

Interviewing Tips and Techniques

When preparing for an interview, there are steps that candidates can take to enhance the probability of a successful interview.

1. Plan ahead. Arrive slightly early for an interview. If it is an on-campus interview, check in with the receptionist. Be courteous to everyone.
2. Research the company or organization with whom you are interviewing. Visit the company's web site.
3. Know what skills you possess that the employer will find valuable.
4. Dress and grooming are very important. Conservative suits and hair styles are appropriate for men and women. Present a professional image!

Interview Questions Frequently Asked by Employers

1. Why would you like to work for this company?
2. What are your long-range career goals?
3. What is your greatest strength?
4. What is your biggest weakness?
5. What was the greatest challenge you have ever faced? How did you handle it?
6. Why should we hire you?

Questions Job Hunters May Ask

1. What are the principle duties of a person in this job?
2. What is a typical workday like for the position?
3. What is the most important responsibility in this job?
4. Are there regular performance evaluations?
5. What are the opportunities for advancement in this job?

Interview Follow-Up

1. Immediately following the interview, write a brief note thanking the interviewer for his/her time. Briefly summarize again why you can do the job.
2. If you have received no response within a few weeks of the interview, you may wish to follow up with a phone call to the office of the person doing the hiring.

Creating a Professional Image

Although there are no hard rules, the following are a few suggestions that are appropriate for both men and women.

1. Wear good quality and well-fitted clothes. Clothing does not have to be expensive to look professional.
2. Dress for your interviewer; some organizations are much more conservative and formal than others. Usually a suit fills the bill.
3. Clothing should be conservative but in style.
4. You should be comfortable in your interviewing apparel. Don't break it in at the interview.
5. Shoes should be polished and well-maintained.
6. Personal hygiene is an extremely important part of the first impression you make on the interviewer.
7. Heavy fragrance may offend; strong perfumes or colognes should be avoided.
8. If you must bring a backpack with you, please leave it with the receptionist.
9. Do not chew gum during an interview.
10. Don't wear sunglasses during an interview.

Tips for Women:

1. Avoid dangling earrings or bracelets. Small-scale jewelry is fine. Please no uniquely pierced body jewelry.
2. Hair should be neatly trimmed and well-groomed. If you ordinarily wear your hair very long and loose, you may want to put it up or pull it back for a more tailored look.
3. Nails should be well manicured; if you wear polish choose a clear or a light shade.
4. If you routinely wear make-up, by all means, wear it in an interview but use a light touch.
5. Skirts are considered appropriate interviewing attire; pants are too informal.
6. Closed toe pumps in a neutral or dark color are the best choice in shoes.
7. Wearing hosiery is a must! Even in mid-summer the bare leg look is not acceptable for interviewing. Neutral or dark hosiery is appropriate; avoid pastels or colors. Make sure your hosiery is free of runs.
8. If you carry a briefcase, do not carry a purse. If you do not carry a briefcase, a small bag is preferable to the large carry-all variety.

Tips for Men:

1. Coordinate shirt and tie with your suit. The men's department of any clothing store can help.
2. Wear appropriate dress shoes with dart, calf-length stockings. Either tie or slip-on styles of shoes are acceptable. No cowboy boots please!
3. Trim and groom your beard and mustache, if you have either.
4. Be aware of differences in interviewing trends and styles due to geographic location. For example, in Omaha, earrings and long hair for men are probably not the best choice.
5. Nails should be clean and trimmed.
6. Jewelry should be kept to a minimum; a professional looking wristwatch and a ring are fine.
7. Don't carry a briefcase unless you have additional information to supply to the interviewer, such as a portfolio of your work. If you are only carrying a resume, then consider using a leather folder.