

Interview Etiquette

Guidelines – Before the Interview

1. Research, research, research

– Self Assessment – Know yourself!

- Skills, talents, abilities, strengths, weaknesses, interests, education, values, goals
- Know your resume inside and out; have your stories ready
- Career goals – What do I want to do?
- Types of work you enjoy and types you do not enjoy
- Use the internet and research the organization's webpage
- Work environment or conditions in which you are comfortable and those in which you are not comfortable.

– Employer Research

- Use research tools at the library – business directories, annual reports, databases of newspaper and periodical articles
- Ask those in your network who may be familiar with the company
- Talk with current or former employees

2. Practice makes perfect

- Familiarize yourself with common questions
- Be prepared to give examples of your personal characteristics, accomplishments, failures, reactions under stress or difficult circumstances
- Practice with friends and family. Also practice in front of a mirror.

3. Prepare employer questions

4. Choose professional attire

5. Call to confirm your appointment one (working) day in advance

6. Review directions & parking

7. Prepare copies of your resume and reference page (minimum of 3)

Guidelines – During the Interview

1. Beginning of Interview

- Allow plenty of time to arrive five minutes early
- Make sure that all cell phones and pagers are turned off
- Bring something career-related to read while you wait
- Bring extra resumes and reference pages
- Bring pen, professional notepad or portfolio (with questions for employer)
- Always be courteous, polite, and professional to everyone
- Introduce yourself with a smile, eye contact, and a firm handshake
- Use your interviewer's name
- Interviewer may begin with small talk; work to find something in common

2. Middle of Interview

- Maintain good posture and eye contact; avoid fidgeting
- Listen! (and give visual and verbal cues; use positive body language to show your interest)
- Project your voice and speak clearly
- Use correct grammar and diction (do not use slang)
- Use your action verbs
- Don't "think," "guess," or "feel" about things (indecisiveness signals lack of confidence)
- Give clear, concise answers that offer **specific examples** (do not ramble and do not give one word answers)
- Sell yourself; be confident and enthusiastic
- Do not dominate the interview; follow the interviewer's lead
- Remain positive (negativity will leave a negative impression; do not whine, complain, gripe, or bad mouth)
- Be honest (do not lie or exaggerate)
- It's okay to pause and regroup if you are feeling flustered

3. End of Interview

- Ask (3 – 5) insightful questions at the appropriate time
- Phrase your questions so that you sound confident
(*"What would my duties be?"* instead of *"What are the job duties?"*)
- Find out what happens next and reaffirm your interest
- Thank the interviewer for her/his time
- Ask for the interviewer's business card (if you do not have contact information for your thank you letter)

Guidelines – After the Interview

1. Write & carefully proofread a thank you letter

- Type and print on quality resume paper
- Send by mail (and email if you have the address) immediately following the interview
- Address to the individual who interviewed you
- If you have multiple interviewers, you should a thank you letter to each of them
- Express appreciation for opportunity
- Reaffirm things you liked &/or ways you'll meet their needs
- Add important things that you forgot
- Thank them and decline if you don't want the job
- If you want the job more than ever, show enthusiasm

2. Make follow-up call when appropriate

3. Record or log notes on interview including name of interviewer(s) and your analysis of the experience (what went well, what you could improve upon)