

## TIPS FOR EXCEPTIONAL INTERVIEWING

The job market can be very competitive. Be sure to follow these tips to stay ahead of your competition...

**Be Prepared.** Go to your interview with copies of your references and resume as well as paper and pen so you can take notes.

**Listen.** Listening is one of the most important interviewing skills.

## COMMON INTERVIEW MISTAKES

These tips will help you to safely navigating common interview mistakes:

**Communication: Don't frustrate your interviewer with too much OR too little communication.** Don't over do it but at the same time make sure you answer questions thoroughly.

**Slang: Leave it on the Street.** Make sure that the language you choose is professional and articulate.

**Dishonesty: Little Lies Leave a Big Impression.** Building trust during the interview is critical.

**Attitude: Confusing an Interview with an Interrogation.** An interview is a business conversation in which both people ask and respond to questions.

**Skirting the Question: Making a So-Called Weakness a Positive.**

If you are asked to give an example of a challenge/weakness simply highlight a skill that you wish to improve upon and steps you are taking to address it. Interviewers care more about how you handle the question than the content.

**Turn it OFF: Cell Phones.** A ringing cell phone is not appropriate for an interview.

## INTERVIEW CHECKLIST

### Before the Interview

- Confirm the time, date and location (including directions) of the interview.
- Do your homework - research the interviewer, position and company.
- SLEEP! Get enough rest the night before.
- Review your notes and resume.
- Prepare answers to frequently asked questions.
- Prepare insightful questions to ask the interviewer.
- Pull together examples of your successes at work.
- Be prepared for the unexpected – meeting more people or different types of questions.
- Bring extra resumes and work samples.
- How do you look? Dress appropriately, get a haircut and manicure, shine your shoes.
- Arrive 10-15 minutes early to observe the work environment.

### During the Interview

- Greet the interviewer by name (pronounced correctly).
- Offer a firm handshake and maintain eye contact.
- Be enthusiastic and remember to smile.
- Use your resume as a guide of your skills and experience.
- Site concrete examples that illustrate your skills.
- Emphasize your qualifications.
- Speak positively about co-workers and employers.

### Closing the Interview

- Summarize your qualifications.
- Emphasize your interest.
- Thank the interviewer for the opportunity.

### After the Interview

- Take notes regarding your impressions of the interview, the job and the company.
- Debrief the interview as soon as possible with family, friends or a professional. What went well and what needs work?
- Write a thank-you letter. Show it to a friend, family member or professional for comments first.
- If offered the job, take time to evaluate it before accepting or rejecting.

# INTERVIEW SURVIVAL GUIDE

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## FIVE STRATEGIES FOR INTERVIEW SUCCESS

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### 1. Know About The Company.

Research the company – including its history, staff, and leadership. Learn more from the company's website as well as the internet.

### 2. Understand The Position You Are Applying For.

Get a full job description, know the application process as well as any other information you can find, such as who is on the search committee, who you would report to, and a general salary range and associated benefits.

### 3. Prepare Your Responses to Questions.

Interviewers ask questions designed to explore aspects of a candidate, ranging from work principles to preferred managing styles, rather than facts such as work history. Be truthful, keep your answers brief and try your best to cover up any nervousness or anxiety you might be feeling.

### 4. Prepare Your Own Questions About the Company/Position.

Failing to have questions for your interviewer indicates you are not interested. Questions about the corporate structure or what a typical day in the position looks like are appropriate. However as a general rule avoid questions on salary and benefits in the first interview.

### 5. Develop Strong References.

Call your references beforehand and tell them what position you are applying for and why and who will be contacting them.

## FIRST IMPRESSIONS

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It is estimated that first impressions are made in the first 27 seconds! Make sure to smile, keep eye contact, smile and have a firm handshake when greeting your interviewer.

### DRESSING FOR THE JOB INTERVIEW

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**Clothing:** Dos: A classic pants or skirt suit or a simple dress with a jacket is best. Choose a classic color such as navy, black, tan or gray. Make sure that your shoes are in good condition and shined. Dress in a manner somewhat higher than the position calls for but do not attempt to out-dress everyone.

Don'ts: Avoid wearing clothes that are tight, revealing or trendy. This is not a time to be provocative or sexy and while it may be the latest fashion it is not appropriate for a professional interview.

**Personal Belongings:** Keep it manageable. Carry a briefcase or professional handbag to organize your paperwork.

**Hair:** Make sure that your style is clean, neat and professional.

**Fingernails:** Nails should be clean, groomed and trimmed. Avoid excessively long tips or colorful polish.

**Scents:** Do not wear perfume, too much of a good smell can be bad. Perfume has a tendency to be overpowering and many people are allergic.

**Tattoos & Piercings:** Cover tattoos if possible. Limit pierced jewelry to ears only and avoid flashy jewelry.

### Polished, Professional and Poised

are three elements that companies look for.

## TOP INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

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Be prepared to answer the following:

1. What is your ideal job and/or boss.
2. Why are you looking for a job? Why are you leaving your current position?
3. What experience sets you apart from other candidates?
4. Tell me about yourself.
5. What are your strengths and weaknesses?
6. Describe some of your most important career accomplishments.
7. What are your goals?
8. Describe a time when you were faced with a challenge and how you handled it.
9. What are your salary requirements?
10. Why are you interested in this position? Our company?
11. What would your former boss/colleagues say about you?
12. What are the best and worst aspects of your previous job?
13. What do you know about our company?
14. What motivates you? How do you motivate others?
15. Are you willing to relocate?

### Attitude & Personality

are critical in the interview!