

How to Ace Your Job Interview Part One

Job Interview Tips

Part One: Be Prepared

Congratulations! You've been invited to a Job Interview!

That is a tremendous step toward the objective of getting an offer!

Here are my basic ideas on interviewing. You may not be able to apply all of these ideas in every case, but if you can get the essential concepts down and work them into your interview, your success rate (offers presented) will increase.

First things first:

Be Prepared.

- Learn all you can about the company in advance. Review the company website. Do internet searches on the company and see what is being written external to the company. If the company is publicly held, see what the investment community has to say.
- Think of intelligent questions that show you did your homework and are interested in the company and its direction. Focus on big picture macro issues that are relative to the company. Be ready to ask these questions when the time comes. Don't ask micro self-centered questions such as days off, dress code, etc.
- Know where the interview location is. If you have never been to that location, or at least in the general vicinity, you might try making a dry run ahead of time. Figure out ahead of time where you will park, etc. Being late for an interview does not make the best first impression.
- Try to learn as much as you can about who will be in the interview. You can ask the person who sets up the interview if they have an itinerary for you. Some companies throw together a panel of interviewers at the last

minute, so you may not always be able to get every detail. If you have the names of the people that will be in the interview, go to LinkedIn to learn about them. Know where they came from prior to this company, and how long they have been at the company. What groups do they belong to on LinkedIn?

- Bring something to write on, a pen, and a copy of your resume. You will need these in the interview.
- Be ready to answer some of the standard basic questions such as “Why are you making a change?” “Why do you want to work here?”

What to wear for an interview.

You get once chance to make a first impression.

Don't let what you wear to an interview be a distraction to you, or to your audience. At a minimum, you should at least dress the way the people at your prospective employer dress when they are meeting their clients.

That may or may not mean a suit. In some cases a suit can work against you. If you are interviewing at a highly technical or creative company where they ordinarily wear jeans or even shorts, a suit may create a silent barrier that could be uncomfortable for everyone. If the environment where you will be working is more “corporate” and conservative, then a suit may be in order. At a minimum, for guys: dress slacks and button down shirt. If you have a blazer or sport coat and are comfortable wearing it, then do so. Same goes for a tie. Some guys have a lot of trouble wearing a tie. It chokes them, makes their face turn red, or makes them sweat. That would be distracting. If you don't wear a tie, make sure you wear an undershirt. And I like a button down collar for a neater look.

For ladies: same general idea. Common sense should dictate what is appropriate as far as neckline and skirt length (and yes, pants are fine

too!). Just don't make the mistake of trying to dress provocatively. I have seen that fail every time.

Small details: do you need a haircut? When your shoes were last shined?

Tattoos? Cover them. Piercings? Remove them.

Be on time – but not too early. As I mentioned previously, make sure you know where you are going and where you will park. Plan ahead. Arrive 10 minutes early and be prepared to wait patiently. Your interviewer may or may not be as prompt as you. Do not arrive really early, as in 30 minutes early. If you do, ask the receptionist not to call your contact until 10 minutes ahead of the interview time. Arriving that early can be off putting to someone with a busy schedule.