

## Preparation Before and During the Interview

When it comes to job interviews two of the biggest things people want to know are:

What to do before an interview and what to do during an interview.

So basically as much as possible about the entire process...

Being interviewed is a critical aspect of the hiring process. After the submission of a resume that followed a prescribed format, and the consequent overview of it is done by the interviewer, the next procedure is face-to-face interaction with the potential employer.

It is essential that you put your best foot forward and allow the interviewer to get to know the person they'd be working with. They learned about your accomplishments from your resume; now show them your personality and how you handle yourself in a professional environment. This means you need to know what to do before an interview, what to do during an interview, and what to do after an interview as well.

Here are some of the important things to do:

### What to do before an interview

The things to do before an interview are typically a bit more mental than anything else. Usually the build up to an interview is much more nerve-wracking than the actual interview itself. With that in mind, shift your focus to preparation and do whatever you can to practice relaxation beforehand! Nerves can be useful if they motivate you to act. So take a deep breath, and read through our suggestions on things to do before an interview that will help you be prepared when you get into the room.

1. Get a good night's sleep the night before. You'll look better and feel better. This lets you make the best first impression.
2. Do your research. Know the company that you are interviewing with so you can answer their questions well and in the right context. It will also show that you are truly interested in the company.
3. Eat a good breakfast. You'll be more alert and focused.
4. Prepare questions beforehand. Know the answers to basic questions that they will most likely ask you. Also come up with a few questions about the company or position you are applying for to show that you're interested.

Some typical interview questions are:

- i. Can you tell me a little about yourself?
- ii. How did you hear about the **position**?
- iii. What do you know about the company?
- iv. Why do you want this **job**?
- v. Why should we hire you?
- vi. What are your greatest professional **strengths**?
- vii. What do you consider to be your weaknesses?
- viii. Tell me about a challenge or conflict you have faced at work, and how you dealt with it.
- ix. Where do you see yourself in five years?
- x. What is your dream job?
- xi. What type of work environment do you prefer?
- xii. How do you deal with pressure or stressful situations?

5. Make a few copies of your resume and put them somewhere where you won't forget to bring them.
6. Search the web. It is likely someone else has interviewed with the company, so search the web and see what others are saying about it.
7. Make sure your clothes are clean and wrinkle-free.
8. Know who will be interviewing you, and learn a bit about their background.
9. Know your strengths and put together a list of them.
10. Prepare a solid list of references that you can give your interviewer on the spot.
11. Know how to answer the question, "What will you add to the company by joining it?"
12. Carry a tissue or handkerchief in your pocket to dry your hands in case you are nervous before you go in.
13. Turn off your cell phone.
14. Prepare for the different types of interviews: behaviour, experiential, or combination.

That is our list of the most important things to do before an interview. You don't need to memorize everything on that list. Just make yourself familiar with them.

### **What to do during an interview**

Now that you're well-rested, prepared and at the designated location a little early – there are a few things to keep in mind once you're actually in the thick of things. Here's what to do during an interview:

1. Ask the permission of the interviewer while entering the interview chamber.
2. Answer the question that was asked.
3. Shake the interviewer's hand.
4. Let the interviewer show you your chair – now is the time to be submissive, so as to not offend the interviewer.
5. Say "Yes," not "Yeah."
6. Take a second before answering a question to show you are putting some thought into your answer.
7. Take notes.
8. Let your achievements speak for you.
9. Ask questions, including asking for a full description of the type of work that you will be doing.
10. Keep eye contact.
11. Be yourself.
12. Start with conversation topics that you are comfortable with. This will allow you to direct the interview to a certain degree and present yourself in a positive light.

Now that you know what to do during an interview that brings out the list of...

### **What not to do during an interview**

While we do highly recommend that you focus your energy on what to do during an interview – make sure that you have at least a preliminary grasp of the no-nos. These can hurt or kill your chances of landing the job, and they are all very preventable. Make it second nature to avoid these and you will be in a very good spot when it's time to interview. Remember, there are a lot of other people who will be committing these interview sins. This alone can help you make it past the first wave of interviews.

1. Don't talk too quickly.

2. Don't digress from your points. Answer questions directly.
3. Don't use slang.
4. Don't use words you don't know the meaning of.
5. Don't be arrogant.
6. Don't talk about your personal life.
7. Don't give the employer any reason to think you will not perform well.
8. Don't act nervous. You probably will be, but it is best if you take a few seconds and clear your mind; your answers will be less jumbled. If you find yourself getting really nervous, excuse yourself and go to the bathroom to get some air. Don't take too long but it is better to collect your thoughts than to plow ahead when you can't focus.
9. Don't fidget. This might be something you have to practice but it is worth it.
10. Don't get defensive. The interviewer will be asking technical questions. Everyone has their weak spots and that is okay – work with it and practice for it.