

PREPARING FOR THE INTERVIEW

KNOW SOMETHING ABOUT THE COMPANY

1. Research the company using pamphlets, informational interviews, Chamber of Commerce/chamber member list, library, or website.
2. Get a job description. Do this by looking up the job order, website, informational interview, by calling the company, or by talking to someone you know who works there.
3. Information you should know: Name of company, what service/product they offer, what is that product used for/what is its purpose, what positions they hire for, shifts, the company's community involvement, etc.
4. Find out who will be doing the interviewing and how to spell their names.

QUESTIONS TO ASK WHEN CALLED FOR AN INTERVIEW

1. Who will I be interviewing with? (Be sure to get the correct spelling and pronunciation of the name or names. You may be interviewing with more than one person.)
2. Where will the interview take place? (Ask for the specific room, so you know where to go.)
3. What entrance to the building should I use? (You don't want to walk into a restricted area by mistake.)
4. Where should I park? If that is full, is there another place I could park? (If applicable.)
5. Who do I report to when I get there? (If the person on the phone says, "me," be sure to get that name also and write it down.)

HOW TO PREPARE

1. Role-play questions and answers with someone (spouse, parents, significant other, etc.), making sure to pay attention to tough questions.
2. Prepare a list of 5-10 good questions you can ask the interviewer

WHAT TO TAKE WITH YOU

1. Portfolio
2. Extra copies of your résumé (5-6). Feel free to leave a résumé or your personal skills list in front of you during the interview for reference.
3. Folder with a pen, questions for the employer, blank paper, thank you note, and 2-3 manila folders.
4. Manila folders should contain, résumé, references, letters of recommendation, high test scores, work evaluations, certifications/licenses, etc. Make sure your name is written on the folder and the items in the folder are important and apply to the position that you are interviewing for. Leave this with the employer at the end of the interview.

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HOW TO DRESS

1. Dress "one step above" what you would be wearing on the job.
2. Remember to remove coat and hat before interview.

THE EXTRAS

1. Eat well.
2. Get a good night's sleep.
3. Don't smoke before the interview.
4. Remember the secretary looks for first impressions.
5. Have a good attitude and smile.
6. No chewing gum.
7. Leave your phone in the car.

INTRODUCTIONS

1. Introduce yourself to the secretary, "Hello my name is _____, and I am here to interview for the _____ position." Remember to smile politely.
2. Introduce yourself to the interviewers. "Good Morning/ Afternoon, my name is _____." Remember to smile politely and have a firm handshake.

BODY LANGUAGE DURING THE INTERVIEW

1. Smile and use good eye contact with all of the people in the interview.
2. Use good posture-relax your back against your chair, hold you hands in your lap, and keep your feet together on the floor with your portfolio/folder in front of you.
3. Avoid doing anything that would distract the interviewer from focusing on your answers, i.e. tapping fingers, swinging feet, etc.

THE INTERVIEW

1. This is your chance to see yourself using proofs (previous work experience, education, and training), emphasizing your skills, strengths, and abilities.

Proofs:

- i. Describe past experience and achievements.
- ii. Demonstrate that you are a successful worker.
- iii. Tell a brief story.

INTERVIEW CHECKLIST

1. Smile and make good eye contact.
2. Show enthusiasm.
3. Know your skills, education, training, background, and understand the job requirements.
4. Study your review questions, answer sheet, and skills list.
6. Convince them you would be punctual, reliable, and a team player.
7. Convince them you really want to work for them.
8. Remember to keep family matters and personal problems out of the discussion, do not show the least bit of negativity.
9. Use interviewers' names during the interview (personable gesture).
10. Be honest and believable.
11. Ask questions you have prepared.
12. Be confident and relax - practicing will help with this. Remember practice makes perfect.
13. Answer questions without talking too much, but get your point across.
14. Take the initiative to ask if you can check back about a decision on the job.
15. Send each individual a thank you card directly after the interview.

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2. Refer to your portfolio
3. Describe experience and education in a positive way. For example, don't say "I started training in welding, but became distracted because of high workload."
4. It is OK to ask questions about the company or the position as you think of them; as long as it doesn't interrupt the flow of the conversation. This lets them know that you are interested in their company.
5. Make sure you show the interviewer and express through your answers that:
 - a. You can do the job.** The employer is looking for your skills, abilities, education, past experience, strengths, and background to see if you can successfully perform the duties of the job. Show them you are confident, have a positive attitude, can manage conflict and adjust to change, and you have desire to work for their company, etc.
 - b. You will do the job.** The employer looks at a person's attitude and work ethic, transportation issues, child care, any prior convictions/arrest, substance abuse problems, health issues, and reasons people left previous jobs. If asked, answer these questions discreetly, but honestly.
 - c. You are motivated to do the job.** Employers want to know you are interested and you will do the job with consistent effort.
 - d. You can get along with others.** They want to know if you will fit in to the existing team already on staff, if your work ethic, values, and goals are similar to that of the organization. They look at an applicant's character, personality, attitude, and temperament.

CLOSURE

1. When the interview comes to an end, you will be given the opportunity to ask questions. Use your list of prepared questions. If some have been answered avoid redundancy by not asking those questions.
2. After the question and answer session is complete, hand them your manila folder. "If you don't mind, I would like to leave with you copies from my portfolio."
3. Thank them, using their name, with correct pronunciation, for the opportunity to interview and then shake their hand firmly.

ON YOUR WAY OUT

1. Thank the receptionist. "I had a nice interview and would like to thank the interviewers. Could you help me with the correct spelling of their names?"
2. Be friendly to whomever you meet on your way out, you never know what their importance might be.

A FEW REMINDERS

1. Learn from your experience.
2. Do not be discouraged if you feel that you did not do well in an interview. Rather, take what you learned and practice for your next one.
3. Only one applicant is chosen for each job opening, which means that all other applicants are rejected.
4. Being turned down is part of the process. It is not a signal to become discouraged or to blame yourself or the company. Use it as an opportunity to take stock of your interview performance and make any necessary changes.
5. Give yourself a break and improve your self-esteem and confidence by recognizing that sometimes you are not hired despite excellent qualifications and a flawless interview performance.

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FOLLOW-UP

1. Send a thank you note immediately after the interview to all interviewers. If you interviewed with three people, you should send three thank you notes.
2. Make your Follow-Up phone call. Make sure to have a pleasant tone in your voice.
 - a. "Hello, my name is _____. I interviewed for the _____ position and am following up on whether a decision has been made on who will be hired."
 - b. If the position has not been filled: "Please let ____ (name) ____ know that if they would like any additional information to feel free to contact me. Thank you for your time."
 - c. If the position has been filled: "I appreciate the opportunity to interview for this position. If possible could you keep my résumé/application on file for any additional positions that come available that I qualify for?" You might want to ask, "Is there any information you can offer me to what disqualified me and could assist me in my continued job search or pursuit of training?"

Northwest Michigan Works! Centers and Kiosks

Cadillac

401 N. Lake Street, Suite 700
(231) 775-3408

Kalkaska

103 Third Street
(231) 258-8889

Manistee

1660 Manistee Hwy
(US 31 South)
(231) 723-2535

Petoskey

2225 Summit Park Drive
(231) 347-5150

Traverse City

1209 S. Garfield Ave., Suite C
1-800-442-1074

