

Interviewing Tips

Intro: There is one basic truth that anyone currently looking for a job should remember and that is that you're in good company. There are a large number of senior people that have been laid off recently, through no fault of their own. Getting past thinking that you are to blame for being let go is the first, and in my opinion, most important step.

The Basics:

- Be positive. This is a business meeting between two professionals. Make it less personal and more about how you can mutually help each other. Put yourself in that frame of mind.
- Prepare for the meeting (do research on the company, make sure your technical skills are tweaked, have some questions for the interviewer and be prepared for the tough questions).
- Bring a copy of your resume and something to write on (and with).
- Bring a portfolio or work samples, if applicable.
- Dress for Success. If you don't know the environment—overdress, it never hurts. You can always ask what the dress code is when the interview is being set up as well.
- Be early but not too early. 15 minutes early to fill out an application is usually good.
- Check for sweat. (First impressions are lasting, and sometimes forever).
- Be kind and courteous to EVERYONE you meet at the client site. You never know who will be giving feedback to the hiring manager.
- Firm handshake, but avoid crushing.
- Good eye contact.
- Answer questions truthfully and directly. Avoid yes or no answers. If you aren't familiar with a specific skill, mention comparables that you have worked with.
- Look for body language answers by the interviewer to see if elaboration is necessary (or just ask: *Have I answered the question to your satisfaction?*)
- Express interest in the position and ask what the next steps are.

Note: Interviewers have more candidates to choose from right now so they can afford to be pickier. They are looking to weed out the weaker candidates as much as they are looking to find the right fits--Don't give them a reason.

If you are interviewing for a consulting position, remember that the impression you leave in this interview will be the impression the interviewer will have of your interview with a client. Don't take anything for granted.

Avoid:

- Speaking negatively about former employers or coworkers.
- Chewing gum—duh.
- Long-winded answers.
- Lying—the truth shall set you free.
- Fidgeting or getting distracted.
- Cockiness, but be confident—there IS a difference.
- Money and benefits unless brought up by the interviewer.

What motivates an interviewer (my thoughts):

- Outstanding communication skills. **Your resume got you in the door but it's your soft skills that will get you the position.**
- The right skillset for the role.
- Loyalty and trustworthiness.

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- Initiative and problem solving ability.
- Affordability

Bottom line---Will you be easy to work with and make them look good?

Always remember: Their reputation/income is at least partially determined by the quality of the people they hire. Would they benefit by hiring you?

Additional tips:

- Use insider information if you have access.
- Mock interview for the position.
- Use the interviewer's name to build rapport—but be careful not to go overboard and use it with every answer or question.
- Get their business card or at least their title.
- Send a thank you card or email—it's not as common as you would think and it definitely sets you apart as a professional.

Screening Interview Tip: The goal is to pass to the next stage. Don't give inaccurate information and keep the answers brief and to the point.

Hiring Interview: Make them like you. You will have to impress them as someone they would like to work with.

Potential Questions for Interviewers:

Questions show interest and participation and therefore are important aspects to any interview. If an interviewer ever asks you if you have any questions, and you have not asked any as of yet, they are testing you. Here are some easy ones to remember in case you get stuck.

How many people are in your department?

How big is your team?

Who does this position report to?

What are the core hours for the position?

When do you plan to make a decision?

How long have you been working here?

What are the attributes of your IDEAL candidate?

What question(s) have I left unanswered that you wanted to discuss?

No matter what the response by the interviewer, remain positive. Weigh ALL of the benefits of a position before making any comments to the negative. Things may not be so bleak upon further consideration.

GOOD LUCK!

Interview Questions You'll Hear Over and Over

- Tell me a little about yourself.
- Why did you leave your last job?
- Tell me about your last job? (How does it relate to this one?)
Hints: Broad parameters of the job.
 How what you did related to the company's business.
 Specific contributions you made.
- How much do you know about our company?
- What are your strengths?
- What are your weaknesses?
- Where do you hope to be five years from now?
- What is it about our company that appeals to you?
- What do you think you can bring to this company?
- Knowing what you know about this job and our company, would you make changes if you were offered this position?
- Describe a typical day in your last job?
- Why should I hire you?
- Tell me about your previous bosses.
- Do you consider yourself a team player? Do you prefer to work alone or on a team?
- What's the biggest problem you faced in your last job and how did you solve it?
- I'm going to give you a hypothetical situation, and I'd like to know how you would handle it.
- If I were to call your former boss, what would he or she be likely to say about your strengths and weaknesses?
- What did you like most about your previous job?
- What did you like least about your previous job?
- What are you looking for salary wise?
- If we were to hire you, when could you start?