

Preparing for the Interview

Preparation is essential to remaining calm under pressure and is the first step toward a successful interview. Here are some tips:

- Organize the night before. Your interview clothing, briefcase and portfolio should all be prepared. Make time for a good night's rest.
- Know the exact place and time of the meeting, the interviewer's full name (including correct pronunciation), and his or her title.
- Research the company through the Internet or library to learn pertinent facts such as annual sales revenue, principal lines of business and locations.
- Be prepared to ask questions of the hiring manager during the interview. Base these questions on your research to show that you've done your homework.
- Look your professional best. In most situations, business attire in a neutral color works well. Be conservative in your use of fragrance, cosmetics and jewelry.

Interviewing Do's:

- Arrive on time or a few minutes early
- Greet the interviewer by last name if you are sure of the pronunciation. If not, ask the employer to repeat it.
- Wait until you are offered a chair before sitting. Sit upright, and look alert and interested at all times. List carefully and respond succinctly and articulately.
- Early in the meeting, try to get the interviewer to describe the job and the duties to you so you can focus your responses on your background, skills and accomplishments that relate to the position.
- Be sincere. Note achievements such as original concepts you developed, projects you managed and websites you produced.

Interviewing Don'ts:

- Don't answer with a simple "yes" or "no". Explain whenever possible.
- If you don't understand a question - or need a moment to think about it - say so. Never pretend to know something or someone when you don't know.
- Don't make negative remarks about present or former employers. When explaining why you left, communicate your rationale professionally.
- Don't inquire about salary, vacations, benefits, bonuses or retirement on the initial interview. If the interviewer asks what salary you want, give a range based on your research of the job market, but indicate that you're more interested in the opportunity for continued learning and professional development than in a specific salary.

How to Dress for an Interview

By: Alison Doyle

The first impression you make on a potential employer is the most important one. The first judgment an interviewer makes is going to be based on how you look and what you are wearing. That's why it's always important to dress professionally for a job interview, even if the work environment is casual.

You'll want that first impression to be not just a good one, but, a great one. The candidate dressed in a suit and tie is going to make a much better impression than the candidate dressed in scruffy jeans and a t-shirt.

How to dress for an Interview

Men's Interview Attire

- Suit (solid color - navy or dark grey)

- Long sleeve shirt (white or coordinated with the suit)
- Belt
- Tie
- Dark socks, conservative leather shoes
- Little or no jewelry
- Neat, professional hairstyle
- Limit the aftershave
- Neatly trimmed nails
- Portfolio or briefcase

Women's Interview Attire

- Suit (navy, black, or dark grey)
- The suit skirt should long enough so you can sit down comfortably
- Coordinated blouse
- Conservative shoes
- Limited jewelry (no dangling earrings or arms full of bracelets)
- No jewelry is better than cheap jewelry
- Professional hairstyle
- Neutral pantyhose
- Light make-up and perfume
- Neatly manicured clean nails
- Portfolio or briefcase

What Not to Bring to the Interview

Gum, Cell phone, Ipod, Coffee or soda, If you have lots of piercing, leave some of your rings at home (women: earrings only, men: **NO** earrings is a good rule) and Cover tattoos

Interview Attire Tips

- Before you even think about going on an interview, make sure you have appropriate interview attire and everything fits correctly
- Get your clothes ready the night before, so you don't have to spend time getting them ready on the day of the interview.
- If your clothes are dry clean only, take them to the cleaners after an interview, so they are ready for next time. Polish your shoes.
- Bring a breath mint and use it before you enter the building

Top 10 Interview Questions

Many job seekers stumble through interviews as if the questions are coming out of left field. But many interview questions are to be expected. Study this list of questions and plan your answers ahead of time. Be ready to deliver your answers with confidence.

What Are Your Weaknesses?

Handle it by minimizing your weakness and emphasizing your strengths. Stay away from personal qualities and concentrate on professional traits.

Why Should We Hire You?

Summarize your experience

Why Do You Want to Work Here?

The interviewer is listening for an answer that indicates you've given this some thought and are not sending out resumes just because there is an opening

What Are Your Goals?

Talk about short-term and intermediate goals rather than locking yourself into the distant future.

Why Did You Leave (Or Why Are You Leaving) Your Job?

If you're unemployed, state your reason for leaving in a positive context. If you are employed, focus on what you want in your next job.

When Were You Most Satisfied in Your Job?

What motivates you. If you can relate an example of a job or project when you were excited, the interviewer will get an idea of your preferences.

What Can You Do for Us That Other Candidates Can't?

What make you unique? This will take an assessment of your experiences, skills and traits. Summarize concisely.

What Are Three Positive Things Your Last Boss Would Say About You?

It's time to pull out your old performance appraisals and boss's quotes. This is a great way to brag about yourself through someone else's words.

What Salary Are You Seeking?

It is to your advantage if the employer tells you the range first. Prepare by knowing the going rate in your area, and your bottom line or walk-away point.

If You Were an Animal, Which One Would You Want to Be?

Interviewers use this type of psychological question to see if you can think quickly. What type of personality would it take to get the job done? What impression do you want to make?