

When you apply for a job, be sure to prepare yourself before the interview. Remember that the interview is one of the most important steps toward getting the job you want. **The following information may give you the edge you need to succeed in a job interview:**

BEFORE THE INTERVIEW

- ✓ *Target specific positions and develop a list of your skills that match the job requirements.*
- ✓ *Learn about the company and its products and services. Doing your research can help you answer interview questions effectively and how your particular skills and background would be an asset to the company.*
- ✓ *Review your résumé to ensure you are well-versed enough to “walk” the employer through your work experience. In other words, be comfortable enough with your own experience to discuss at length some of your greatest accomplishments, challenges, and ways in which you were instrumental in improving the processes or bottom line of the company.*
- ✓ *Anticipate being asked both broad and specific questions about yourself and your experience relating to the position in question. Conduct mock interviews with family and friends using a list of possible interview questions based upon the type of position you are seeking.*
- ✓ *Prepare a list of questions on topics which may not be covered by the employer in the interview. Start with the following to incite the conversation:*
 - 1) *What is the essence of this position?*
 - 2) *What are the key qualities of the potential hire?*
 - 3) *What tools and/or resources will I be given to achieve success in this position?*
- ✓ *Jot the following information down and be sure to take it to your interview to help answer questions accurately:*
 - 1) *Social security number and driver's license number*
 - 2) *Dates of previous employment*
 - 3) *Names and addresses of former employers*
 - 4) *Names and addresses of references*
- ✓ *Visit the company website and complete the application online to be considered for the position. If you meet the criteria, you will be contacted to schedule an interview.*

DURING THE INTERVIEW

- ✓ *Report to the interview alone and on time. Arriving independently demonstrates confidence and self-reliance. Remember...to be early is to be on time; to be on time is to be late.*
- ✓ *Greet the interviewer in a friendly, business-like manner with a firm handshake. Introduce yourself and clearly state your reason for being there.*
- ✓ *Use proper grammar as now is not the time for slang or bad diction. Conduct yourself as professionally as possible with the most formal language you can muster.*
- ✓ *Maintain steady eye contact, lean forward slightly especially when responding, and listen intently to what the interviewer is saying as well as the questions being asked. Being mindful of your body language helps you appear interested in what the interviewer is saying.*
- ✓ *Take notes and question matters unclear to you. It's okay to gain clarification to ensure you are responding to the interview questions thoroughly.*
- ✓ *Fight the temptation to discuss personal problems or issues experienced with former employers. Doing so may cast you in a negative light and label you as weak or uncooperative.*
- ✓ *Ask prepared questions paying close attention to how your skills will translate as a perfect match for the ideal candidate.*

CLOSING THE INTERVIEW

- ✓ *Restate that YOU are that ideal potential hire, having learned earlier in the interview the employer's vision of an “ideal” candidate. Perhaps now would be a good time to remind the employer of your skills and how you would ultimately add value to the company.*
- ✓ *Ask for the business card of your interviewer(s) – if none have been supplied at the beginning of the interview. If cards are not available, obtain the correct company/contact name, mailing address, email address, and phone number.*
- ✓ *Thank the interviewer for granting the interview. Give the interviewer(s) a firm handshake and acknowledge the greeter(s) once again upon your exit.*

AFTER THE INTERVIEW

- ✓ *Handwrite a thank you note expressing your interest in the position and indicate you are looking forward to joining the team. Doing this follow-up would be considered part of your “assumptive close.” Following-up with a phone call no later than ten (10) days from the date of the interview to ascertain whether the position has been filled would be advisable as well.*

REMINDE RS

- ✓ *Rest well in preparation for the interview.*
- ✓ *Dress conservatively, professionally, and be well-groomed.*
- ✓ *Display a friendly, approachable attitude by smiling when speaking. Doing so will create the impression that you are easygoing and a team player.*
- ✓ *Mention anyone you know who works for the company. This person will inadvertently serve as a character reference, so be sure that s/he is in good standing with the company.*
- ✓ *Talk about former employers with whom you've had a mutually positive work experience.*
- ✓ *Answer questions directly and truthfully. There is nothing worse than an employer finding out later that you have stretched the truth or simply avoided it altogether.*
- ✓ *Explain to the employer your willingness, eagerness, and ability to learn quickly and accept new challenges and responsibilities.*

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