



INTERVIEWING TIP SHEET

The interview is one of the most important tools in your job search. The interview will get you the job; your resume simply gets you the interview. It is your opportunity to convince the employer that your qualifications and experiences have prepared you to be successful in the role you're applying for.

BEFORE THE INTERVIEW

- ***Research the Company to find information, such as: ****
 - Mission and/or vision
 - Major products or services
 - Key people in the organization—leadership and people who are part of the hiring committee
 - Size in terms of sales, employees, and other locations
 - Major competitors
 - Latest news reports on the company or on local or national news that affects the company

- ***Find out as much as you can about the position—understand the position and anticipate interview questions***
 - Read the job description and make note of any responsibilities that are unclear or that you do not understand
 - Prepare questions you will ask in the interview to gain more clarity
 - Anticipate questions that may be asked during the interview in order to determine whether you have the qualities the hiring committee is looking for in a candidate
 - Write down questions that may be asked related to each job responsibility listed
 - Practice your response to those questions
 - For each responsibility listed on the job description, make note of your previous experience that has prepared you to execute that responsibility
 - Prepare specific examples you will share in the interview
 - If you do not have experience performing one of the responsibilities outlined, prepare a response that will outline your plan to learn how to handle that responsibility
 - Plan how to communicate the relationship between the job and your strengths, abilities and experience – how you can contribute to the company
 - Contact the Human Resources Department with questions; such as who will be present during the interview
 - Seek out someone who holds a similar role at another company and request an informational interview

- ***Be familiar with typical questions an interviewer may ask of you*** (see list below)

- ***Practice a firm handshake***

- ***Practice, Practice, Practice.***

THE INTERVIEW



- **Dress professionally**
 - **Men:** business suit (or dress pants and jacket), long-sleeved collared shirt, tie, and dress socks/shoes
 - **Women:** business suit (or dress/skirt/pants, and blazer), long-sleeved collared shirt, blouse, and dress shoes
 - **Avoid:** clothing that does not fit properly (i.e. too tight, baggy, long, short or wrinkled/worn-out); excessive cologne/perfume; distracting accessories; bulky bags; (women) heels you have trouble walking in
- **Bring the following items in a neat folder or portfolio:**
 - Extra copies of your resume (enough for each person who will be on the hiring committee)
 - List of professional references
 - Schedule of availability (when you are available to work)
 - A pad of paper and a nice pen (should you need to take any notes or write down contact information)
 - Valid ID
- **Arrive on time**
 - Look up directions ahead of time and provide enough time to arrive 15 minutes early
 - Should there be an unexpected delay, make sure to call in advance to notify the hiring committee
- **Introduce yourself in a courteous manner with a firm handshake**
- **Read company materials while you wait**
- **Use body language to show interest—smile, nod and give non-verbal feedback to the interviewer.**
- **Listen and write down notes, as needed**
- **Think about the questions being asked before you answer (see list below)**
- **Handle liabilities graciously:** each of us has liabilities— any personal factor or experience that hinders the chances of getting an offer for a particular job—and how we handle them can be important
 - Don't get defensive
 - Recognize the liability as a legitimate issue of concern
 - Identify the strength that is perceived as missing (i.e., lack of experience, education)
 - Prove that you have that strength
- **Ask winning questions**—always have a few questions prepared (see list below)
- **Ask about the next step in the process**
- **Thank the interviewer and ask for a business card or contact information**

AFTER THE INTERVIEW

- **Follow-up with a thank-you letter to anyone who interviewed you (handwritten, typed or emailed is acceptable)**
- **Reflect on what you did well and how you can improve on the next interview**
 - *Write down all the questions you were asked in the interview to help you prepare for similar questions in future interviews*

TYPICAL QUESTIONS INTERVIEWERS LIKE TO ASK

General Get-to-know-you Questions:

- Tell me about yourself.
- Why are you interested in this position? Why are you interested in this company/organization?
- Why did you choose your program of study? What do you enjoy most about what you're studying?
- What are some of your activities and interests outside work and school?
- What are you strongest (and weakest) personal qualities?
- What do you anticipate will be the greatest challenges for you in this role?
- What are your long-term goals? Where do you see yourself in 5 years?

Behavioral Questions:

- Give me a specific example of something you did that helped build enthusiasm in others.
- Share an example of a time you had to persuade other people to take action. Were you successful?
- Share an example of a time when you had to make an important decision. How did you make the decision? How does it affect you today?
- Tell me about a time when you dealt with a difficult person. How did you handle the situation?
- Tell me about a difficult situation that required a positive attitude. What did you do?
- Tell me about a time you handled multiple responsibilities. How did you handle this?

QUESTIONS FOR CANDIDATES TO ASK DURING INTERVIEWS

Information about the Position:

- Would you describe your own concept of the ideal employee? What specific qualifications are you looking for?
- What are some of the more demanding aspects of doing this job well? What are this position's greatest challenges?
- What are some examples of good results accomplished by a person in this job?
- What kind of training and supervision might I expect if hired for this position?
- Is there anything I can do or study to get a head start of learning this job?
- Will there be a chance to work overtime in this position?
- How soon will a decision be made for filling this position?

Professional Development & Advancement Opportunities:

- What led to your hire for this position—a new position or a departure/promotion? Do you usually fill this position internally or from outside the company?
- Do you have much turnover in this position? What are the reasons for turnover?
- Will good job performance in this position qualify the person for advancement?
- What professional development is provided to employees? Is training provided to improve job skills?