



HOW TO INTERVIEW SUCCESSFULLY

BEFORE THE INTERVIEW

1. Conduct research on the *Organization* and the *Position*:
 - products/services
 - how long has organization been in business
 - rate of growth
 - parent company, headquarters, plants, offices, stores
 - size of organization & structure
 - description of position
 - deadline for application
 - salary range of position
 - competitorsWhere to conduct research:
 - Library
 - Chamber of Commerce
 - Employees of the organization/Personnel Office
 - Personal contacts (family and friends)
 - Internet
 - College placement office
2. Go to the interview alone. When bringing friends, family, or children along, even though they may wait in the lobby, the employer may see reasons not to hire the candidate. An employer may believe the candidate lacks confidence, transportation, or childcare.
3. Return all calls and schedule the interview around employer's schedule.
4. Arrive at least 10-15 minutes early. If going to be late, call the interviewer.
5. Get directions to place of interview.
6. Gather all materials needed for interview: resume, reference sheet, transcripts, certificates, paper, pen, company information, interviewer's telephone number, directions, and questions to ask. (Include portfolio with artwork or writing samples.)

OPENING MOVES

1. Appearance is very important -- dress appropriately, professionally, and conservatively.
2. Dispose of chewing gum and cigarettes before entering the interviewer's office. Politely turn down food and drink.
3. Turn off cell phones and pagers.
4. Don't get annoyed or restless while waiting. Be very polite to the receptionist. He/she may have input into the hiring decision!
5. While waiting in the outer office, watch what goes on in the office and read the literature that is displayed.
6. Smile and give name distinctly when greeting the interviewer. Give a firm "web-to-web" handshake and repeat interviewer's name.
7. Do not expect the interviewer to stand up when entering the room and don't sit down until the interviewer has instructed.

DURING THE INTERVIEW

1. Let the interviewer lead the conversation: 20% is interviewer; 80% is applicant.
2. Keep referring to skills and achievements. Use specific examples from real situations. Specify results. Link everything to the job applying for.
3. Never beg for a job or be boastful. Convince the employer that education and skills match the job requirements. Everyone needs a job to pay bills; therefore, set skills apart from everyone else.
4. Watch posture and body language; sit up straight with both feet on the floor.
5. Maintain eye contact, it shows confidence and honesty.
6. Avoid using slang expressions and watch grammar usage and tone of voice.
7. Never criticize others, including former employer, even if justified.
8. Be relaxed, social, act natural, show enthusiasm, and smile.
9. Do not contradict or argue with the interviewer.
10. Don't discuss personal problems. Always keep the conversation positive.
11. Answer questions completely and accurately.
12. Take notes during the interview. Ask first.

CLOSING THE INTERVIEW

1. Thank the interviewer by name and give a firm handshake.
2. Reaffirm interest in the position.
3. Always conclude with a call-back option.

FOLLOW UP

1. Send a thank you note within 24 hours.
2. If interviewed by several people, send a different letter to each person.
3. Keep a log of interviews: with whom, where, and when a thank you letter was sent.
4. Follow up with the company within 5-7 days.

TESTING

1. For some jobs, a test may be required. There are several types:
 - *Aptitude Tests* predict the applicant's ability to learn and perform job tasks.
 - *Practical Tests* measure what the applicant knows and what he/she can do in a job.
 - *Literacy Tests* measure reading and arithmetic levels.
 - *Personality Tests* evaluate mental, emotional, and temperamental makeup.
 - *Honesty and Integrity Tests* evaluate the likelihood of stealing and trustworthiness of applicants.
 - *Physical Ability Tests* measure strength, flexibility, stamina, and speed for jobs that require physical performance.
 - *Medical Tests* determine physical fitness to do a job.
 - *Drug Tests* show the presence of illegal drugs that could impair job performance and threaten the safety of others.
 - *Criminal Background Check*
 - *Credit History*
2. Ask about the re-testing policy.
3. After the test, find out what scores actually mean.