

# Tips to Win in your next Interview:

Interviewing can be an intimidating experience when you really want the job. Following are a few suggestions to help you feel comfortable and prepared the next time you are trying for that new position.

## Phone Interviews:

1. If you are going to use a cell or portable phone, make sure it is well charged and use one that provides a good, lasting connection. Nothing is more irritating than speaking with someone whose phone keeps going in and out.
2. Make sure the mouth piece is close enough to your mouth and speak at a volume that is not too loud, yet loud enough for the interviewer to hear you easily.
3. Have a quiet room you can go to where you won't be distracted and background noise won't filter through to the Interviewer.
4. Take notes, but be sure to listen while writing.
5. Be prepared. Research the company and community.
6. Get the Interviewer's name, spelling when possible, and correct pronunciation.
5. Listen to the questions and don't interrupt.
6. Remember to give your voice the proper intonations and speed of speech to show interest and enthusiasm.
7. Give verbal feedback. They can't see you nodding, so they need to "see it" in your voice. Give them "verbal nods" by saying "yes", or "I understand" or "I see what you mean", etc.
8. Ask for the personal interview. At the end of the conversation, tell the Interviewer that the position and company certainly sound interesting and that you would very much like the opportunity to interview in person for the position.

## In-person Interviews:

1. Arrive early and be prepared to fill out an application. Have another copy of your resume with you to transfer the information accurately to the application.
2. Have your references typed out and with you, but don't offer them to the Interviewer unless you are asked for them or until the very end of the interview.
3. Wear Business Dress clothes. Many employers are business casual today. However, the people you interview with already have jobs there -- you would like to join them! Being over-dressed still gives a good impression. Being under dressed never does. Do not let how you are dressed become a distraction to the Interviewer.
4. Be prepared. Research the company and location. Have the names, spellings, and pronunciations wherever possible of the people you will be meeting with.
5. Be flexible. Even if you receive an interview schedule, don't be surprised if it isn't followed. Adapt and focus on everyone you talk to.
6. It's okay to take brief notes during the interview, but do not let it become your focus. The interaction between you and the Interviewer is the primary thing.
7. Focus on THEIR needs, not yours. Companies hire because it solves problems for them. Show understanding of what the Interviewer sees as the importance of the position, what they want it to accomplish, what the challenges have been in that role, etc. Then relate your education, experiences and skills to solving those issues. After you leave the interview, you will have plenty of time to reflect on whether this is an opportunity you can do and want to do for them. But remember, until they offer you the position, you have no decision to make. That is why you always want to be considered for the job and why you focus on their needs during an interview- - - not yours. At the point they make you an offer, they will make such things as compensation, benefits, career track, etc., known to you.
8. Ask the type of questions you would need answers for to do the job. This shows your knowledge of the field without having to go into a long

dissertation. It also shows them you are “projecting” yourself in the role and taking ownership.

9. Whether you are talking or not during the interview- - - be in the conversation. Give verbal and nonverbal feedback to show your understanding, interest, enthusiasm, and energy. Nod when appropriate, sit up in your chair, make appropriate facial expressions, and maintain good eye contact.
10. Try to get business cards from all of the people you interview with.
11. Be the best representation of who you are that you can be. In other words, be yourself. Don't try to be the “perfect candidate.” If this is going to be a good fit, it is because of your personality combined with your skills and career aspirations and their needs along with their style of operating. Trying to be someone you aren't can only lead to an uncomfortable interview and a mismatch if you do get the job.

### Touchy Situations:

1. **They ask you about salary needs.** The best way to respond to this question is by stating what you were making in your last position and, that sure, like everyone else you would like an increase but you are trying to focus more on the company and the position than just the compensation. This gives the Interviewer a ballpark number, while showing them you have a good long-term perspective on the importance of joining the right company in the right position. If you are a recent graduate, just comment to the employer that you are sure they are aware of the average salaries new graduates are receiving and that if they chose to offer you the position, you know it will be competitive.
2. **Lunch/dinner interview.** The lunch/dinner interview is a business meeting in a social environment and can therefore, be a little tricky. Remember to order modestly from the menu in terms of price. Not the cheapest – somewhere in the middle. Also, order something that is easy and not messy to eat. You need to be able to speak throughout the meal between small bites. Do not order or drink alcohol. Let the interviewer pay for the meal.
3. **They ask you why you are looking for a new position or why you are leaving (or left) your current employer.** Honesty is always the policy in an interview. It is really how you relate the honest answer that is important because it reflects your attitude. Rather than saying you are leaving because your present employer treats their people badly you might say; “I have gained some very valuable experience with my current employer. Now I would like to find a company that creates a team environment and rewards effort.” If you think about it -- - you have implied there might be a problem with your current

employer's management style, but you have chosen to take the high road and address it as a goal to achieve that which is missing in your current situation with this career move.