

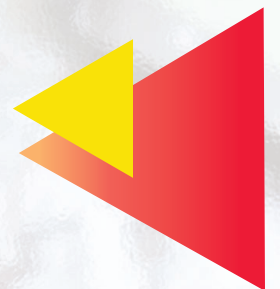
# Tips for Interviewing



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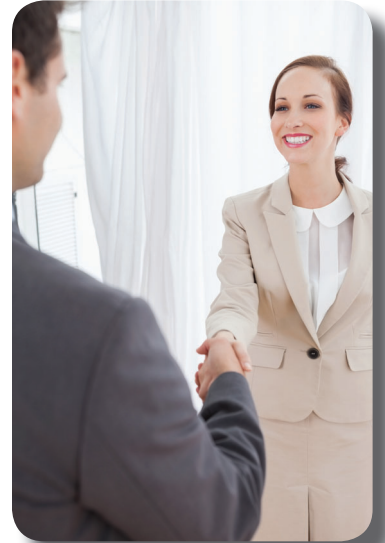


# Tips for Interviewing

The process of interviewing has changed quite a bit in recent years. A few years ago, a face-to-face interview was the only kind you would have. It might have involved one interviewer or a team of interviewers. Today, a first interview may be over the phone so the employer can spend less time and manpower figuring out if you should advance in the process. The phone interview may be followed by a digital interview using Skype or another software or app. If you are still in the running for the job, then you might get to a face-to-face interview.

No matter which interview method is used, you can benefit from these practical tips:

- Get plenty of sleep the night before and wake up early enough so you aren't rushed or still tired. This is especially important if your appointment is in the morning.
- Eat something for breakfast or lunch. Do this for energy and to keep your stomach from rumbling while you are trying to make your best impression.
- Be as prepared for a telephone interview as for an in-person interview. The employer may use a phone interview to quickly—and inexpensively—cut down the list of applicants. Because you can't be seen, you have to work even harder to make a good impression. You may also not have advanced notice before a telephone interview; the phone may ring and the interview begins when you answer. Sometimes, you can schedule the phone interview. If so, make sure your phone's battery is fully charged. Also be sure you have a quiet place to talk arranged in advance.
- Block out noise, interruptions, and other distractions. Make sure you can focus your full attention on the interview. Turn the TV and radio off (not muted).
- Make sure you have done your research on the employer.
- Know the job for which you are being interviewed and tailor your answers to that job.
- Have paper and a pen or pencil handy so you can take notes, write down questions you want to ask, etc.





- Be a good listener. When responding to questions, give more than one-word answers but avoid rambling. If you don't understand something that is said, ask for clarification but don't dominate the conversation.
- Have a list of questions to ask and keep the list handy so you can get it when needed. Start with 3-5 questions to ask the interviewer, then narrow them down to two.
- Pace yourself. Remember to breathe and think about your answers. Make sure you wait until the interviewer finishes the question, too.
- Speak slowly and clearly; talking too fast can confuse the interviewer.
- If you are being interviewed via Skype or other web-based app, make sure your Internet service and device are ready at least an hour before the interview. Dress appropriately even for this type of interview. You may not have to worry about which shoes to wear, but you still want to make a good impression.
- Before a face-to-face interview, make a "practice run" to the business at the same time of day as your appointment. This gives you a chance to find out how long it will take to make the drive in the same traffic conditions on the day of your interview. Leave home a little early in case of unexpected delays. Try to arrive 5-10 minutes early for the interview.
- Have the phone number of the person you are meeting. If something unavoidable happens and you are delayed on the way to an interview, you can call to reschedule the appointment. (This also shows the employer that you are considerate and responsible when something unexpected happens.)
- Adjust your clothes and check your hair before you enter the employer's building. Put a small breath mint into your mouth (not one that will color your tongue, though). Never chew gum.
- If you have sweaty palms, fold a paper towel or tissue into a small square and slip it into the palm of your hand. When it is time to go in to your interview, slip the paper into a pocket or your purse. That way, your handshake will be dry and confident.
- Remember that the receptionist or person at the front desk often plays a role in the hiring process. His or her impression of you can be helpful or can hurt your chances. This person may be a member of the hiring team and may pay attention to your appearance, behavior, and level of confidence after you arrive. Treat this person with the same respect and sincerity as you would the actual interviewer.
- Take an extra copy of your resumé to the interview, as well as your own pen (black ink), a small notebook, and the appropriate types of legal identification. Also bring the properly spelled names, addresses, and daytime phone numbers of your references and former employers.



- If anyone offers you coffee or another beverage before or during the interview, it is best to politely decline. It is too easy to spill a drink, which will not enhance the impression you might be making. NEVER smoke just before or during an interview. While the interviewer cannot legally ask about smoking, it could be obvious by the odor on your clothes or if you are seen smoking in the parking lot. Do not lie about smoking, if you do smoke, but don't give an employer a reason not to hire you if you can avoid it.
- Be an active participant in the interview. Have your questions to ask the interviewer written in the notebook you brought. Thoughtful and sincere questions show the interviewer that you are genuinely interested in the employer and in becoming an employee.
- Be ready to discuss your training in detail and to show that education has prepared you for the job. Make sure to address these soft skills as well:
  - Oral and written communication
  - Conflict resolution
  - Teamwork
  - Responsibility
  - Punctuality
  - Organizational skills
  - Interpersonal skills



It is common for employers today to search the Internet to look at how job applicants have used social media. It may not seem fair for someone to peek into your personal life, but social media provides one more tool for employers to use in the hiring process. As you can imagine, employers want employees who will make a good impression with customers and the public. Some employers will check an applicant's online information as a part of the hiring process. You need to manage your "digital dirt." Do this by:

- Being choosy about what you post about yourself.
- Searching for your own name to discover what others might be sharing about you.
- Using available privacy controls.
- Knowing the people with whom you share personal information.
- Removing information and photos that might limit your chances of getting a job.
- Keeping personal information private.
- Checking your "Internet presence" often and knowing what information is out there about you.
- Making sure you are putting your best image out there for the world to see.

