

Tips for a Successful Interview



Interviews are often key to obtaining a job, entrance to a college or university, and scholarships. The interview is your opportunity to demonstrate what kind of person you are to the interviewer. Therefore, you should be well prepared for the interview. You should find out about the company, the employer, the school, or the scholarship program. You should also pay attention to details such as personal appearance, punctuality, and demeanor.

Before the Interview

If you are interviewing for a job, prepare yourself as much as possible by researching the company, the employer and the position. Do the same type of research on the schools or scholarship programs. If possible, recruit a friend, volunteer leader, teacher, or family member to conduct a trial interview session with you before the interview. If you are interviewing for college entrance or a scholarship, try to contact someone who has been granted entrance or the same scholarship for additional tips and background information.

Dress properly. Tailored, businesslike clothes are better than dressy or casual clothes. You want the employer to look at you, not at your clothes. Be neat and clean, with hair combed and shoes shined.

During the Interview

Apply alone. The employer, admissions director, or scholarship board wants to talk to you, not to your relatives or friends.

Be on time. Being on time, or even a few minutes early, demonstrates to the interviewer you can be punctual. It also demonstrates that you are really interested in the job, entrance or scholarship. If you are late for your interview, your chances of getting the job, gaining entrance, or getting the scholarship are hurt.

Be friendly. Smile. Know the interviewer's name and use it during the interview. Show an interest in the business or college. When the interviewer asks you questions about yourself, answer politely.

Use good manners. Stand until you are invited to sit. Do not smoke or chew gum. Sit up straight and be alert. Be sure to thank the interviewer for meeting with you.

Listen. Interviewers know more about the job, college, or scholarship than you do, so let them do most of the talking. Listen to the questions and statements and let them determine what you say or how you respond.

Speak clearly and confidently. Think about what you are going to say before you speak. Take time to cover all points, answers, and questions completely.

Be honest. Tell only what you can do and have done. Stress your qualifications. Present your work record, references, or other material to support your statements when they are requested.

Do not be afraid. Most interviewers are patient and considerate. Be confident. You have something to offer. Remember, the interviewer is looking for good workers or students with strong potential. You are looking for a good job, college entrance, or a scholarship.

After the Interview

Follow Up. Always remember to write a thank you note after completing the interview. Thank the interviewer for the opportunity to have interview with them. This small step may make the difference between your being selected and the next person if everything else is equal.

Keep your courage. If you do not get the job, entrance into the school, or the scholarship, accept the fact that the particular job, school, or scholarship was probably not suited to you or you for them. If you have made a good impression in the interview, the employer, admissions director or scholarship board may refer you to another employer, school or scholarship opportunity or even save your name for future reference if another opportunity becomes available.



Once You Have a Job...

It is up to you to be successful. Your employer expects you to produce good work. Your ability to get the job done will help determine how successful you are. Set a goal to develop the traits of a successful worker, which include the following:

- Positive work attitude
- Dependability
- Cooperation
- Initiative
- Pride in work
- Ability to get along with others
- Honesty
- Enthusiasm
- Cheerfulness
- Ability to listen to and carry out instructions
- Loyalty
- Efficiency – not wasting time and materials
- Reliability
- Good and prompt attendance
- Helpfulness
- Willingness to learn
- Ability to follow rules and regulations

As a successful worker, you can generally expect the following things from your employer:

- Appreciation for work well done
- Training and orientation necessary to do the job
- Adequate pay for work done
- Understanding of personal problems
- Explanation of work benefits such as insurance, bonuses, and vacation
- Provisions for safety on the job
- Information about changes that will affect you
- Obedience to all legal regulations
- Discipline for rules violation

If you follow the advice in this information sheet, and you will be a successful student or employee.



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