

Preparing for the Job Interview

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Before the interview

- Research the company
 - Overview of the company business
 - Information on the company's products and services
 - Recent events and news about the company
 - Learn about the people you will be meeting. (<http://www.google.com>)
- Questions
 - Prepare questions that will help you understand what the responsibilities and expectations of the position.
 - Prepare questions that will help you understand what the future growth, learning, and advancement opportunities that might be with the company if you do a great job for them.
 - Be prepared to respond to the question: Why do you want to know these things? If you can't answer this, don't ask the question.
 - Examples: I want to make a long term career decision for me and my family. May I ask you ...
 - What about the company convinced you to join it and stay throughout the years?
 - How would you define the management philosophy of the company?
 - How would you define the work culture?
- Reasons for looking for a new position
 - Avoid any negative talk about your employer, manager or supervisor.
 - Explain why it makes sense for you to move to a new company/position in terms of why this will help you advance your skills and career and contribute more to your new employer.
 - Be prepared to answer questions about why you left your previous positions, and why you accepted your previous positions.
- Prepare to be on-time
 - If possible, the night before the interview or a few days before, drive the route to the location of the company. Know how the traffic will be.

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Leave early enough so that you can have a flat, fix it and still be early to the interview. (Do not completely trust MapQuest and Google Maps)

- Attire
 - Wear a suite! No matter what the dress code for the company. I say again, wear a suit! If you don't own one, borrow one, buy one, or rent one.
- What to bring?
 - Multiple good copies of your latest resume. Some recruiters edit down and fax your resume, and the interviewer may have a poor copy.
 - A sheet listing your professional references. Prepare a list of professional references that you can give them and that they can contact, just in case they ask you for references. Make sure the people you use as references know that you are looking for a new position and that they might be contacted.

The Interview

- Selling your skills
 - You must communicate your most relevant skills and experiences. To do this, you must first understand what the interviewer believes are the most important and relevant technical skills, personal skills and accomplishments for him to consider you a strong candidate. If you don't understand this first, you're making an assumption about what is most important/relevant for the interviewer, to know about you, which might be wrong.
 - Don't be too aggressive and jump right into the interview trying to get the interviewer to share/reveal this information. You are the interviewee not the interviewer, let him set the pace of the interview. Relax and answer his questions . Always use examples to support your answers/response.
 - When you know the time is right for you to ask questions, you should concentrate getting the following questions answered. This will help you gain a clearer understanding of what the interviewer believes are most relevant/critical/important skills and accomplishments to possess.
 - What must the candidate hired for this position jump-in and accomplish immediately in this position (i.e. the first 3 to 6 or 9 months?) What will the candidate hired for the position most likely need to accomplish beyond these immediate needs?
 - What do you believe are the most important skills, work experience and accomplishments a candidate must possess to be successful in this position? Why?

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- What do you believe are the most important personal skills and characteristics for a candidate to possess to be successful in this position, and to be a fit for your company's environment/culture? Why?
- What other criteria do you consider very important when you're evaluating a candidate for this position? Why?

➤ Explain and Sell Your Relevant skills

- Prepare specific examples of your experiences, accomplishment and personal skills, which will help to explain and support what you have to say and what you posses in each of these areas. Remember, it's more important and powerful to prove what you've done and are capable of doing through real world examples.
- *Write down* examples that clearly explain and support everything you've written on your resume, it's easier for people to understand and relate to examples. Describe your employer(s) business, where your area fits into the company, what area and who you report to, what your area does, specifically what you do now and what you've done in the past.
- *Write down* what you believe are your best relevant technical and personal skills. *Write down* examples that you can use to support and prove these examples.
- *Write down* the accomplishments that you are most proud of in the positions you have held, and be ready to explain in detail how you achieved these accomplishments.
- If you don't have the skills, or the skills you possess are weaker/lighter in the area most important to the interviewer, be prepared to discuss actual work situations where you didn't have the required skills/experiences desired by your employer and how you successfully completed these new responsibilities by using your intelligence, determination and work ethic. This is how you communicate how you accomplished tasks assigned to you even though you didn't have the ideal requirements.

➤ Things to remember

- When you walk into the office, wait to be asked to take a seat before you sit down.
- Body language – Sit squarely facing the interviewer, maintain good eye contact, don't distract the interviewer by taking too many notes during the interview.
- Ask for a business card from each person that you interview with.
- If you are meeting with multiple people, treat each new person as the first interview of the day.
- Maintain a high energy level. If they offer you a restroom break or a cup of water, TAKE IT, even if you don't need it.
- ***Speak with passion and enthusiasm.***

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After the Interview

- Thank You Note
 - You must PROMPTLY send a thank you note to each person you interviewed with. (That is why you asked for their business card. You have the correct spelling of their name, their title and email addresses.)
 - Hand write the envelope. Snail mail the thank you note ASAP.
 - Have someone review your thank you notes before sending them to ensure there are no spelling or grammatical errors.