17 TIPS TO ACE THE INTERVIEW

Preparation is Key!

1. **Start with the end in mind:** Be purposeful and have a clear intention for your meeting. Visualize the interview going exceedingly well, connecting to the interviewer(s) and being offered the job.

2. **Determine the top 10 things that impress you about the company:** Shows enthusiasm and due diligence. Start the interview with mentioning these after building rapport.

3. **Develop self-knowledge in these areas** *(with related sample Interview Questions):*
   - **TOP 10-15 KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS** –
     Use the job description to prepare related STARs for your success stories and accomplishments.
     - **Situation/Task** ► **Action Steps** ► **Results** ► **Skills used**
     - **WHAT IS YOUR PROUDEST ACCOMPLISHMENT?**
   - **TRANSFERABLE SKILLS** –
     Up to you to connect the dots of how your background relates.
     - **HOW DOES YOUR PAST EXPERIENCE & SKILLS REFLECT ON WHAT WE DO HERE? TELL ME ABOUT A TIME WHEN YOU USED THOSE SKILLS.**
   - **UNIQUE SELLING POINTS – UNIQUE SELLING PROPOSITION** -
     - **WHY SHOULD WE HIRE YOU? WHAT CAN YOU DO THAT OTHERS CAN’T?**
     - **WHY ARE YOU THE BEST PERSON FOR THE JOB? WHAT IS DIFFERENT & UNIQUE ABOUT YOU?**
   - **PERSONAL VALUES – RELATES TO CULTURE & FIT** -
     - **WHAT MATTERS MOST TO YOU IN A WORK ENVIRONMENT?**
     - **WHAT VALUES ARE MOST IMPORTANT TO YOU?**
   - **TOP 5 MOST VALUABLE STRENGTHS/COMPETENCIES** -
     Relate these to the job description. Be ready to have samples of each with STARS.
     - **HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR STRENGTHS? GIVE ME AN EXAMPLE OF EACH.**

4. **Perform due diligence on the company:**
   - Services and/or products
   - Size, employees, branches
   - Brief history
   - President & key executives
   - Sales
   - International/Domestic operations
   - Recent press releases
   - Competitors, markets and competitive advantage
   - Interviewing individual(s)

5. **The quality of your preparation is a direct demonstration of how you would get the job done:**
   Review annual reports, current press releases and mission statements via websites and Social Media. Ask people in the field, competitors and employees for the inside scoop.

6. **Dress for the position:**
   This can account for 95% of the first impression you make on your prospective employer. Let your appearance demonstrate your success and support your purpose.

7. **The Handshake:**
   Give a firm, full-handed handshake with members of both sexes.

8. **Be polite and personable to everyone you encounter:**
   Employers hire people they like and whom their Assistants and staff like. Everything you say and do counts.
9. Act as if you have all the confidence in the world, because you ARE the best candidate for the job!

10. Be an interested listener and observer. Practice “unconditional positive regard” by nodding, smiling, and listening intently: Listen carefully and use body language to connect with the interviewer. Listening builds trust. Lean forward and nod agreeably to encourage more explanation.

11. Concentrate on making a contribution in a team environment:
Both competence and compatibility are important traits.

12. Present yourself as the problem-solver:
To do this effectively, you need to ask about the most pressing needs and challenges the department/company is facing. At the end of the interview, you should be able to list 3-5 specific needs, issues or problems that you can help them overcome.

13. Have questions for the interviewer:
These may be divided into questions about the company, position and culture, etc.

14. Avoid premature salary and benefits discussions:
Talk money and ask about benefits (only after) your value has been built and understood and not until the offer stage. Be prepared to defer the compensation discussion to another time. Whoever talks money first loses!

15. Close the interview! Remember, this is a sales call, and YOU are the product:
Give the top 3-5 reasons why you want to join the company. Remember what their pressing needs are and CLOSE THE INTERVIEW by telling them why you are the best person for the job and that you will help solve/overcome the specific problems that they mentioned (#1, #2, #3). Use the interviewer’s emotional words and phrases. When the Interviewer says, “Well, if you have no further questions, then we are done,” that is your cue to ask: What is the next step in the process? When are you making a decision? Who else will I be meeting with?

16. Follow-up:
You leave the interview and feel good about the position. Now go to your car and write down the key points of what happened. Record topics that were discussed, characteristics the interviewer described for the position and other details. This will help you write a thank you letter that shows both your interest and that you are a perfect match for the position. Include in the thank you letter, the points that show how you can be a problem-solver for the specific challenges that they are facing. This is another opportunity to sell yourself!

17. Congratulations!
Plan a reward for yourself after the interview for completing the interview successfully. You deserve it!

Provided by:
Janet Andrews, MA, President, Certified Career Coach  JAndrewsCareers@gmail.com  858.775.7551
http://twitter.com/JobCareerResume