Ace Your Job Interview!

Prepare to Make a Great Impression

- Everything you do and say will be crucial in making a good first impression with potential employers. Make sure your appearance is neat and professional, and keep your interview clothing clean and pressed.
- At the interview, shake hands, make eye contact and convey a positive attitude.
- When leaving messages on voice mail, be clear and articulate (no heavy metal in the background). One of the biggest mistakes people make when applying for a position is talking too fast. Slow down and relax. Remember, you only have one chance at a first impression.

Research the Employer

Knowing as much as you can about the company will show that you have gone the extra mile to prepare, and that you care about the job and the company. It will also help you get ready for the interview and figure out which aspects of your history and personality will be important to highlight. Finally, being knowledgeable about the company may set you apart from other applicants. Some key things you'll want to know about the company:

- What do they do?
- How big are they?
- What kinds of products and services do they sell?
- Who are their customers?
- What makes them unique?
- How did they achieve their success?
- Where are they headed?

Be Prepared!

Phone Interview

- Write out notes
- Dress as if interview is in-person
- Make sure the room is quiet
- Practice beforehand
- Have questions ready
- Show enthusiasm!

Video/Skype Interview

- Know how to use it
- Send ID and materials in advance
- Dress fully, not just top
- Neat and clean environment behind you
- Microphone picks up room noise
- Make eye contact – know the camera

Face-to-Face interview

- Arrive 5-10 minutes early
- Remember the interviewer’s name!
- Be nice to everyone
- Think about your body language
- Discuss topics honestly and positively
- Practice, practice, practice!

Go the extra Mile!

- Self-assess before you go – analyze your abilities and interests.
- Know exactly what you want to do and why.
- Bring several copies of resume. Consider having a portfolio and don’t forget your references!
- Make eye contact. Listen. SMILE!
A few typical interview questions

- **Tell me about yourself**
  - Cover education, work history, and recent career experience.
- **Why should I hire you?**
  - Review job description and qualifications very closely to identify skills and knowledge critical to the position, and then identify experiences from your past that demonstrate those skills and knowledge.
- **Tell me one thing you would change about your last job**
  - Be prepared with an answer that doesn't criticize a colleague or paint you in an unflattering light. A safe scapegoat? Outdated technology.
- **What’s the biggest risk you’ve ever taken?**
  - Provide examples of your willingness to take risks shows both your ability to fail and rebound, but also your ability to make risky or controversial moves that succeed.
- **Why is there a gap in your work history?**
  - List activities you’ve been doing during any period of unemployment. Freelance projects, volunteer work or taking care of family members all let the interviewer know that time off was spent productively.
- **Describe a time…**
  - Employers ask **behavioral questions** to predict how you will perform in the future. These questions will focus on how you dealt with situations and what were the outcomes.

**Don’t ask…**

- When would I get a raise?
- How long would I get for lunch?
- How many breaks are there in a day?
- How soon will I get a vacation?
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- How soon will I get a vacation?

**Follow-up**

Immediately after the interview, write down the **names and titles of all the people you met** with, as well as your impressions, concerns, and any additional questions you think of. This will all be useful should you have additional interviews.

**Write a “Thank You” note** and send it the same day or, at the latest, the day after the interview. This should be a short handwritten note thanking the interviewer for meeting with you. You may also include something to personalize the message (perhaps it came up in the interview that you both like sports or Mexican food) and any additional questions you might have. Make sure you know how to spell correctly all the names and titles you are using in your Thank You note.

Try our mock interview online program: [www.perfectinterview.com/lonestar](http://www.perfectinterview.com/lonestar)

- Create an account. Your email address will be your ID.
- A password will be sent to your email account.
- Log in.
- Start an Interview. Be sure to use a computer with a webcam.
- Make selections and begin.
- View Coach and Examples for help. Record your responses.