

Candidate Interview Preparation

Since most of us don't interview on a daily basis, it is important to review what to expect and what should and shouldn't be done while interviewing.

Interview Checklist

- Thoroughly review Corporate Website of Potential employer. It is essential that you familiarize yourself with a potential employers' business culture, corporate structure, products etc... in order to intelligently discuss the opportunity you are interviewing for.
- Take a dry run to company to designate appropriate length of commute and exact location of company.
- Review your resume vs. the job description. While interviewing, be sure to stress the specific skills that relate to the job requirements. Remember to show your value and how your skill set will benefit the potential employer.
- Bring a Portfolio containing your resume and references. Be prepared!!
- Men: "Dress to Impress" This is never more important than on an interview! You only have one chance to make a first impression!!!! Attire should always be conservative and low key: a nice blue or gray suit with a white shirt and conservative tie.
- Women: Wear a skirt or pant suit in a conservative in color. A neutral color or black is the preferable choice. Avoid wearing perfume if possible. Often perfumes can be overpowering, especially if you are interviewing in a closed office.
- Prepare questions for the interviewer.....asking questions about the company, the position, and the individual who is interviewing you. This not only shows your interest level, but also provides you valuable information in order to make an informed decision and ensure that it is the right position for you. Utilize the job description to formulate questions.
- Do not be afraid to express your interest and enthusiasm for the position!! This goes a long way.

Things to keep in mind before going in:

- Are you dressed appropriately?
- Make a mental note to remember the people you met with and their titles.
- Smile!! Companies want to surround themselves with friendly people who are team players and get along well with others. A Smile costs you nothing, but will increase your value exponentially!!
- Avoid "Yes or No" answers!! It shows a lack of detail and depth in your skill set. By the same token, do not over answer the questions and go off on a tangent. Explain your answers in depth with confidence, but know when to stop!! Nothing is more frustrating to an interviewer then when a candidate over answers!
- If you feel there are some areas of the interview that did not go as smoothly as you would have liked, it is appropriate to ask if there are any reasons why you would not fit the position.
- At the end of the interview, inquire as to the next step going forward in the interviewing process and when they are looking to make a decision.
- Prior to leaving, be sure to express your interest and enthusiasm in the position/company. Make it the last point the interviewer hears from you...and be sure to say it with a SMILE!

- And last but not least, be sure to sell yourself on one or all of these three important things, think about how you have saved your company money, how you have made your company money, or how you did something that impacted the way the company now operates.

Pitfalls that cause an Interview to Fail:

- “They did not dress appropriately; he/she didn't look professional”
- “They talked to much and I couldn't get a word in”
- “Their skill set was too light” Meaning a candidate did not stress how their skill set would benefit the potential employer and fulfill their current need. Be sure to interact and emphasize how the particular skill set you possess will help fulfill their specific need. If necessary, repeat back to the interviewer their statement or question. Interactive conversation with the interviewer throughout the interview will let them know you understand what she/he is explaining.
- “Person was over qualified” (candidate oversold him/herself knowing that is was a lower level position)
- “Talked more about things he/she didn't know rather than their strengths” Remember: It is not what you say, it is how you say it!!. Do NOT interview negative!! If there is something missing from your skill set “de-emphasize” this and focus on the parts of your skill set that will fulfill their need
- They answered their cell phone!!