

Preparing for the Interview

Be Prepared:

- Research the company. Review their website, conduct an online search, check local media outlets for stories and ask people about their experience with the company.
- Prepare for the commonly asked behavioral interview questions (see 10 most common interview questions). Write a few notes for each of the questions to cue you when asked the questions during the interview. Chances are you will be nervous and forget what you want to say.
- Create questions you would like to ask the company.
- Review the job description and requirements and be prepared to tell them what skills and qualifications you have that match their requirements.
- Role-play with friends and family or practice interviewing in front of the mirror. This will make you more comfortable when you are in the interview.
- Ensure there is nothing potentially embarrassing about you on the social networking sites. Employers are checking the sites to garner information on prospective employees.

Phone Interview

- Most employers will begin with a phone interview. Typically the first phone interview is conducted by the recruiter. Please select a time for a phone interview when you have no distractions and can focus on the interview. Distractions include driving, working and watching children.
- Have all of your company research, notes for interview questions, questions for the company and your resume readily available when you participate in the phone interview.
- Express your interest in the job and thank the interviewer for his/her time. Ask them what the next step is in the process.
- Send a thank you note by email and follow up with a handwritten note the next day. If you don't have their contact info become a sleuth and find it.

In Person Interview

- Please see the handout on attire and grooming for an interview.
- TURN YOUR CELL PHONES AND OTHER ELECTRONICS OFF.
- Bring a portfolio with you; have extra copies of your resume, notes for the behavioral interview questions and questions you want to ask the organization.
- If possible, make a dry run to the facility before your interview to evaluate logistics such as traffic, parking, and security. Arrive early and treat everyone you meet respectfully. I

worked with a candidate who was on a final interview and did not get the job because he was rude to the security guard.

- Arrive early; allow enough time for unforeseen events such as an accident or a full parking lot.
- Your interview could be with one person or a group interview. Some companies will also have round robin interviews where you have back-to-back personal interviews with a number of people. If you are scheduled to meet with a number of individuals, make sure you stay upbeat and look fresh. Group interviews are common and usually contain a diverse group of interviewers such as prospective peers, subordinates and management. Treat everyone with respect; all will have input into the hiring process.
- During the interview, it is acceptable to take a few notes in your portfolio. It is also a good way to have the info you prepared in sight for you to use.
- Use a firm handshake, have a warm smile, direct eye contact and sit down only after you have been offered a seat. Sit up straight, no gum chewing or mints in your mouth. Conduct yourself in a professional manner.
- Open your portfolio and take a few notes during the interview. This will also give you access to your notes and resume in your portfolio.
- Do not speak badly of a prior employer or boss.
- Don't be afraid of taking a little time to compose your thoughts before answering a question.
- At the end of the interview, ask them if they have any additional questions for you. This is the time to make sure all their questions about you have been answered.
- Let them know you are interested in moving forward in the interview process and summarize what skills, talent and experience you have that will benefit the company.
- At the end of the interview thank everyone for his or her time; use their names. Get their business cards so you can follow up with thank you emails and handwritten notes.
 - A thank you email/note allows you to thank each person for interviewing you, express your interest in the job and summarize what skills you bring to the company. If more than one person interviewed you, customize a thank you note for each person.
 - Send the email thank you immediately and follow up with a handwritten note on high quality stationery within 24 hours of the interview.

Other notes:

- Do not ask about vacation time, salary or benefits during the interview. Human resources will review that information with you at the appropriate time.