



Successful Interview Strategies

DISCOVER YOUR PURPOSE | CREATE YOUR DESTINY

CAREERSERVICES

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The Interview Process

The interview is one of several sales tools you will use in the job search process. Some consider it to be the most important part, for in many instances, it is your only chance to make a favorable impression upon an employer and it could very well be the deciding factor as to whether or not you are offered employment.

Purpose

The interview serves four main purposes. For one, it gives the employer an opportunity to learn about you, your qualifications and experience, and to decide if you are the best person for the job. Second, it gives you, the job seeker, a chance to learn about the company, the position, its duties and expectations, and to convince the employer that you are the right person for their organization. Third, it's a screening tool for future interviews and last, it's the point where hiring decisions are made.

Phases

The interviewing process can be intimidating if you don't know what to expect. While each interview will differ, all interviews include three phases: before, during and after.

Phase #1: Before

Just like other important tasks, preparing for an interview is very essential to getting hired, yet it is often neglected. Here are some suggestions to help you get ready for your interview.

1. *Know yourself* - Think about how your interests, skills, education, experience, and values fit in with the type of organization and position for which you are being interviewed.
2. *Know the employer* - Researching the company, the interviewer, and the position enables you to ask well informed questions. It is important for you to know what type of business the company engages in, the working conditions, duties and salary range of the desired position, the mission, goals and vision of the company, and the full name and title of your interviewer.

There are many resources you can use to aid you in your research. Most employers publish literature, like annual reports, brochures and fact sheets, as well as, a website that describes their organization and list employment opportunities. Either way, it's important for you to secure information on an employer before you interview. Doing so will help you to target your skills and compatibility, as well as, decrease your level of anxiety.

3. *Appearance* - Be sure to get a good nights rest before the interview. When getting dressed, your appearance should be clean and neat. Experts recommend that you dress like you think your interviewer would dress, but cleaner. Make sure your hair is neat, teeth and nails are clean, breath is fresh, clothes are wrinkle free, and shoes are polished. Refrain from wearing loud colors, low cut blouses, short skirts, clanging jewelry, excessive make-up and cologne.
4. *Timing* - Time is always a major factor in getting prepared for an interview; therefore, it is important to know the exact time and location of your interview, the route you plan to take, and how long it will take for you to arrive. If you are unsure about these things, you may want to make a trial run a few days prior to your scheduled interview. The day of the interview, you should arrive 15

minutes early. This allows you time to slip into the restroom to freshen up, look yourself over, and correct any grooming problems that your travel may have caused.

5. *Other Reminders* – Always go to interviews alone. You should leave children, buddies, significant others and spouses at home. Carry with you at least two ink pens and a notepad. Take money for parking and lunch. Take copies of your resume, military records, reference letters, and any source of identification.

Phase #2: During

The typical interview will last 45 minutes, although some may be longer. A typical structure includes the greeting or opening, small talk, questions and answers, and the closing.

The Opening

The typical interview starts before you even get into the inner sanctum. It begins in the outer office, so it is important that you are pleasant and courteous to everyone you meet. While waiting for your interviewer to arrive, remember to remain relaxed. Occupy your mind by looking over your resume, notes and any company literature. Refrain from smoking, chewing gum, slouching in your seat, fidgeting with your nails, hair, lipstick, tie or clothes.

Small Talk

The minute you are identified by the interviewer, you are being evaluated. You are expected to shake the interviewer's hand upon being introduced, so don't be afraid to extend your hand first... this shows assertiveness. Always refer to the interviewer by their name, smile and look them straight in the eyes. For example, "Hello Dr. Charles, I am Patrice Jones." You are now face to face with your interviewer who is in the position to notice your posture, your dress, any annoying mannerisms, and your nervousness. Remain standing until you are directed where to sit and where you may be able to hang your coat. While sitting, keep a good posture, place your feet firmly on the floor and put your notepad in your lap and your belongings on the floor next to your chair.

Many interviewers will begin the interview with some small talk. Topics range from the weather to sports and will rarely focus on anything that brings out your skills. Nonetheless, you are still being evaluated. Interviewers are trained to evaluate candidates on many different points. They may be judging how well you communicate on an informal basis. This means you must do more than just smile and nod.

Questions and Answers

The main part of the interview starts when the interviewer begins discussing the organization. As the interviewer turns to talk about your qualifications, be prepared to engage in a back and forth conversation for about 15 to 30 minutes. Your interviewer will lead the conversation, so listen carefully and answer all questions in a brief, concise manner. Relate all of your answers directly to the job and your skills and remember to mention examples and results of your past works. Be sure to use standard English and avoid using slang and expressions such as, "uh," "you know," "like," and etc. Speak in a clear, strong tone. Not too fast and not too slow.

When the interviewer asks, "Now do you have any questions?" it's important to have a few ready. Your questions should elicit positive responses from the employer and should bring out your interest in and knowledge of the organization. Don't be afraid to ask questions for this shows responsibility

and alertness. Well-thought-out and prepared questions show the employer that you are serious about the organization and that you've done your homework. Most employers find this impressive.

The Closing

The conclusion of the interview usually lasts five minutes and is very important. During this time the interviewer is assessing your overall performance. It is important to remain enthusiastic and courteous. Often the conclusion of the interview is indicated when the interviewer begins to rustle papers, looks at his/her watch, closes or packs up his/her belongings, stands up or simply states that he/she has all the information needed. When any of these things occur, you should briefly reiterate your interest in the position, stand, shake the interviewer's hand and thank them by name for their time and for the opportunity to interview for the job. Smile and say goodbye.

Phase #3: After

You've walked out of the door and the interview is now over, right? WRONG!!! You now need to jot down any important notes about the job and you also need to follow-up on your interview by sending a thank you card, note or e-mail to the person or persons who interviewed you. A phone call is also a good way to follow up on your interview for it shows that you are truly interested in the position. After the interview you may also want to evaluate your interview experience. Ask yourself, what would you do differently? Where can you improve? What were your impressions of the company? What can you expect next? And are you still interested in the position?

In Summary

Because of its importance, interviewing requires advance preparation. Only you will be able to positively affect the outcome. You must be able to compete successfully with the competition for the job you want. In order to do that, be certain you have considered the kind of job you want, why you want it, and how you qualify for it. You also must face reality: Is the job attainable?

Interview Types

The interview is the last segment in the job search process. Employers use interview styles that assist in revealing those attributes of the candidate that are most essential for the job and most beneficial to the organization. Becoming familiar with different types of interviews will give you a chance to be a better prepared candidate.

Here are descriptions of the most common types of interviews:

Exploratory / Informational

Direct meetings set up with selected people to obtain “insider” information about an industry, occupation, organization, or training program. They are a method of career exploration and a way of discovering jobs that are not publicized. They are considered one of the best avenues for building and maintaining a professional network of contacts.

Panel

Two or more people interview you simultaneously, usually taking turns asking questions. Used by employers to get different opinions about the candidate.

Group

Takes place with other candidates seeking the same job. Used by employers to predict how well the candidates interact with others and test for communication skills. It can last from two hours to a day or longer and may include a group problem-solving exercise.

Stress

This interview intentionally creates and promotes discomfort. The purpose is to test the candidate to see how she/he reacts under pressure and in difficult situations.

Behavioral

Behavior-based interviews consist of questions that enable the interviewer to know how you previously reacted or behaved in certain types of situations. Candidates are asked to respond to questions that require examples of previous activities and behaviors. This format helps an employer to predict future performance based upon past experiences.

Telephone

Used as an initial screening method to determine if a full interview is warranted. Days and times are pre-arranged.

Second

Usually referred to as a “site visit” and is most often conducted by the first interviewer’s boss or someone else in management. The purpose of this interview is to see whether you fit in with the organization’s culture and if you really want to work for this employer.

Meal

This type of interview takes place over a meal to test the candidate’s ability to make conversation and use proper etiquette. It is more relaxed and it allows for more lengthy answers; however, be mindful

that you are still being judged. Follow good restaurant etiquette, select foods that are easy to eat, never drink alcohol, and always keep focused on the conversation.

Testing/Performance

In this interview, the employer's purpose is to see how you handle yourself, so you will be asked to perform tasks associated with a job in a limited amount of time. Remember to ask for clear directions, follow them exactly, proofread your answers and do your best.

Cyber

This type of interview takes about 30 minutes to complete. One variation is for the computer to ask you a series of questions about your background, work history, and career goals. A second variation is a toll-free call requiring you to answer up to 25 questions on a push-button phone.

Screening

The initial interview designed to narrow the pool of acceptable candidates. Often conducted by a member of the Human Resources department to determine if the candidate should be referred to the next step in the process.

Job Fair

A brief opportunity to meet with the prospective employer and get information about the company.

Situation

Several situations are described and the candidate is asked to respond to them. Used by employers to determine decision making skills and judgment.

Fly-In/On-Site

When seeking employment that would require you to relocate, most employers will pay for you to travel to visit them for what is referred to as the on-site interview. Know in advance who is paying and when the bills will be paid. Ask the company to make the reservations. Pack your interview outfit and all of your interview materials in a carry-on bag. When you arrive, show interest in the city, as well as the position. Just because the employer paid for you to fly in, never arrive over confident, never assume the job is yours, and never carry on like the interview is an expense-paid vacation.

Researching Your Potential Employer

There are many important areas of preparation to deal with prior to the interview. One of the most important steps involves researching the company.

It's wise to begin researching weeks before your interview. You may find an overwhelming amount of information and you must be able to sort out the pertinent information and retain key facts. Additionally, it may be difficult to find some information and some digging will be required.

If you are interviewing with a number of different employers, it's smart to keep a file on each one. As you do more research, the file will help you keep facts organized, making the preparation easier.

Facts to Know About the Organization

Size of organization / Number of employees

Financial status / Growth outlook

Mission statement / goals / vision

Annual sales growth for past five years

Products / Services / Clients

Potential new products /services

Who are the competitors?

Is the company public or private? Local, national and/or international?

Characteristics of top management and their backgrounds

Public image / Reputation in the industry

How does it rank in the industry

Parent companies / Subsidiaries

Regional lifestyle / Cost of living

Geographical location of corporate headquarters / smaller offices

Organizational Structure

History of the organization

Recent significant accomplishments / Changes

Facts to Know about the Position

Details and functional description of the position

Name and correct spelling of the interviewer

Training program outline

Hiring Process (timing, evaluation criteria)

Benefits

Skills / qualifications needed for the job

Typical career / Promotional paths

Starting salaries / Compensation forms

Travel / Relocation expectations and policies

Information Sources Available

Researching a company can be done through a variety of sources.

Annual report

Employment brochure

Company website

Chamber of Commerce

Library

College's Career Center

Trade publications

Friends

Faculty

Finance and business section of local newspaper

Business / industry directories

Questions, Questions, Questions

Questions Asked by Employers

Tell me about yourself.

Why do you want to work for our organization?

Describe your ideal job.

What can you offer us?

What do you consider to be your greatest strengths?

What do you consider to be your greatest weakness?

Define success. Define failure.

Have you ever had any failures? What did you learn from them?

Name three accomplishments you are most proud of?

Who are your role models? Why?

How does your college education or work experience relate to this position?

What motivates you most in a job?

Have you ever had difficulty getting along with a former professor / supervisor / co-worker and how did you handle it?

Why should we hire you?

What do you know about our organization?

Where do you want to be in five years? Ten years?

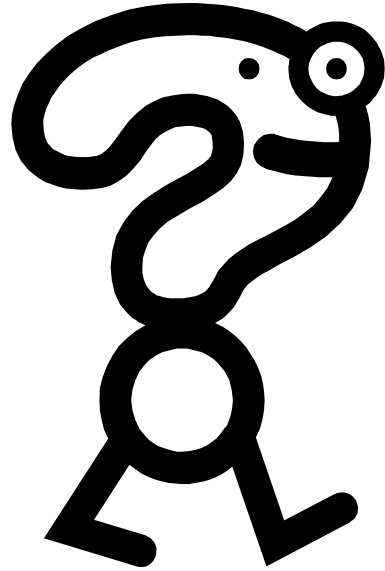
Why did you choose your major?

Why did you choose to attend your college or university?

In which campus activities did you participate? Why?

What did you enjoy most about your last employment? What did you enjoy the least?

Have you ever quit a job? Why?



Give an example of a situation in which you provided a solution to an employer.

Give an example of a time in which you worked under deadline pressure.

How do you think a former supervisor would describe your work?

How did you learn about us?

How many employers have you worked for during the last five years?

You seem to switch jobs a lot. Why?

Why are you looking to leave your current employer?

Do you plan to continue your education?

Give an example of any major problem you faced and how you solved it.

In your lifetime, what has been your greatest accomplishment? What did you learn from it?

What was your greatest failure? What did you learn from it?

Are you at your best when working alone or in a group?

Would you rather be in charge of a project or work as part of the team? Why?

What would you do if one supervisor told you to do something now and another supervisor told you to do it later?

What kind of salary are you looking for today?

What would your current employer say about you?

Are you willing to travel?

Will you relocate?

Have you ever been fired from a job? Why?

Do you have any questions for me?

What two or three things are most important to you in your job?



What the Interviewer is Seeking

Interviewer: Tell me about yourself.

You: Remember, this is a job interview, not a psychological or personal interview. The interviewer is interested in the information about you that relates to your qualifications for employment, such as education, work experiences and extracurricular activities.

Interviewer: Why do you want to work for our company / organization?

You: Not having an answer is a good way to get crossed off the candidate list, and is a common pet peeve on interviewers. Research the employer before your interview. Attempt to find out about the organization's products, locations, clients, philosophy, goals, previous growth record and growth plans, how they value employees and customers, etc.

Interviewer: What do you expect to be doing five years from now? Ten years from now?

You: The interviewer is looking for evidence of career goals and ambitions rather than specific descriptions. The interviewer wants to see your thought process and the criteria that are important to you. Your answer will tell the interviewer whether you are truly interested in the company and the position or if you are seeking this position for a temporary fix.

Interviewer: Why should I hire you?

You: Stress what you have to offer the employer, not how nice it would be to work there or what you want from the employer.

Questions You Should Ask Employers

What are you looking for in the person you will hire for the position?

Would you describe a typical work day and the things I'd be doing?

How will I be trained or introduced to the job?

How is this job important to the company – how does it contribute?

What are the department's goals for the year?

How many people work in your department? How many work for the company?

Who are the people I'd be working with and what do they do?

How would I get feedback on my performance?

If hired, who would I report to?

How does the company promote professional growth?

How often are performance reviews given?

Are salary adjustments geared to the cost of living or job performance?

What type of growth do you see for the organization in the next five years?

What do you look for in people that you promote?

Is this a new position or am I replacing someone?

What are the biggest challenges of the job?

What do you like best about your job / company?

What qualities are you looking for in the candidate who fills this position?

What skills are especially important for someone in this position?

Is there a lot of team / project work?

Where does this position fit into the organizational structure?

How much travel, if any, is involved in this position?

What are the challenges facing this company?

What is the next course of action?

When should I expect to hear from you or should I contact you?

Questions Not to Ask Employers

Not only should you know what questions to ask during the interview, but it is important to know what questions not to ask. You don't want to alienate the interviewer by putting him or her on the defensive.

Avoid the following areas:

1. Avoid asking questions that are answered in the company's annual report, employment brochure or on their website. Interviewers are familiar enough with their own information to recognize when you haven't done your homework. If some information in the literature is not clear to you, by all means ask for clarification.
2. Don't bring up salary or benefits in the initial interview. Most companies are very competitive and will offer similar salaries and benefits. The interviewer may choose to bring up the information, but you should not initiate the topic.
3. Avoid asking any personal questions or questions that will put the interviewer on the defensive. This includes questions such as the interviewer's educational background, marital status, past work experience and so on.
4. Don't ask questions that have already been answered during the interview. If you have prepared a list of questions and some of them have been addressed during the interview, do not repeat them unless you need clarification.

Illegal Interview Questions

(Source: University of Wisconsin Eau Claire Career Services Website)

What is an Illegal Interview Question?

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 makes discrimination on the basis of national origin, citizenship, age, marital status, disabilities, arrest record, military discharges, or personal information (such as height and weight) illegal. Any question that asks a candidate to reveal information about his or her national origin, citizenship, age, marital status, disabilities, arrest record, military discharges, or personal information is a violation of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

Which Questions ARE Still Legal?

If employers can phrase questions so that they directly relate to specific occupational qualifications, then the questions may be legitimate ones. Employers may also still ask general questions. For example, an interviewer may NOT ask your age in an interview, but the interviewer may ask if you are over the age of 18 (if being over the age of 18 is a requirement of the job). The reverse side of this sheet contains additional examples of illegal versus legal questions.

What Should I do if I am asked an Illegal Question?

If you are asked an illegal question during an interview, you have three basic alternatives.

1. You can answer the question

By answering the question, you may actually help your chances of getting the job, particularly if you give the “right” answer. Doing so, however, may convey to the interviewer that you are not familiar with illegal questions?

2. You can refuse to answer the question

You do have the right to not answer the illegal question. However, a flat refusal to answer may harm your chances of being hired for a position if the interviewer sees you as an uncooperative or stubborn person.

3. You can examine the intent behind the question

When an interviewer asks an illegal question, they are often trying to find out information about you that is not directly related to the job. It is often easy to infer what the interviewer is really trying to find out from an illegal question. A simple compromise to the problem is to respond to the question as it may apply to the job. For example, if the interviewer asks “are you a US citizen?” you may respond “that question is in violation of the law, but yes, I am authorized to work in the United

States.” This third choice shows the interviewer that you are both knowledgeable of the law and able to quickly compromise and solve problems.

4. Other alternatives

You may feel more comfortable with one of these choices (which are just as valid as the first three) for responding to an illegal interview question:

- Ignore the question and move on
- Ask how the question relates to your qualifications or the requirements of the job
- Walk out

Information on the Web about Illegal Interviewing Questions

<http://www.usatoday.com/careers/resources/interviewillegal.htm>

<http://jobsearch.about.com/od/interviewsnetworking/a/illegalinterv.htm>

Whatever alternative you chose depends on your personal preference. If you are asked an illegal question and you would prefer not to work for a company that asks such questions, then do not be afraid to refuse to answer the question and tell the interviewer why. Pointing out illegal questions may persuade the interviewer not to ask them of other candidates in the future.

Handling Illegal Questions

National Origin / Citizenship



Illegal:

Are you a U.S. citizen?

Where were you / your parents born?

What is your native tongue?

Date when you, your parents or spouse acquired U.S. citizenship.

Where were you born?

Legal:

Are you authorized to work in the United States?

What languages do you read/speak/write fluently?

(This questions is okay only if this ability is relevant to the performance of the job)

Statement by employer that if hired, you may be required to submit proof of authorization to work in the U.S.

Age

Illegal:

How old are you?

When did you graduate?

What's your birth date?

Require you to submit a birth certificate, naturalization or baptism record.

Other questions that tend to identify applicants 40-64 years of age.

Legal:

Are you over 18 years of age?

Can you, after employment, submit a work permit if under age 18?

Education

Illegal:

Date last attended high school.

Legal:

Your academic, vocational or professional education; schools attended

Marital Status / Family

Illegal:

What's your marital status?

With whom do you live?

Do you plan to have a family? When?

How many kids do you have?

What are your child-care arrangements?

With whom do you reside?

Do you live with your parents?

Name and address of a relative to be notified in case of accident or emergency.

What's your maiden name?

Legal:

Would you be willing to relocate if necessary?

Would you be able and willing to travel as needed for the job?

(This question is okay if it is asked of all applicants for the job)

Would you be able and willing to work overtime as necessary?

(This question is okay assuming it is asked of all applicants for the job.)

Names of your relatives already employed by this company.

Name and address of parent or guardian if you are a minor.

Name and address of a person to be notified in case of accident or emergency.

To help check prior employment, list any other names you used.

Affiliations

Illegal:

What clubs or social organizations do you belong to?

Do you attend religious services /or/ a house of worship?

Applicant may not be told "This is a Catholic / Protestant / Jewish / atheist organization.

Legal:

List any professional or trade groups or other organizations that you belong to that you consider relevant to your ability to perform this job.

Military

Illegal:

If you've been in the military, were you honorably discharged?

Legal:

In what branch of the Armed Forces did you serve?

What type of training or education did you receive in the military?

Personal

Illegal:

How tall are you?

How much do you weigh?

(Questions about height & weight are not acceptable unless minimum standards are essential for the safe performance of the job.)

Requiring you to affix a photograph to the application form, or provide a photograph after the interview but before hiring.

Legal:

Are you able to lift a 50-pound weight and carry it 100 yards, as that is part of the job?

Have you worked for this company under a different name?

Statement that photograph may be required after employment.

Disabilities

Illegal:

Do you have any disabilities?

Please complete the following medical history...

Have you had any recent or past illnesses or operations? If yes, list them and give dates when these occurred.

What was the date of your last physical exam?

How's your family's health?

When did you lose your eyesight? How?

Do you need an accommodation to perform the job?
(This question can be asked only after a job offer has been made.)

Questions as to receipt of workmen's compensation.

Legal:

Are you able to perform the essential functions of the job?
(This question is okay if the interviewer has thoroughly described the job.)

Can you demonstrate how you would perform the following job-related functions?

Statement by employer that all job offers are contingent on passing a physical examination.

As part of the hiring process, after a job offer has been made, you will be required to undergo a medical exam.

(Exam results must be kept strictly confidential, except medical / safety personnel may be informed if emergency medical treatment is required and supervisors may be informed about necessary job accommodations, based on exam results.)

Arrest Record

Illegal:

Have you ever been arrested?

Legal:

Have you ever been convicted of any crime? If so, when, where, and disposition of case?
(The crime named should be reasonably related to the performance of the job in question.)

Have you ever been convicted of a crime under another name?

Ten Rules of Interviewing

Before stepping into an interview, be sure to practice, practice, practice. To help with the interview process, keep the following rules in mind:

Keep your answers brief and concise. Unless asked to give more detail, limit your answers to two to three minutes per question.

Include concrete, quantifiable data. Refrain from talking in generalities. Include measurable information and provide details about specific accomplishments when discussing your strengths.

Repeat your key strengths three times. It's essential that you comfortably and confidently articulate your strengths. Explain how the strengths relate to the company's or department's goals and how they might benefit the potential employer.

Prepare five or more success stories. Make a list of your skills and key assets. Then reflect on past jobs and pick out one or two instances when you used those skills successfully.

Put yourself on their team. Ally yourself with the prospective employer by using the employer's name and products or services. For example, "As a member of _____, I would carefully analyze the _____ and _____." Show that you are thinking like a member of the team and will fit in with the existing environment. Your research will help you in this area.

Image is often as important as content. What you look like and how you say something are just as important as what you say.

Ask questions. The types of questions you ask and the way you ask them can make a tremendous impression on the interviewer. For this part of the interview, you should have a list of questions already prepared. If you don't have any questions prepared and you try to cover your mistake by asking a spur-of-the-moment question, chances are you have damaged your chances for a successful interview. Every question you ask should demonstrate your interest and confirm your knowledge of the organization. Don't ask questions just for the sake of asking questions - make sure it is information that you need.

Maintain a conversational flow. Use feedback questions at the end of your answers and use body language and voice intonation to create a conversational interchange between you and the interviewer.

Research the company, product lines and competitors. Simply being informed about an employer does not guarantee a successful interview unless you thoroughly research the company. Researching the company helps you to answer questions intelligently and to determine whether your goals will fit the promotional structures defined by that employer.

Keep an interview journal. As soon as possible, write a brief summary of what happened. Note any follow-up action you should take and put it in your calendar.

Dressing for an Interview

The first impression you make on a potential employer is the most important one. The first judgment a recruiter makes is going to be based on how you look and what you are wearing. The candidate dressed in a suit and tie or a suit and stockings is going to make a much better impression than the candidate dressed in jeans and a t-shirt. That's why it's always important to dress professionally for an interview. You'll want that first impression to be not just a good one. But, a GREAT one.

MEN'S INTERVIEW ATTIRE

SUIT

- Suit (solid color-navy, black, or dark grey)
- Jacket sleeves should end at your wrists
- Pants should be the appropriate length (not too long or too short)

SHIRT & TIE

- White, long-sleeved, button-down dress shirt
- Shirt sleeves should touch your wrists
- Do not roll up your sleeves
- Make sure it fits comfortably around your neck
- Be sure to wear an undershirt to control perspiration

SHOES, SOCKS & ACCESSORIES

- Belt to match color of shoes
- Silk tie that matches the suit color
- Do not wear ties with pictures of animal characters
- Dark, plain socks
- Socks should cover calves
- Conservative, polished dress leather shoes
- No sneakers, flip flops or boots
- No visible body piercing
- Remove all jewelry, including earrings
- Portfolio or briefcase

HAIR, PIERCINGS & TATTOOS

- Neatly trimmed beard or mustache
- Professional, well-groomed hairstyle
- Pull back long hair and long dreads
- Limit the aftershave or cologne
- Neatly trimmed nails
- Cover tattoos
- Well brushed teeth and fresh breath
- No gum or candy

WOMEN'S INTERVIEW ATTIRE

SUIT

- Suit (navy, black, or dark grey) OR
- Blazer with a blouse and skirt. Always wear a jacket
- The suit skirt length should be below the knee
- No night club attire
- No dress unless accented with a jacket
- Avoid "loud" patterns
- Pockets, darts, pleats, etc must lay flat

BLOUSE

- Coordinated cotton or silk blouse
- White or light colored
- No sleeveless or sheer blouses

SHOES, STOCKINGS & ACCESSORIES

- Conservative, neutral colored pantyhose
- Low-heeled, comfortable dress shoes
- No sneakers, flip flops or open-toed sandals
- Limited jewelry
- No dangling earrings or arms full of bracelets
- No visible body piercing beyond ear piercings
- Portfolio or briefcase rather than a purse

HAIR, PIERCINGS & TATTOOS

- Professional, well-groomed hairstyle
- Pull back very long hair and long dreads
- Light make-up and perfume
- Neatly manicured and clean nails
- Use neutral nail polish
- Cover tattoos
- Well brushed teeth and fresh breath
- No gum or candy

How to Ace Your Job Interview Checklist

Before

Done	Task
	Do you know exactly what you have to offer? Skills, qualifications, and abilities.
	Do you know the key points you want to emphasize? Accomplishments and goals.
	Do you know why you want the job? Can you say why you want it clearly?
	Have you researched the company? History, products, services, size, structure, etc.
	Have you researched the position? Qualifications, career paths, duties, and salary.
	Have you rehearsed answers to possible questions? Reasons why the company should hire you. Skills and experiences you bring to the position. Your strengths. Your weaknesses.
	Have you created a list of intelligent questions you want to ask the interviewer?
	Do you have extra copies of your resume and references?
	Do you have a pen and paper?
	Is your outfit appropriate and pressed?
	Are your shoes polished?
	Is your hair trimmed and styled in a professional manner?
	Do you have directions to the interview?
	Do you know where to park?
	Do you have money for tolls, parking, lunch, etc?

After

Done	Task
	Did you send a thank you card to everyone who participated in your interview?
	Did you jot down notes about the position, company, people you'd work with, etc?
	Have you considered what you would do differently for your next interview?
	Are you still interested in this position? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

Updated 1/2010