

INTERVIEW TIPS

So – your hard work sending out all those CVs has finally paid off -- you've been called in for a face-to-face interview. Congratulations! But now is not the time to sit back and think about how you're going to spend your fat new salary; you've got a lot of work to do. The better prepared you are beforehand, the better your chances are of walking out of the interview with a confident smile on your face that says "I think I got the job!"

Here are our tips on "how to wow" in an interview:

1. **Research. Research. Research**
Find out all the information you can about the company via its website, watching if they are in the news and speaking to people who understand the relevant industry. It is an indicator of your interest in the company. Be thorough in your knowledge of what the position entails so as to align skills acquired from your previous employment.
2. **Be on time**
Make sure you know how to get to the interview venue and how long it will take you to get there. Get to the company 15 minutes before the scheduled time. Don't be late, not only does it create a bad impression but it also makes you nervous. Try not to be too early as the interview might feel obligated to stop what they are doing to see you.
3. **Look the part**
The impression you make starts from the moment you meet the interviewer(s) until you say goodbye. Make the best first impression you can by being well groomed in appropriate business attire. For both males and females, a suit is preferred but if you do not have a suit, then smart pants and a freshly ironed smart shirt may be acceptable for males and a smart skirt or pants and blouse for females.

5. Stay focused on why you are there
What you say and when you say it is as important as how you say it. You have to concentrate and listen to what is being said or asked. An interview is not a competition of who talks the most or least, it's a platform for interviewers to assess your capabilities and for you to assess whether the opportunity offered is in line with your intended career path. Answer questions openly and ask relevant questions.
6. Your time to shine
Refresh your memory regarding specific work-related achievements. An achievement is recognition for bringing about change; by showing the interviewer(s) that you have the ability to make change, you are differentiating yourself. An example is if you have a background in sales, you would relay any performance figures from your background.
7. Reason for leaving
Keep this brief and to the point. Do not bad mouth your previous employers as the interviewer will wonder why you had problems, and may have concerns regarding your ability to relate to others, whether they are managers, staff and clients within the workplace. Another concern of course is "will you say the same about their company?" when you are looking to leave them.
8. Bring necessary documentation
Make a checklist of documents you will need for the interview and make sure you have them before leaving home. These documents may include extra copies of your CV, a passport, driver's license or portfolio of writing samples or other professional work. If you are a recent graduate, you should also bring along your university transcripts.
9. Follow up
After the interview, don't forget to send a handwritten note or friendly email thanking the interviewer for his or her time and consideration, as well as restating your interest and commitment to the position. If you don't hear anything after one week, call to politely inquire when they will be making a final decision.

Job Interview Checklist

It seems like you've been sending out cover letters and CVs forever. Suddenly, a prospective employer has called and asked you to come in for a job interview. Take this as a compliment, as unqualified applicants typically are eliminated well before the interview process. Being invited in for a face-to-face meeting is a sign that that you're a serious candidate for the job.

Before you head out the door, study this helpful checklist to make sure you are fully prepared for this important appointment.

Questions to think about carefully beforehand:

- Do you have a clear understanding of the position you are applying for?
- What distinguishes you from other candidates for the position?
- What five qualities make you a good candidate?
- What are your strengths and weaknesses? How do you compensate for your weaknesses?
- Why do you want to work for the company?
- Why should the company hire you?
- What skills or experiences qualify you for the job?
- What education or training qualifies you for the job?
- What were your key accomplishments in your past positions?
- Can you discuss each item on your résumé or job application in detail?

