

Launch

Interviews and Salary Negotiations



25 Tips for Interviewing

The interviewing stage of your job search is the most critical. Your success or failure in obtaining a position is often determined at the interview. However,

anyone can learn to interview well, since most mistakes can be anticipated and corrected. Learn the following top 25 interviewing techniques to give you a winning edge.

1. Bring extra copies of your resume to the interview.

Nothing shows less preparation and readiness than being asked for another copy of your resume and not having one. Come prepared with extra copies of your resume. You may be asked to interview with more than one person and it demonstrates professionalism and preparedness to anticipate needing extra copies.

2. Dress conservatively and professionally.

What you wear to an interview can make a tremendous difference. It is important to convey a professional image, and it is better to overdress than underdress.

3. Be aware of your body language.

Be alert, energetic, and focused on the interviewer. Make eye contact. Non-verbally, this communicates that you are interested in what the interviewer has to say.

4. Consider first and last impressions.

The first and last five minutes of the interview are the most important. It is during this time that critical first and lasting impressions are made and the interviewer decides whether or not you are a viable candidate. Communicate positive behaviors during the first five minutes and be sure you are remembered when you leave.

5. Fill out company applications completely - even if you have a resume.

Even though you have brought a copy of your resume, many companies require a completed application. Your willingness to complete one, and your thoroughness in doing so, will convey a great deal about your professionalism and ability to follow through.

6. Remember that the purpose of every interview is to get an offer.

You must impress your interviewer both professionally and personally to be offered the job. At the end of the interview, make sure you know what the next step is and when the employer expects to make a decision.

7. Understand employers' needs.

Present yourself as someone who can really add value to an organization. Show that you can fit into the work environment.

*“Be alert,
energetic,
and focused
on the
interviewer.”*

How do you compare with your peers in education, experience, training, salary, and career progression?

8. Be likeable.

Be enthusiastic. People love to hire individuals who are easy to get along with and who are excited about their company. Be professional, yet demonstrate your interest and energy.

9. Make sure you have the right skills.

Know your competition. How do you compare with your peers in education, experience, training, salary, and career progression? Mention the things you know how to do really well. They are the keys to your next job.

10. Display an ability to work hard to pursue an organization's goals.

Assume that most interviewers need to select someone who will fit well into their organization in terms of both productivity and personality. You must confirm that you are a hard-working, productive, and personable individual by emphasizing the benefits you will bring to the company.

11. Market all of your strengths.

It is important to market yourself, including your technical qualifications, general skills and experiences as well as personal traits. Recruiters care about two things, credentials and personality. Can you do the job based on past performance and will you fit in with the corporate culture? Talk about your positive personality traits and give examples of how you demonstrate each one on the job.

12. Give definitive answers and specific results.

Whenever you make a claim of your accomplishments, it will be more believable and

better remembered if you cite specific examples and support for your claims. Tell the interviewer about business situations where you successfully used a skill and elaborate on the outcome. Be specific.

13. Don't be afraid to admit mistakes.

Employers want to know what mistakes you have made and how you have learned from them. Don't be afraid to admit making mistakes in the past, but continuously stress your positive qualities as well, and how you have turned weaknesses into positive results.

14. Relate stories or examples that heighten your past experience.

Past performance is the best indicator of future performance. If you were successful at one company, odds are you can succeed at another. Be ready to sell your skills and performance using relevant stories from your work experience in the interview.

“Past performance is the best indicator of future performance.”

15. Know everything about your potential employer before the interview.

Customize your answers as much as possible in terms of the needs of the employer. This requires that you complete research before the interview about the company, its customers, and the work you anticipate doing. Speak the employer's language and address his or her needs.

16. Rehearse and practice interview questions before the interview.

Prior to your interview, try to anticipate the types of questions you may be asked and rehearse the appropriate answers. Even if you do

not anticipate all of the questions, the process of thinking them through will make you more confident and relaxed during the interview itself.

17. Know how to respond to tough questions.

The majority of questions that you will be asked can be anticipated. However, there are exceptional questions tailored to throw you off guard to see how you perform under pressure. Your best strategy is to be prepared, stay calm, collect your thoughts, and respond as clearly as possible.

18. Address the relevant needs of the employer.

While you no doubt have specific strengths, skills and experience, make sure you translate how these qualifications would address the prospective employer's needs. Emphasize the benefits you are likely to provide in the new position. Whenever possible, give examples of how your strengths, accomplishments, and contributions relate to the employer, using the appropriate language for the job or industry.

“Skills that you enjoy are the ones that are most likely to benefit a future employer.”

19. Identify your strengths and what you enjoy doing.

Skills that you enjoy are the ones that are most likely to benefit a future employer. Prior to the interview, understand what it is that you enjoy doing most, and what benefits this provides to both you and your employer.

20. Know how you communicate verbally to others.

Strong verbal communication skills are highly valued by most employers. They are signs of educated and competent individuals. Know how you communicate, and practice with others to determine if you are presenting yourself in the best possible light.

21. Don't plan to arrive on time, plan to arrive early!

No matter how sympathetic your interviewer may be to the fact that there was an accident on the freeway, it is virtually impossible to overcome a negative first impression. Do whatever it takes to be on time, including allowing extra time for unexpected emergencies. However, don't show up too early either. A good time to announce your arrival is 5 - 10 minutes before your interview is scheduled to start.

22. Treat everyone you meet as important to the interview.

Make sure you are courteous to everyone you come in contact with, no matter who they are or what their position. The opinion of everyone can be important to the interview process.

23. Answer questions with complete sentences and with substance.

Remember that your interviewer is trying to determine what value you would bring to the company and the position. Avoid answering the questions asked with simple “yes” or “no” answers. Give complete answers and use examples of past experiences that demonstrate your qualifications.

24. Reduce your nervousness by practicing stress-reduction techniques.

There are many stress-reducing techniques used by public speakers that can certainly aid you in your interview process. Practice some of the relaxation methods as you approach your interview, such as taking slow deep breaths to calm you down. The more you can relax, the more comfortable you will feel and the more confident you will appear. ■

25. Be sure to ask questions.

Be prepared to ask several questions relevant to the job, the employer, and the organization. These questions should be designed to elicit information to help you make a decision as well as to demonstrate your interest, intelligence, and enthusiasm for the job.