



INTERVIEW INSIGHTS

Here are 10 basic interview checkpoints for you to keep in mind before you arrive for any interview. It is important to appear confident and cool for the interview. The best way to make this happen is to be prepared to the best of your ability. There is no way to predict how an interview will go, but by following these important rules, you will feel less anxious and will feel more prepared to positively present yourself.

Look Sharp

- Before the interview, carefully select your apparel. Depending on the industry and position, get out your best clothes and check them over for spots and wrinkles. Even if the company has a casual environment, you want to look your best and for an interview—“Dress for Confidence!” Dress nicely even for interviews at fast food restaurants.

Be on Time

- Never arrive late for an interview. Give yourself extra time to arrive allowing for things like getting lost, traffic back-ups, car trouble, etc. If you don't know how to get there, use Map Quest! Enter the building 10 to 15 minutes before the interview. Be polite to secretaries and receptionists – they often provide input to their bosses concerning interviewees!

Do Your Research

- Researching the company before the interview and learning as much as possible about its services, products, customers, and competition will give you an edge in understanding and tailoring your answers to the company's outlook and goals. The more you know, the better chance you have of selling yourself.

Be Prepared

- Bring along a folder containing extra copies of your resume, a copy of your references, and paper to take notes. Have a “pocket resume” with names, addresses, dates, etc. if asked to complete an application before the interview begins. Have general responses ready for these sample questions an employer may ask in an interview:
 - ✓ Tell me about yourself
 - ✓ What qualifications do you have for the position?
 - ✓ Why do you want to work for our firm?
 - ✓ Why are you leaving your current position?
 - ✓ What do you like most about your current job? Least?
 - ✓ How were your grades in math? In English?
 - ✓ Tell me about your computer skills.
 - ✓ What do you plan to be doing for work in five years? In ten years?
 - ✓ What are your greatest strengths? Weaknesses?
 - ✓ Have you ever been convicted of a crime?
 - ✓ Last year, how many days of work (or school) did you miss? How many days were you late?
 - ✓ What motivates you to do a good job?
 - ✓ Do you work best alone or in a group?
 - ✓ Have you ever been fired from a job? Why?
 - ✓ Do you have any questions for me?

Show Enthusiasm

- A firm handshake and plenty of eye contact demonstrate confidence. Speak distinctly in a confident voice, even though you may feel nervous. Avoid nervous mannerisms such as twirling your hair, cracking your knuckles, chewing gum, gazing around, etc.

Listen

- Make sure you are not only listening very carefully, but also reading between the lines. Sometimes what is not said is just as important as what is said. Be an effective listener.

Answer the Question Asked

- Candidates often don't think about whether or not they actually are answering the question asked by their interviewers. Make sure you understand what is being asked, and get further clarification if you are unsure. It is okay to take a couple of seconds to think about your response before answering a question.

Give Specific Examples

- A one- or two-word response will never sell your work skills to an interviewer. They may not ask for examples, but they are waiting for you to offer them. Prepare your examples before the interview. Give examples that highlight your successes and uniqueness. Examples should not be negative or too personal. They should exemplify your work ethic, skills, education and quality of character. Bring a portfolio of your work to show interviewers your quality of work.

Ask Questions

- Be sure to have some questions prepared for the interviewer. Many interviewees don't ask questions and miss the opportunity to find out valuable information and show the employer they are truly interested in the position. Don't ask questions you should have the answers to through research you should have done before the interview, i.e. "What does your company manufacture?" Here are a few examples:

- ✓ How would I be trained or introduced to the job?
- ✓ If hired, would I report directly to you, or to someone else?
- ✓ If you were to offer me this job, where could I expect to be in five years?
- ✓ If hired, how would I get feedback on my job performance?
- ✓ How is the job important to the company? How does it contribute?
- ✓ What are the department's goals for the year?
- ✓ Would you describe a typical workday and the things I would be doing?
- ✓ What is the most enjoyable aspect of this position?
- ✓ What will be the most difficult part to learn?

Follow Up

- Whether through e-mail or regular mail, the follow-up correspondence is one more chance to remind the interviewer of all the valuable traits you bring to the job and company. A handwritten thank you card is best, but a thank you e-mail is better than nothing. Don't miss this last chance to market yourself!