

Phone Interview

- **Research** - Prior to the phone call, research their website at length. Financials, 10K, Annual report with special emphasis on the Chairman's letter.
- **Why are you interviewing?** - Know the reason why you would like to work at the company
- **Laundry List** - Have a list of accomplishments and pertinent skills in front of you and know why you are a fit for the job. If you cannot articulate this you may not get to the face to face interview.
- **Quiet Area** - Schedule the interview at a time and number where you can be alone and talk freely. Land lines are better than mobile phones whenever possible. (Make sure the dog doesn't bark in the background.)
- **Resume at the Ready** - Be sure to have your resume in front of you so you can follow along with your background as they ask you questions.
- **Be Honest** - Answer questions as directly as possible. If you do not know, say so. Be candid, friendly, cheerful and courteous. Confident but not cocky. If you sense that the other person wants to do lots of talking, let them. People like others who are interested in hearing them talk!
- **Starting the interview** - When the interview starts, it is a good idea to ask the interviewer to clarify what the position will entail and what type of person they are looking for in the role. Make sure to gear your answers to what type of person the manager is looking for; i.e. if he wants someone who is highly organized, explain that you have that skill during the interview.
- **Questions Ready** - Be sure to have 5-7 questions about the company, group and position ready before the interview that you can ask at the end. Ask questions about the group, project, Day to Day work, etc. Chances are the manager will have answered some during the interview so having more ensures you have some left to ask.
- **Next Steps** – Once the interview is over there are 4 things you want to make sure you do:
 1. Thank the manager for investing their time to interview you
 2. Explain why you would be a good fit for the role based on what things were mentioned during the interview
 3. Ask the manager if they have any concerns about you moving to the next step in the process (which will give you a chance to explain how you can either overcome the objection or if it was just a skill you hadn't covered)
 4. Tell the manager that you want the job – so many people lose a job because the manager didn't think they were interested. SHOW YOUR INTEREST!

Face-to-face interview

- **Be Prepared** - Prior to your visit, educate yourself about the company. Go through their web site and write down several questions that come to mind. Look them up on Google. Know the reason why you'd like to work at the company. People notice when you have knowledge of their company and/or products. Research the individuals on LinkedIn, Myspace, ZoomInfo.
- **Know Your Directions** - Make sure the directions you received are accurate. Nothing says, "I'm not prepared" like getting lost on the way to an interview. Arriving 15-20 minutes early is a way to ensure you will not be late. Just wait outside the office until 5 minutes before the interview,

and then make your grand entrance exactly on time. (Use the extra time to review the job description, your resume, and go to the bathroom and make sure you are presentable.)

- **Practice** - Practice your interview skills - that means answering the interview questions out loud to yourself as if you were in the interview. Running through your answers a few times builds confidence and assures yourself you will come across as articulate, efficient and prepared.
- **5 Resume Copies** - Take at least 5 copies of your resume - you'll be prepared if they do not have copies.
- **Take Notes** - Bring a nice note pad to take notes. Have 10 -15 questions written down on the pad before you get to the interview. You don't want to make it to the end of the interview without any questions left!
- **Dress Code** - Know the office dress code. Look sharp and professional. Being overdressed is always better than being underdressed. Both men and women should always opt for the traditional business suit as their interview attire.
- **Confidence** - Firm handshake upon arrival and positive attitude throughout.
- **Be enthusiastic and friendly.** Listen more than you talk (no single factor is more important in determining success in an interview).
- **Eye Contact** - Look people in the eye when talking or listening to them.
- **Just Listen** - No single thing you can do will affect the interview more than just being a good listener. Listen to questions asked of you. Answer them fully and directly. Do not talk too much. Never oversell your skill set.
- **Salary** - If they ask you what salary you want, the only acceptable answer at this point is "I am open to any fair and reasonable offer".
- **Nothing Negative** - Do not criticize or come across as negative about your present or past employers or co-workers. Stay professional and avoid personal information unless it's "polite" conversation.
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- **Send a thank you letter** – Send me a thank you note to forward along to the manager.

Some Questions You May Hear in the Interview:

- **Tell me about yourself.** They are looking for a concise, descriptive, and informative summary of more current and relevant career information, not long past personal information. Give your “30 second commercial.” Being too wordy can be a bad thing, it is best to keep it simple.
- **Why do you want to work at XYZ Company?** This is where your website and company history homework pays off. Give examples of specifics that you have found on their site, OR past projects that you enjoyed that apply.
- **What is your proudest accomplishment/ What are your greatest strengths?** This is your turn to brag a bit, but not to the point of being arrogant. At least 2 examples, offer references that can attest to your work, etc. The more specifics you can offer, the better you look. Bring up sales numbers, deadlines, \$\$ Savings, whatever is measurable and speaks well of your efforts.
- **What would you classify as an area of improvement, and how would you go about achieving those improvements?** Try to pick something that isn't a "DEAL KILLER" meaning something that IS NOT a job requirement, and that is not easily improved upon. Lots of folks choose something that is indirectly related to the role so that it doesn't affect your interview success. *For example: "I realize this position requires a great deal of systems reporting experience and you work with system "x". I do have considerable experience with reporting, but up to now, there has not been a requirement for me to learn "system x". I can pick it up very quick as I do with all systems. At this time, I would have to say an area of improvement would be the learning curve on your particular software system."*
- **Why you are leaving?** Be honest, very concise and direct, but don't slam your employer or boss. They want to hear that you are leaving on good terms (for everyone, not just you!) since it can easily be them on the other end of the equation if they hire you.
- **Why should we hire you for the position?** Summarize, detail, sell yourself, and ask for an offer! Give technical reasons why you are the best candidate over personality reasons.