this seem like a good place to work?

## A Second Interview



A panel, or group, interview is common during a second interview. Companies may arrange for candidates to meet with several staff members simultaneously. Job candidates must be able to:

- Demonstrate awareness of the company and its goals.
- Elaborate on his or her resume.
- Make good eye contact - first with the panelist who asks a question, and then with the other panelists.

The second interview is typically held at the employer's site, so you may have to make travel arrangements. You should definitely gather the following information:

- Name, title, business address and phone number of whomever is coordinating your trip/travel arrangements.
- Complete details about your travel and accommodation arrangements, including dates, times and locations. If you will be staying at a hotel, ask the trip coordinator whose name your room is under.
- Any necessary documents or paperwork, i.e. plane tickets, hotel reservations, car rental slip, etc.
- A map or directions to your various destinations. For example, if you are flying to the employer's location, how will you get from the airport to hotel and hotel to interview?
- A schedule detailing where you should be, when you should be there, and who you should ask for upon your arrival.
- Information on what expenses will be covered by the employer and what documentation you will need to submit for reimbursement and to whom.

## After the Interview

### Send a Thank You Note

Not only is sending a thank you note good manner, it keeps you top of mind and gives you another chance to underscore your interest in and suitability for the position. It also provides an opportunity to showcase your writing skills and attention to detail. If you forgot to mention or bring something with you to the interview, a thank you note is the perfect time to submit it. Below are some tips for writing a professional thank you note:



- State your appreciation.
- Express your interest in employment.
- Summarize your qualifications.
- Add a final "thank you" and indicate if you plan to contact the person again and when.
- Always address the letter to a specific person.
- If you were interviewed by more than one person, either send a separate note to each person or send a single note to a key person for distribution. When sending more than one note, tailor the message to each recipient.
- Send the note as soon after the interview as possible, preferably the same day.
- You can either type a letter or handwrite a note. Make sure that your handwriting is clear and legible.
- In the event you do not get the job, use the thank you note to express your appreciation for being considered and your interest in future opportunities.

After an interview, it is important to update your recruiter. Call your recruiter to debrief and take inventory of how the interview went. If you know that you are not interested in the position, tell your recruiter immediately.