

INTERVIEW TIPS: THE MEETING

Look Sharp

Before the interview, select your outfit. Depending on the industry and position, get out your best duds and check them over for spots and wrinkles. Even if the company has a casual environment, you don't want to look like you slept in your clothes. Above all, dress for confidence. If you feel good, others will respond to you accordingly.

Be on Time

Never arrive late to an interview. Allow extra time to arrive early in the vicinity, allowing for factors like getting lost. Enter the building 10 to 15 minutes before the interview.

Do Your Research

Researching the company before the interview and learning as much as possible about its services, products, customers and competition will give you an edge in understanding and addressing the company's needs. The more you know about the company and what it stands for, the better chance you have of selling yourself. You also should find out about the company's culture to gain insight into your potential happiness on the job.

Be Prepared

Bring along a folder containing extra copies of your resume, a copy of your references and paper to take notes. You should also have questions prepared to ask at the end of the interview. For extra assurance, print a copy of Monster's handy interview take-along checklist.

Show Enthusiasm

A firm handshake and plenty of eye contact demonstrate confidence. Speak distinctly in a confident voice, even though you may feel shaky.

Listen

One of the most neglected interviewing skills is listening. Make sure you are not only listening, but also reading between the lines. Sometimes what is not said is just as important as what is said.

Answer the Question Asked

Candidates often don't think about whether they are actually answering the questions asked by their interviewers. Make sure you understand what is being asked, and get further clarification if you are unsure.

Give Specific Examples

One specific example of your background is worth 50 vague stories. Prepare your stories before the interview. Give examples that highlight your successes and uniqueness. Your past behavior can indicate your future performance.

Ask Questions

Many interviewees don't ask questions and miss the opportunity to find out valuable information. Your questions indicate your interest in the company or job.

Follow Up

Whether it's through email or regular mail, the follow-up is one more chance to remind the interviewer of all the valuable traits you bring to the job and company. You don't want to miss this last chance to market yourself.

It is important to appear confident and cool for the interview. One way to do that is to be prepared to the best of your ability. There is no way to predict what an interview holds, but by following these important rules you will feel less anxious and will be ready to positively present yourself.

Five Important Interview Tips

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In order to increase your chances of landing a great job, you should take time to define your strategy and prepare your resources. Successful job offers are direct results of effective planning. A productive interview needs to be well-researched, planned and implemented. Follow these tips and future interviews will deliver positive and powerful results.

1. Carefully research the company. Learn as much as you can about your prospective employer's business model. Visit its Web site and read their mission statement and/or company philosophy. Identify main products, services and functions. Speak to employees, vendors or other contacts with inside knowledge. Acquire strategic information that will enable you to speak knowledgeably and offer valuable insight during your interview.

2. Thoroughly read and analyze the official job description. Visit the company's Web site or ask the recruiter to provide you with this information. Identify key skills and determine whether or not you meet the job requirements.

3. Be prepared to recognize and engage in various types of interviews. Interviews have different purposes and characteristics. The experienced job seeker should be familiar and comfortable with all varieties. Telephone and behavioral interviews have very different formats and objectives. Telephone interviews are prescreening tools used to determine whether or not a candidate matches the position's requirements. Employers try to streamline their search by eliminating candidates who do not fit their basic requirements. Your goal is to pass the prescreening test by proving you have the required skills. Your prize is an invitation to a face-to-face interview.

Behavioral interviews are based on the belief that "past performance is an indicator of future value." After identifying which skills and knowledge are necessary to fill the open position, employers will then develop and ask questions based on these competencies. The questions often ask the job seeker to tell about or describe a time in the past when they had to respond to a certain situation. Interviewers want to know how you handled these issues and what the outcomes were.

4. Be passionate. Every employer believes his or her company is special and unique and therefore wants to hire the best person for the job. Show your passion for the company and its products by preparing "big picture" questions that address the employer's needs.

Sample questions to ask include:

- What are the two most important tasks and issues related to this position?
- One year from now, what would you like to say about the person whom you hire for this position and what he or she was able to accomplish?
- How will this accomplishment impact the entire organization?

5. End strongly. Finish the interview by quickly summarizing how you can deliver solutions to their problems. Thank the interviewer for taking the time to speak with you. Sincerely express your interest in the position and ask what the next step will be. Request the interviewer's business card.

Remember: Positive and lasting results are built on solid groundwork. Take the time to learn about the company, the position's requirements and different interview techniques. Preparation will generate profitable results.

100 SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

- Tell me about yourself.
- What are your strengths?
- What are your weaknesses?
- Who was your favorite manager and why?
- What kind of personality do you work best with and why?
- Why do you want this job?
- Where would you like to be in your career five years from now?

- Tell me about your proudest achievement.
- If you were at a business lunch and you ordered a rare steak and they brought it to you well done, what would you do?
- If I were to give you this salary you requested but let you write your job description for the next year, what would it say?
- Why is there fuzz on a tennis ball?
- How would you go about establishing your credibility quickly with the team?
- There's no right or wrong answer, but if you could be anywhere in the world right now, where would you be?
- How would you feel about working for someone who knows less than you?
- Was there a person in your career who really made a difference?
- What's your ideal company?
- What attracted you to this company?
- What are you most proud of?
- What are you looking for in terms of career development?
- What do you look for in terms of culture -- structured or entrepreneurial?
- What do you like to do?
- Give examples of ideas you've had or implemented.
- What are your lifelong dreams?
- What do you ultimately want to become?
- How would you describe your work style?
- What kind of car do you drive?
- Tell me about a time where you had to deal with conflict on the job.
- What's the last book you read?
- What magazines do you subscribe to?
- What would be your ideal working situation?
- Why should we hire you?
- What did you like least about your last job?
- What do you think of your previous boss?
- How do you think I rate as an interviewer?
- Do you have any questions for me?
- When were you most satisfied in your job?
- What can you do for us that other candidates can't?
- What are three positive things your last boss would say about you?
- What negative thing would your last boss say about you?
- If you were an animal, which one would you want to be?
- What salary are you seeking?
- What's your salary history?
- How do you want to improve yourself in the next year?
- What were the responsibilities of your last position?
- What do you know about this industry?
- What do you know about our company?
- How long will it take for you to make a significant contribution?
- Are you willing to relocate?
- What was the last project you headed up, and what was its outcome?
- What kind of goals would you have in mind if you got this job?
- Give me an example of a time that you felt you went above and beyond the call of duty at work.
- What would you do if you won the lottery?
- Can you describe a time when your work was criticized?
- Have you ever been on a team where someone was not pulling their own weight? How did you handle it?
- What is your personal mission statement?
- Tell me about a time when you had to give someone difficult feedback. How did you handle it?
- What is your greatest failure, and what did you learn from it?
- What irritates you about other people, and how do you deal with it?
- What is your greatest fear?
- Who has impacted you most in your career, and how?
- What do you see yourself doing within the first 30 days of this job?
- What's the most important thing you've learned in school?
- What three character traits would your friends use to describe you?
- What will you miss about your present/last job?
- If you were interviewing someone for this position, what traits would you look for?
- List five words that describe your character.
- What is your greatest achievement outside of work?
- Sell me this pencil.
- If I were your supervisor and asked you to do something that you disagreed with, what would you do?
- Do you think a leader should be feared or liked?
- What's the most difficult decision you've made in the last two years?
- What do you like to do for fun?
- Why are you leaving your present job?
- What do you do in your spare time?
- How do you feel about taking no for an answer?
- What was the most difficult period in your life, and how did you deal with it?
- What is your favorite memory from childhood?
- Give me an example of a time you did something wrong. How did you handle it?
- Tell me one thing about yourself you wouldn't want me to know.

- Tell me the difference between good and exceptional.
- Why did you choose your major?
- What are the qualities of a good leader? A bad leader?
- What is your biggest regret, and why?
- What are three positive character traits you don't have?
- What irritates you about other people, and how do you deal with it?
- If you found out your company was doing something against the law, like fraud, what would you do?
- How many times do a clock's hands overlap in a day?
- How would you weigh a plane without scales?
- What assignment was too difficult for you, and how did you resolve the issue?
- If I were to ask your last supervisor to provide you additional training or exposure, what would she suggest?
- If you could choose one superhero power, what would it be and why?
- What's the best movie you've seen in the last year?
- Describe how you would handle a situation if you were required to finish multiple tasks by the end of the day, and there was no conceivable way that you could finish them.
- What techniques and tools do you use to keep yourself organized?
- If you could get rid of any one of the US states, which one would you get rid of, and why?
- With your eyes closed, tell me step-by-step how to tie my shoes.
- if you had to choose one, would you consider yourself a big-picture person or a detail-oriented person?
- If selected for this position, can you describe your strategy for the first 90 days?
- Who are your heroes?
- Tell me 10 ways to use a pencil other than writing.