

# Prepping for Job Interviews

How to impress starting from the initial phone call to the in person meeting.

# Topics

- \* Decreasing Anxiety
- \* Initial Phone Call – First Impression
- \* Phone Interview Preparation
- \* Phone Interview Tips
- \* In Person Interview Preparation
- \* In person Interview Tips
- \* Various Types of Interviews
- \* Common Interview Mistakes
- \* Post Interview
- \* Q&A

# Hiring Manager Confessions

- \* “The candidate hugged me after the interview”
- \* “He ate all the candy from the candy bowl while answering questions”
- \* “Brought a copy of their college diploma but obviously whited out the original name and replaced it with their name”
- \* Their friend came in during the interview and asked “How much longer?”
- \* “Candidate kept fidgeting and adjusting their duffle bag and turned out to have a dog inside the bag”



# Decreasing Anxiety

- \* Effective preparation best way to decrease anxiety
- \* Folder/Portfolio: Resume, Work Samples, Accomplishments, Awards, References, LOR's
- \* Research: Company history, customers, size, revenue, products, accomplishments, recent news
- \* Practice and Rehearse: About me, what you have to offer, reasons for leaving jobs, answers to sample questions, questions for employer

# Initial Phone Call – First Impression



- \* If you're actively job searching, your phone is now your new business
- \* You will get calls from unfamiliar numbers; possibly at unexpected times
- \* Avoid answering in loud environments (Kids, loud TV, Driving/freeway, Restaurants, etc.)
- \* Do not answer at work
- \* Do not answer when in a bad mood
- \* Ask questions: Who will you interview with? Expectations?

# Phone Interview Preparation

- \* Will screen you out or pass you along
- \* Study job description & company info
- \* Prepare resume cheat sheet for phone interview (accomplishments relevant to the position and examples for EACH bullet point)
- \* High quality phone (consider landline)
- \* Have cover letter and application in front of you just in case

# Phone Interview

- \* Prepare logical reasons behind all job changes
- \* Be ready to address red flags: Employment gaps, short work history, multiple jobs in short periods of time
- \* Exemplify confidence, personality, and good communication (smile, sit up straight, enunciate)
- \* Tell me about yourself? What do you know about company? Salary? Strengths & weaknesses?

# Phone Interview... additional tips

- \* Keep a glass of water handy
- \* Avoid very long answers
- \* It's ok to pause and/or speak slower than usual
- \* Enunciate and communicate clearly
- \* Ask questions at the end: How many steps in interview process? Interviewers contact info?
- \* Who are you interviewing with next and their expectations? Facility information?



# Preparation for in person interview



- \* Practice answers to common interview questions & behavioral interview questions.
- \* Practice alone and with other people
  - \* (Career Portal: InterviewStream)
- \* Memorize accomplishments, examples, red flags responses
- \* Write out information if it helps
- \* Duplicate copies of portfolio

# In Person Interview

- \* Do you have the skills to do the job?
  - \* Experiences, industry knowledge, software, capabilities
- \* How do you measure to the competition?
  - \* Years of experience, education, ability to sell yourself
- \* Do you fit the culture?
  - \* Relate your experiences to the company needs (research)
- \* Do you really want the job?
  - \* Enthusiasm, passion, sincerity

# Behavioral Interview

- \* You must provide specific examples of how you have dealt with relevant situations in the past.
- \* Key to providing impressive answers is presenting the: Situation/Issue, Action, Result
- \* Do not try to get around the question or avoid providing a specific example
- \* Take your time and think of an appropriate answer
- \* Write/Prepare stories: Solved a problem? Saved the company money? Increased revenue? Achieved a goal? Resolved a conflict? Managed/disciplined an employee?

# Panel Interview

- \* 2-3 people, provides employer with multiple opinions about you
- \* Ask who you will be interviewing with?
  - \* Allows you to practice responses that make sense to multiple decision makers and their respective departments
- \* Modify communication and eye contact appropriately
- \* Attempt to connect with the panel
- \* Thank and follow-up with each panel member

# Stress Interview

- \* Questions to put you under pressure and see how you react
- \* Interviewer acts hostile towards you
- \* Appears uninterested and interrupts you
- \* Asks uncomfortable or similar questions
- \* Make you feel as if your answer wasn't good enough
- \* Extended pauses after responses
- \* Arguing your points

# Stress Interview

- \* Do not take questions personal or respond emotionally
- \* Be open, honest, direct & polite. Do not backtrack on answers or become intimidated.
- \* Focus on how you would handle situations; not necessarily giving the “right” answer
- \* Do not hesitate to ask for clarification of a question and/or nature of desired answer (buy some time)
- \* Research techniques to deal with aggressive interviewers and sample stress interview questions

# Case/Presentation Interview

- \* Show your ability to present information to a group
- \* Structure clearly: Introduction, Development of your argument/topic, Conclusion/Summary
- \* Speak clearly and do not rush; Try to memorize as much as possible
- \* Avoid excessiveness: 3-4 bullet points per slide with graphics and diagrams when appropriate
- \* Back up plan in case technology fails
- \* Take questions at the end

# Common Interview Mistakes



- \* Answer phone or text: 71%
- \* Dressing inappropriately: 69%
- \* Appearing disinterested: 69%
- \* Appearing arrogant: 66%
- \* Speaking negatively about previous employer: 63%
- \* Chewing gum: 59%
- \* Not providing specific answers 35%
- \* Not asking good questions 32%

-Source: CareerBuilder Interview Mistakes Survey



# Post Interview

- \* Thank you letter/email/card within 48 hours of interview to everyone you interview with.
- \* Allow at least 7 days before following up on status of position unless you were told otherwise.
- \* Address any concerns or missing information that wasn't available during interview.
- \* If declined position, let it be known you are still interested in future openings with company and/or if things do not work out with their candidate of choice.

# Questions

**BE THE  
BEST  
VERSION  
OF *you***

DO THE BEST YOU CAN