

meeting the hiring authority

When The Phone Rings Will You Be Ready?

When it comes to a successful job interview being prepared may be even more important than having the right skills.

The interview is the opportunity for the organization to evaluate you holistically, and enables you to demonstrate a comprehensive range of skill sets.

You may be not as strong as another candidate on a particular skill, but your interpersonal skills may shine. This of course would be difficult to demonstrate through the resume alone, but in an interview it's your time to shine!

Job interviews can be stressful, but with preparation you will ease the pain of the process. A successful interview leaves you with a great feeling and more importantly could be the last step to land you that great job!

Failing to prepare is preparing to fail.
Benjamin Franklin

The interview process is the forum where you can demonstrate that you are the best candidate for the job. Your resume has exhibited your competence and opened the door for you to validate your fit for the position. However, hiring decisions are not made from resumes but from the next all important step – the interview.

Preparation

Meeting the hiring manager is already stressful enough so rehearsing your answers the night before will keep them fresh in your mind. Practice makes perfect in the case of preparing for an interview. If you are prepared during the interview process the hiring manager will know that you have done your homework and are serious about the interview. Bring extra copies of your resume, a list of references and a sample of work if applicable. No one has ever been accused of being over prepared for an interview.



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Learn all that you can about the hiring authority. How long has he/she been with the company? What is their background? You can typically find bios of key executives on the website. You can also ask a few key questions when scheduling the interview.

On the day of your interview be sure to factor extra time into your driving schedule should you encounter traffic. It is better to arrive too early and wait in the car or a nearby coffee shop than to arrive too late. We have all been late for appointments due to traffic and the day of an interview is not the day to be late.

Dress for Success

Dressing for interviews in today's market can be confusing. Many companies have adopted business casual as the preferred dress code. Other companies, particularly those in the tech sector may be extremely casual, even allowing flip flops and jeans.

You may have heard it said that "It is better to be over dressed than under dressed." If you have any doubt how to dress for an interview, it is best to err on the conservative side. First impressions are always one of the key factors in securing that perfect job.

The following is a general guideline for Dressing for Success:

Women

- Solid conservative suit
- Neutral blouse
- Basic pumps
- Limited jewelry

Men

- Solid conservative suit
- White shirt
- Conservative tie
- Matching socks and conservative shoes



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Both men and women should limit their perfume/aftershave and carry any necessary documentation in a portfolio or briefcase. All of these guidelines are the traits of a good candidate.

How to Make A Good Impression

The interview is your chance to make a good impression and demonstrate that you are the right candidate for the job. A key element during the interview process is to demonstrate your expertise and skills. By answering questions intelligently and articulately you will demonstrate that you are prepared for the interview.

Your knowledge base will become clear to the hiring manager as you answer the questions presented to you. If at any time you are not clear about a question, feel free to ask the hiring manager to explain his or her thought process. Hiring managers often tailor their interview questions to see how well a candidate can “think on their feet” during the interview process.

Have a list of your own questions you want to ask the hiring manager. These questions should focus on the position you are applying for, trends within the industry or the company’s objectives. All questions should demonstrate that you have done your homework on the company and have an understanding of the niche in which they compete. The interview is not the time to ask about compensation and benefits.

Be Your Most Professional Self

Hiring managers are drawn to those candidates that act in the most professional manner. Not only is the candidate going to be working with peers and co-workers they will be out in the community representing the organization.

During the interview process hiring managers will be observing how you would represent the company. When a candidate answers questions in an intelligent manner using the proper grammar and listens attentively it demonstrates a level of professionalism that the hiring manager is looking for in the ideal candidate. A successful candidate is a key reflection on the hiring manager and no manager wants to make an error in hiring a candidate that does not demonstrate the highest level of professionalism.

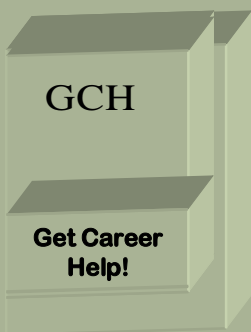




Exhibit Enthusiasm during the Hiring Process

An upbeat candidate can set the tone for the interview. Hiring managers want to work with candidates who demonstrate an upbeat and positive attitude. Hiring managers are impressed when candidates show enthusiasm for being selected for the interview. This enthusiasm is likely to follow the successful candidate into the position.

Jackie knew the minute she met the hiring manager that she had succeeded in demonstrating to the hiring manager that she was not the right candidate for the job. Prior to the interview she had been feeling down about a current relationship. Unfortunately, the day of the interview she was as not able to shake the feeling of depression.

Nevertheless, Jackie showed up for the interview and was only able to muster up a smile or two throughout the entire interview. Every time the hiring manager asked her a question she answered with a “yes” or “no” answer and did not elaborate on any of her answers. After 45 minutes the hiring manager had grown tired of trying to build a relationship with Jackie and promptly ended the interview.

It came as no surprise to Jackie when she received the letter informing her that the company had selected another candidate for the job.

The minute you settle for less than you deserve, you get even less than you settle for.

Maureen Dowd – New York Times

Be Honest With Yourself

Be honest with yourself before you agree to an interview that this is a job you want to pursue. A hiring manager will always respect honesty and integrity. During the interview process be sincere and truthful about your accomplishments. Be open and honest about your past even if you have had a bad experience or two.

If you cannot get around talking about a bad experience that you have encountered try to put a positive spin on the experience. Hiring manager’s respect that we all have “flaws” – but it is how we handle those “flaws” that will set you apart from the other candidates.

When meeting the hiring authority, you want to appear as likeable as possible. Equally important you want to be someone that other members of the team will want to work with.

Hiring managers are always looking out for people who will be a good fit for the organization. Skills and education are only a part of the requirements necessary in a good candidate. After all you may be the most talented person for the job, but if the interviewer does not like you, you will not get an offer!

How Do You Demonstrate To The Hiring Authority That You Want The Job?

Are you excited about the company and the position? Well, tell them! Quite simply at the conclusion of the interview express in a clear and concise manner that you want the job and why you are the right candidate for the job.

Asking for the job should not be viewed as being overly aggressive but a natural progression following a successful meeting. The whole purpose of the interview is to determine your fit for a job. Thus, leaving without telling the organization that you are interested may lead them to believe that you don't want the job!

Before you leave, you should also ask the hiring manager what the next step will be. You are not attempting to press them into a decision. Ask the question in an upbeat and non-threatening manner.

Thank the hiring manager for taking the time to interview you and don't forget to ask for business cards, as you will need them to send your thank you cards.

Good luck!



Preparation

What preparations have you made prior to the interview?

How will you demonstrate that you have completed research on the company?

What professional traits will set you apart from the other candidates?



What weaknesses are you prepared to expose?

How will you dress for success?

How will you demonstrate enthusiasm and honesty during the interview?



How will you ensure that you arrive on time?

What barriers are in the way of your asking for the job?

