

Interviewing Prep: Quick Tips and Suggestions

Your Interview Goals:

BEFORE THE INTERVIEW

Review your resume: make sure you know your resume well enough that you can discuss every line if necessary!

Develop your career objectives: be prepared to articulate your career goals, highlighting how these goals fit in with the position and organization you are interviewing for.

Research the employer: research its history, present day standing and future directions. Explore the company's website, company brochures, yearend statements, trade journals, local Chamber of Commerce, professional organizations and media coverage. Develop an understanding of their mission and vision, size and locations, organizational structure, services/products offered, sales volume and competitors.

Practice, Practice, Practice: conduct a mock-interview with a colleague, friend, family member or Career Development Center professional. Keep in mind that the less familiar you are with your mock-interviewer, the more likely you are to experience and have the opportunity to practice managing the "real life" anxiety and pressure you can expect during your actual interview. Prepare a list of questions to ask of the interviewer(s).

Choose your interview attire: try it on after you pick it out and model it for a friend. Be certain it is laundered and pressed. Business attire is appropriate for most interviews, unless otherwise notified. See interview clothing tips later in this guide.

AFTER THE INTERVIEW

Keep your letters /emails brief and send them within 24 hours of your interview (see "thank you letter" handout).

Following-up: if the discussed follow-up timeframe has passed and an employer has not followed-up with you, wait a few days and email or call the employer to inquire as to the status of the position and your candidacy. If you weren't given a timeframe, it is appropriate to follow-up with an employer a week after the initial interview.

If you are offered the position: thank the employer and ask for time to consider. It is wise to take at least 24 hours to evaluate an offer, but do not drag things on. Ask the employer when they need to know your decision.

Declining a job offer: thank the employer for their job offer and express regret that you will not be able to accept their offer at this time. Remain friendly and tactful throughout, as you do not want to burn any bridges with them.

Response to being declined for a job: be sure to demonstrate a positive attitude and express gratitude for having been considered. If so desired, suggest that you would be interested in similar positions within the organization as they become available. If you anticipate reacting poorly to being declined for a job, talk about this with someone as soon as you complete your interview so that you can prepare accordingly.

COMMON QUESTIONS ASKED BY EMPLOYERS