

Top 10 Interview Tips

1. Documentation

Thoroughly prepare your documentation. A Curriculum Vitae is a brief, concise document that presents, and effectively sells, the most relevant and positive credentials for employment. It should contain an outline of your personal, educational and professional history. An employer will usually spend 15 to 20 seconds reviewing your resume, so the content of your CV must be clear, concise, and targeted to the type of job for which you are applying. If your CV has a typo or grammatical error, it will probably jump off the page to an employer, and this is a way to weed you out of a candidate pool. Your resume may be the only chance you get to make an impression, so make it a good one.

2. Research

To effectively sell yourself as a job candidate, you need to be able to persuade the employer that you are a fit for that employer's needs. Even when the job market is great for job seekers, employers aren't going to interview and hire candidates who are not a match for their needs. You can't present yourself in cover letters or interviews, as a match for the employer's needs, if you don't know enough about the employer to do so. By doing research you obtain the information to ascertain which employers would be of interest to you and which employers could use your particular skill sets.

3. Correspondence

Target your mail. Individual correspondence to a recipient is much more effective than a bulk standard letter. Just as you can recognise a general "mailer", employers can too!

4. Interviews

Employers expect you to present yourself for interview knowing background information about their Company or organisation. Preparation is critical before an interview. You must know sufficient information on the Company to be able to answer the basic question of why you would like to work for them. If you are unable to answer, you will look as if you have no interest in the position.

5. Pre-interview

Confirm you will be attending, either by letter or email. If you ring up use it as an opportunity to check practical issues like car parking or directions.

6. Punctuality

Always ensure that you have established the location, time and place of the interview. Make the necessary travel arrangements to include extra time for unforeseen delays. Remember, arriving late for an interview does not create a good impression. There is also the possibility that the Company will not be able to rearrange an interview time.

7. Dress Sense

Your conduct, your interpersonal skills and your ability to articulate intelligent and well thought out responses to questions are the most important elements of an interview. Your clothes do play a supporting role however, during your interview. Wearing appropriate clothes, supports your image as a person who takes the interview process seriously and understands the nature of the industry in which you are trying to become employed. Plan what to wear. If you know you look good you will feel more confident. Dressing suitably for an interview is a compliment to the person you will be seeing. If the role you are applying for is customer facing it is more important that you present yourself for interview in suitable attire. If you end up being remembered for what you were wearing at interview, the likelihood is you were not suitably attired!

8. Interview Process

Some interviewers are skilled at the process others are not. Some interviewers are talkative, others let you do most of the talking. Most interviews, however, will either be open-ended (when the interviewer will ask questions and lets you do most of the talking) or a highly structured interview (when the interviewer will ask specific questions and has a planned format). Initially, the interviewer will try to establish a rapport and create a relaxed thorough businesslike atmosphere. This is where the interviewer gets the very important first impression of you, the candidate. The interviewer will examine your background and interests and will focus on what you are like and what you have accomplished, both academically and through previous work experience. It is the interviewer's objective to see if your qualifications are suitable for your work interest. If the employer feels that you would be suitable for a position with their company, it is likely that they will

discuss the job details to see how interested you are in the position. The interviewer will also at this stage explain the hiring process etc. It is advisable at this stage to ask any relevant questions on the role that has possibly not been covered in the job description e.g. career prospects with the position, salary expectations etc.

9. Telephone Interviews

Some employers use phone calls to pre-screen candidates before offering to see a candidate in person. Employers conducting interviews by telephone usually formally schedule the telephone interview in advance, but this can be done informally without warning by some employers. If this happens, and is not convenient, don't hesitate to politely explain this and offer to call back at a time convenient to the employer. Remember, the employer will be assessing your telephone manner and evaluating your conduct.

10. Length of Interview

Interviews vary from Company to Company. Some may be of a short duration, an hour or two while others may be spread over one or two days. Always ask for an itinerary in advance, if it is not provided.