

HOW TO HAVE A SUCCESSFUL INTERVIEW

You are being interviewed because the interviewer has open position(s) that need to be filled. Simply stated they are ready to hire when they find the right candidate. Through the interaction that will take place during the interview, the interviewer will be searching out your strong and weak points, evaluating you on your qualifications, skills and intellectual qualities, and probably probe deeply to determine your attitudes, aptitudes, stability, motivation and maturity.

Knowing that you are the best candidate for a position is not enough. You must be prepared to show the company you can do the job and why they should hire you. Do this by giving examples of what you have done previously for other companies or activities which utilized the same skills and qualities that they are presently seeking. Give specific examples that demonstrate how you used a particular competency and the result. Show confidence and enthusiasm.

No matter how good you are or how great the demand for your type of experience, you must sell your assets to the employer. Be prepared to do this on your own, during the interview. If we do our job well, we will open the door and arrange the interview. Then you're on your own. Approach the interview and the entire negotiation with a positive attitude. Rather than deciding if you want to work for a company on the basis of the appearance of the building, the individuals you meet, and /or the information you receive about the specific assignment, decide in advance that **you** will approach each interview with one thought in mind--get the offer!

Since offers are extended to those candidates who appear to be best qualified, you must emphasize your good points and eliminate or avoid discussion of negatives. Without lying, you must answer all questions with whatever positive comments you might make. Every time you answer a questions with the word "no", you decrease your chances of an offer. Therefore, even if your experience is quite limited in a particular area, it would be better to respond with a comment of what it is you know, rather than any reference to what you do not know. Keep in mind your objective – get the offer.

Start now to be enthusiastic and positive throughout the entire interview, without reservation. Have the "Be of Service Attitude". Know exactly what you can do for this company, before you go in there. Below are the helpful tips to prepare for interview:

1. Arrive early for your interview. If a time problem occurs always call ahead of time and inform the interviewer of your predicament.
2. If you carry a cell phone, make sure you turn it on silent ring during the interview.
3. If asked to fill out a company application form. Do it neatly and completely. Bring a copy of your resume to the interview.
4. Greet the interviewer by his or her last name and be sure of the pronunciation. Always use a firm handshake whether greeting a male or female. Walk, talk, act, feel and look like the right person for the job you seek.
5. Sit upright in your chair, look alert and interested at all times. Be a good listener as well as a good talker. SMILE. Always look directly at the person you are meeting with.
6. Follow the interviewer's lead, but try to get the interviewer to describe the position and duties to you early in the interview so that you can relate your background and skills to the position.
7. Present your background and interests with enough informative detail, particularly if they relate to the job. Be completely familiar with those important dates of your education and work history so that your answers show a career commitment on your part.

8. Make sure that your good points get across to the interviewer in a factual, sincere manner. Keep in mind that you alone can sell yourself to an interviewer. Make the interviewer realize the need for you in the organization.
9. Most questions should not be answered with only a 'yes' or 'no'. Explain whenever possible. Tell those things about yourself which relate to the situation—be brief and avoid bragging. Illustrate ability with an example. Instead of "Am a leader" say, "Organized local engineering chapter and served as its President." Instead of "Am Company's best sales representative," say "Placed first among 25 sales people last year." Quote others. "Have been told I have a creative approach to problem solving." Or, "My boss says I get along well with just about everyone." Show appreciation. "Was fortunate in being given increasing responsibility and promotions." Give credit where due. "Working under one of the nations' leading designers, I have had wonderful training."
10. Be careful not to "over answer" questions. The interviewer may steer the conversation into politics or economics. Since this can be a ticklish area, it is best to answer the questions honestly, trying not to say more than is necessary.
11. Avoid the mistake of inquiring about SALARY, BENEFITS, VACATIONS, BONUSSES, RETIREMENT, etc. on the initial interview. If the company asks you what salary you expect, you must ask for "the best offer you can make, based upon my education and experience." By far, the most frequent obstruction to an offer is an excessive salary demand. Many people feel that they should ask for a figure that is higher than one they might find acceptable, and/or try to renegotiate after the company has extended an offer. These approaches are antiquated! If the interview insists upon a figure it would be desirable for you to get an idea of the range the company has in mind and then respond by saying, "I think we are speaking in the same ball park," or "I had something higher in mind." Keep in mind the following points. Different people applying for the same job may be compensated at different levels. Asking for a particularly high figure and state that it is a 'minimum' may result in no offer. Stating a willingness to move laterally, or take a cut, if necessary, may be underselling in relation to the company's assessment of your capabilities, and may also create questions. The employer ultimately makes the decision whether or not to extend an offer. If the interviewer has a favorable impression of you, based on positive answers to questions in the areas of experience and education, and if in the employer's opinion you can perform well in the position, all that remains is the question of money. A firm minimum figure, if too high, can and frequently does eliminate an offer. Conversely a willingness to accept "anything" may lead to an offer at a lower figure than might have been possible or no offer at all if the employer begins to wonder why? Since it is true that the employer decides how much to offer, asking for the best possible offer should produce the desired result. Once that figure is established, you will reach a decision by assess the salary as well as the company, the work, our potential growth, your co-workers, benefits, location, etc. Look carefully at the opportunities the position offers you, not what you'll be earning now, but ten, fifteen, or twenty years from today. It's easy to earn raises on a lower starting salary, when you prove your worth on the job.
12. Always conduct yourself as if you are determined to get the job you are discussing. Never close the door on opportunity. It is better to be in a position where you can choose from a number of jobs.
13. ASK FOR THE JOB! Expressing your desire for the job automatically tells the company that you want to work for them. If you are interested in the position, ask for it. Ask for the next interview if appropriate. If the position is offered to you, and you want it, accept it. If you wish some time to think it over, be courteous and tactful in asking for that time. If you decide you do not want the job, DO NOT reject it. Tell your TCI Recruiter and they will communicate it to the company. THIS IS IMPORTANT!

14. Before and after your interview, offer a firm handshake. It tells the other person you believe in yourself.
15. If you are a smoker, it is a good idea not to smoke right before the interview.
16. Remember not to chew gum on an interview.
17. Answer questions truthfully, frankly, and as straightforward as possible.
18. Be careful not to make derogatory remarks about your present or former employers.
19. Don't be discouraged if no definite offer is made or specific salary discussed. The interviewer will probably want to communicate with other decision makers in the company first, or interview more candidates before making that decision.
20. If you get the impression that the interview is not going well and that you have already been rejected, don't let your discouragement show. Once in a while an interviewer who is genuinely interested in your possibilities may seem to discourage you in order to test your reaction.
21. Thank the interviewer for his or her time and consideration of you. If you have answered the two questions uppermost in the interviewer's mind: (a) Why are you interested in the company? And (b) What can you offer? You have done all you can.
22. Acknowledge the interview with a brief personal letter immediately following the interview. Be sure to use enthusiasm, confidence, interest, and appreciation in your selection of words to be utilized in the letter. It is not good practice to contact the interviewer directly for feedback, please contact your Recruiter.

WHAT DO COMPANY INTERVIEWERS LOOK FOR?

When a position opens at most companies, it's not unusual for many people to apply for the job. Yet in every case, only one actually lands the spot. Everyone else then spends an hour or two wondering why they weren't chosen. Some curse the system, while others work to perfect their interviewing skills for the next opening that comes along.

To better understand how companies choose among hundreds of applicants to fill just one position, take a look at the following guidelines. They were developed to help interviewers evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of each candidate by rating characteristics and abilities in eight areas. By knowing what interviewers look for, you can direct your efforts to only those areas of importance. The areas rated are:

PERFORMANCE:

- Has the candidate developed a command of the required industries, functions and technical databases?
- Given your understanding of the organizations and constraints under which the person has worked, are his or her accomplishments significant?
- If you project the candidate's achievements into your organization, would they compare favorably to your personal performance expectations?

MANAGEMENT ABILITY:

- Does the individual contribute to planning processes and believe in the virtues of planned activity?
- Does the person have a capability for administrative tasks and dedicate appropriate attention to them?
- Does the candidate place a premium on teamwork and properly motivating and developing subordinates?
- Does the individual understand the process of delegation and demonstrate a willingness to delegate and implement proper controls on the delegation process?

- Is there evidence that previous risk-taking behavior is appropriate to the style of the organization?
- Does the candidate demonstrate objectivity in his or her capabilities and the capabilities of others and staff accordingly?

EMOTIONAL MATURITY:

- Does the candidate demonstrate resiliency under stressful conditions?
- Will behavior be predictable? Will the candidate provide a consistent point of reference for subordinates?
- Is there evidence of self-knowledge which allows maximization of strengths and buttressing of weaknesses?
- Have good judgment, self-discipline and tough-mindedness been amply demonstrated?

MOTIVATION:

- Is there a long-term behavioral pattern of goal setting and achievement throughout the individual's development?
- Does the candidate have an ongoing plan for personal and career development that is aggressive relevant and achievable?
- Does the person display aggressiveness, drive and follow-through in the pursuit of business tasks?
- Is the candidate an initiator in both individual and group settings?

Intelligence:

- Did the candidate demonstrate academic excellence in secondary and college pursuits? Were challenging courses chosen?
- Did he or she exhibit analytical acuteness and creativity in problem-solving behavior in past jobs? In the interview? Does the candidate have the ability to deal with simultaneous, complex problem-solving tasks?
- Were professional degrees, designations and other recognitions achieved with distinctions?
- Does the individual have a wide span of interests and activities?

COMMUNICATIONS:

- Was the candidate articulate during the course of the interview? Were questions answered candidly and concisely and with good organization?
- Does the individual communicate at appropriate detail level for the circumstances?
- Does the candidate demonstrate an acceptable style of communication in terms of energy level, flow, eye contact and sense of humor?

BEARING:

- Does the person present a healthful and well-groomed personal appearance? Is the clothing selection appropriate to the status level and industry?
- Are the levels of interpersonal skill and sophistication suitable to the role to be played in the organization?
- Does the candidate project self-confidence and leadership capacity?

CAREER DEVELOPMENT AND GROWTH POTENTIAL:

- Does the overall career achievement to date, as well as knowledge, personal maturity and growth potential, make him or her a realistic candidate?
- Does the individual's personal circumstance appear to provide a solid backdrop for career success?
- Are the candidate's current and future expectations for responsibility, title, earnings and geography achievable within the organization?

- What capabilities and potential exist for future growth into other staff, line or general management responsibilities?