

Tips for Effective Interviews

The interviewing process should be a series of conversations between you and company representatives. Each of you wants to present yourself in the best possible light. It is in both of your best interests to determine that there is a good match between you and the position. Listed below are some general tips to help you accomplish this:

- Be prepared -- Research the company and industry.
- Know your "story". Know your selling points.
- Give specific examples to demonstrate each of your selling points.
- Frame your answers positively, even if asked a negative question (e.g., what did you like least about your previous work).
- Establish rapport with the interviewer. You both want the same thing, to determine whether there is a good fit between you and the job.
- Be honest with yourself and the interviewer. You don't want to talk yourself into the wrong position.
- DON'T interview for a position you do not want. DO communicate to the interviewer that you really want the position (and why) and that there is a good chance that you would accept their offer (if that is true).
- Be prepared for the questions you hope they will not ask. Be matter of fact in your answers, NOT defensive.
- Have several insightful questions prepared to ask the interviewer.
- Be sensitive to cultural differences if you are interviewing with a firm from a country of which you are not a native.
- Even if you are being interviewed for a summer position, know that the company is thinking about you in a long-term capacity.
- PRACTICE! (And do it before your interviews).
- Arrive on time, but not ridiculously early.
- Bring extra copies of your resume to offer only in case you are asked.
- Dress appropriately. Research the company and know what is expected.
- When in doubt, overdress.

Most employers provide their interviewers with a checklist of information for the interviewer to assess the candidate. Listed below is the typical information a company looks for. How would you evaluate yourself?

- Work experience
- Educational history
- Leadership ability
- Judgment/decision making ability
- Problem solving ability
- Statements of goals for the future
- Statements of interest in the job
- Communication and listening skills
- Self-evaluative statements of strengths and weaknesses (indication of self awareness)
- Statements of likes and dislikes
- Statements of positive attitudes about what it takes - to be a good employee, to be a good supervisor, etc.
- Well-thought out answers to questions posed about hypothetical situations
- Statements of philosophy that are congruent with the interviewers' own
- Nonverbal behavior:
 - Body language
 - Eye contact
 - Appropriate smiling
 - Appropriate laughter
 - Firm handshake
 - Appropriate reserve
 - Absence of nervous mannerisms
 - Appearance