



## **Interview Preparation**

The job interview is a crucial part of your job search as it's an opportunity for the employer to figure out if you are right for the job. This page will provide you with information to prepare for your job interview in enabling a positive and lasting impression.

### **Preparing for the interview**

**Company research** is a critical part of interview preparation. It is to your advantage to research the job and the organization before you attend a job interview. At your job interview you may be asked what you know about the company. It is a very common interview question, which you should be able to answer in some detail. By asking this simple question, the interviewer is assessing your ability to prepare for an event (in this case – your job interview). Background research requires motivation, time and planning. Answering the question with a well researched answer will impress the interviewer and provide a level of your research skills and abilities. It will enhance better confidence in the interview if you know some detail about the company and the position you're applying for.

The best way to do your company research is to ask more questions from your Recruiter or perform a search of the company on the Internet. This might include researching:

- Any current events/news that relate to the organization or industry
- The organization's goals and objectives
- The history of the company
- What does the organization do - The Products or Services
- Who are the customers/clients
- The Reputation of the company
- Vacancies available
- Awards & Achievements
- Current ongoing or Future projects



If you are being interviewed for a relatively senior position, your research should be broad enough to include other factors such as:

- Corporate background
- Current and target customers
- Industry overview
- Business market share
- Competitors and competing products
- Stock prices
- Financial information
- Competitive advantages

## Analyze the Job

- Take time to analyze the Job Description and what the company is seeking in a candidate.
- Understand the skills, knowledge, professional and personal qualities that are required by the employer and are critical for success in the job.
- Create a list of up to 10 assets, including skills, certifications, experiences, professional qualifications, abilities, computer skills, and knowledge bases.
- Ensure your assets correlate directly with the skills and abilities required by the company.
- Prior to the interview, review your list, and the job requirements to be ready to share with the interviewer.

## Practice Interviewing

Take time to practice answering interview questions which you will possibly be asked during a job interview will give you a framework for your responses and help calm your nerves.

- Prepare a succinct, clear answer to each of the questions in the interview questions section.
- Practice answering questions with a friend, or in front of a mirror. Get your friend to give you constructive criticism on your speaking style, mannerisms, and poise.
- Make sure you don't script all your answers – you'll sound as though you're reading cue cards!



## Practice Interview Etiquette

- Greet the receptionist, your interviewer, and everyone you meet politely.
- Watch your body language – This begins with a smile, a firm handshake and make eye contact as you articulate your points.
- During the interview, relax and lean forward a little towards the interviewer so you appear interested and engaged. Do not lean back or slouch in your chair to avoid looking too casual and relaxed. Keep your feet on the floor and your back against the lower back of the chair.
- Avoid chewing gum, or fidgeting with jewelry or your hair.

## Dress for success

Professional business clothes are always appropriate, regardless of the type of job you are interviewing for. First impressions are extremely important in the interview process and it should be a great one. Refer to the guidelines and tips provided in the Dress Code section for more information.

## Be punctual and Get Directions

- Always arrive approximately 15 minutes early. Find out ahead of time where you are going and how long it will take to get there.
- Use Google Maps to get directions. Program your GPS to find the best route to the company.
- Call for exact directions in advance, Leave extra time for any traffic, parking, or unpredictable events.
- Drive or travel the route a day or two ahead before the interview. Confirm how often the buses run. Have a back-up plan.
- If you are running late, call right away and notify your Recruiter or Person In-charge.
- Give yourself the time to read your résumé one more time, to catch your breath, and to be ready for the interview.



## **Be organized - What to Bring to a Job Interview**

Carry a portfolio with extra copies of your resumes and have the names and phone numbers of references, in case the employer asks. Also, bring a list of questions for the employer. You may refer to your list of questions to be sure you've gathered the information you need in order to make a decision. Do not be preoccupied with taking notes during the interview.

## **Know yourself**

You will make the interview process easier for the employer if you volunteer relevant information about yourself. Think about how you want to present your strengths, experiences, education, work style, skills, and goals. Be prepared to supplement all your answers with examples that support the statements you make. It is also a good idea to review your resume with a critical eye and identify areas that an employer might see as limitations or want further information. Think about how you can answer difficult questions accurately and positively, while keeping each answer brief.

## **Be positive & Let your personality shine.**

Never say anything negative about past experiences, employers, or courses and professors. Always think of something positive about an experience and talk about that. You should also be enthusiastic. If you are genuinely interested in the job, let the interviewer know that, do not be afraid to show it. Employers want passionate employees, be yourself and always keep it professional.

## **Save discussion of salary for later**

Find out as much as you can before the interview about the salary levels for the position you are seeking. Do not bring up the issue of salary during the first interview unless the interviewer asks about your salary expectations.



## **After-interview notes**

After the interview, take time to write down the names and titles (check spelling) of all your interviewers, your impressions, remaining questions, and any information that may influence your decision to accept a position with the organization.

## **Always follow up**

You should write a thank you note within 48 hours after an interview, even if the interview (or the interviewer) was not productive and/or you are not interested in the position. It is important to say thank you for the time the interviewer spent with you. This letter should be brief.