

Interview Tips

The key to a good interview is enthusiasm and knowledge. Preparation is essential and is the first step toward a successful outcome. Follow these suggestions:

- Learn as much as you can about the firm. Prepare questions to ask of the hiring manager, which will show that you've done your homework. **Check out their website.**
- **Organize in advance.** Know the exact location of the interview, name of person to ask for, and traveling time to arrive there promptly. Have your attire and portfolio ready the night before. Bring a hard copy of your resume with you but not with contact information on it.
- **Look professional.** Wear business attire in neutral colors and be conservative in your use of fragrance, cosmetics and jewelry.
- Make sure your resume is in good form; is properly formatted, has been grammar and spell checked (refer to our resume writing guide for help).
- **Have informative answers.** Interviewers look to have three primary concerns addressed during the interview 1. Do you have the professional skills to do the job? 2. Will you fit the job requirements? 3. Do you want the job?

Interviewing Do's

- **Shake hands with a firm grip.**
- **Communicate effectively.**
- **Be attentive.**
- **Show enthusiasm.**
- **Maintain positive body language. Don't send** negative messages through poor eye contact, hurried nodding or crossing your arms. Sit up straight. Smile.
- **Listen carefully to how the interviewer** describes the position and its duties as well as the firm's management style.
- **Present a professional appearance.**
- **Remain poised and positive.** Even if you sense the interview for the position is not going well, there could be other opportunities that would be a better fit for you.

Interviewing Don'ts

- **Don't be late! Arrive 5 minutes early – but no more.**
- **Don't provide just "yes" or "no" answers.** Offer more information whenever possible.
- **Don't pretend to know something when you don't. Let the interviewer know if you need clarification** or you don't understand a question.
- **Don't rely on your application or resume to show your strengths.**
- **Don't speak negatively about former employers or bosses.**
- **Don't speak negatively about ANYTHING!**
- **Stay on topic and don't discuss controversial issues such as politics, sex or religion, or your personal life.**

- **DO NOT SAY YOU WOULD BE THE BEST CANDIDATE FOR THIS POSITION BECAUSE YOU NEED THE JOB! Offer more substantial reasons in terms of what you can bring to the position and the company.**

Be prepared to answer these questions:

- **Tell me about yourself.** Use two to three sentences to describe your professional achievements, qualifications and career goals. Don't talk about your divorce, your current love life, the loss of a loved one.
- **Tell me about your career.** Explain what's made you effective in your work, your range of talents and why you want the job.
- **What are your strengths?** Talk about projects you've handled that show your ability to do a job.
- **What are your weaknesses?** Be honest — address a skill that you're developing but would like to improve. However, do not overstate any lack of knowledge. Nor should you proclaim that you have no weaknesses.
- **What interests you about our company?** Discuss why you would like to work there and how your qualifications match the position. State your interest in taking on new challenges and assignments.
- **Where do you see yourself in five years?** In ten years? Discuss your long-term career goals, such as growth in responsibility or management positions.
- **Why did you leave your last job?** Be brief and to the point using the most positive language possible.

Resume Writing Tips

Resume Do's

- Remember the purpose of the resume is to get the interview, not the job.
- Be accurate and truthful.
- List your present or most recent job, first, and then work backwards. State the complete name of the company you work(ed) for, what they do and the month and year of your employment. Then list the position you held and your accomplishments.
- Use numbers, statistics and percentages to get attention.
- Tailor your resume for each employer.
- Use key words that relate to the job description.
- Use bulleted statements, whenever possible. Bullet points make it easier to scan your resume.
- Include *achievements* instead of *responsibilities*.
- Use fonts between 10 and 12 points only.
- Avoid using the pronoun "I" to begin every sentence. Use action words instead.
- Keep it to a two page maximum.
- Include contact details (name, address, etc.) on each page.
- Use grammar and spell check.
- Proofread and ask others to proofread as well.

Resume Don'ts

- Don't misrepresent your work or education.
- Do not use design details like color, fancy fonts, borders or images.
- Don't include irrelevant work experience.
- Don't give reasons for termination or leaving a job on your resume.
- Don't include irrelevant personal information.
- Don't show salary requirements on your resume.

Special Tips for **E-Mail** Formatting:

- To avoid wrapping the line prematurely, set page width at 4-3/4", or 80 characters, and save the file as "Text with Line Breaks."
- To achieve an equal number of spaces from the left-hand margin, convert all the text to 10-point Courier or another fixed-width font.
- Use characters such as dashes (-), asterisks (*) and arrows(>) to highlight information. Do not use bold, italics, columns and bullets; these are special symbols in word processing that may not translate properly to a plain text format.
- Save the file in a "plain text" format.
- Do not send in a .wps format (many systems cannot open this). Preferable format is .doc followed by a .pdf