

What You Need to Know About the Interviewing Process

Before the Interview

1. Research—employers want to know you have put in the effort!
The company and the industry
 - look at company website/annual report
 - look at websites that compare companies
 - look at industry newspapers and journals (online or in print—visit your local or campus library!)
 - know if the company has been in the news
2. Know yourself
Review your resume thoroughly
Be prepared to elaborate on key points of emphasis—stories can bring your resume to life!
Be prepared to show evidence of past performance/skills
 - *Transferable skills:* your non-paid work experience is just as valuable as your paid experiencePractice your responses!
3. Questions
Prepare your response to questions you will be asked
 - Tell me about yourself—prepare a succinct answer
 - What courses did you enjoy in college?
 - What types of jobs have you had in the past?
 - What books have you read? What are your hobbies?
 - What are your strengths? What can you do for us?
 - What do you consider to be your major accomplishments?*Prepare questions to ask*—these should show your interest and thoughtfulness; ask questions that you can't find answers to elsewhere
 - Never say you have no questions
 - Do not ask about salary/benefits
 - What are the duties and responsibilities of the position?
 - What type of training can I expect?
 - Are there travel requirements?
 - To whom do I report? What is their background?
 - Ask about company culture; a typical day
 - Ask about professional growth activities, societies or seminars
 - Ask about company history—beyond what you have read already
 - Ask about prospects for promotion/personal growth opportunities
 - What is the next step in the decision making process?

4. The Basics

1. Dress Properly (in your prior research, you should keep an eye out for indications of dress code at a company or within an industry in general. If the office is open to the public, you may want to drop by prior to the interview to get a feel for the tone.)
2. Get enough sleep
3. Bring a copy of your resume and references
4. Directions to interview: know how you will be getting there
5. Be on time: not too early, not late

During

First impression—very important, you can use this to build on for the rest of the interview

- Give a positive greeting—firm handshake, be positive
- Make eye contact
- Have a natural smile
- Watch your body language
- Don't appear unprepared or unenthusiastic

Illegal Questions

There are some questions that an interviewer shouldn't ask. These include questions about race, sex, national origin, religion, disabilities, marital status, or children. The rights of the interviewee in respect to these issues are covered by Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act and by the Americans with Disabilities Act. For the official source on legal guidelines for hiring, you can consult the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission's Uniform Guidelines on Employee Selection Procedures.

Although there are laws in place to protect you, you may still be confronted with an illegal question during an interview. In most cases, this is not intended out of malice, but rather out of ignorance on the part of the interviewer. When confronted with this situation, you can do several things:

1. Ask for clarification: Why are they asking you this question? Get to the root of their intentions, and attempt to answer this point
2. Politely decline to answer the question.
3. You can also contact the Equal Employment Office. Keep in mind, it is often difficult to prove you have been discriminated against, even though you may have a valid claim.

The Interviewing Process: Strategies for Making the Right Impression
Instructor's Resource Materials

Remember what you've practiced

- Explain your skills and experience, relate them to the current position
- Be honest, but do not put yourself down
- Be concise
- Don't oversell yourself

Stay positive: Remember, the reason you were asked to interview is because someone saw your resume and thought you would be a good candidate

Thank the interviewer for the opportunity!

After:

Jot down important information: key names, information about the organization

Jot down your impression: What did you like? What did you not like?

Evaluate yourself: What did you do well? What do you need to work on? What should you have asked about?

- Every interview is practice for a future interview—use your experience for the next one!

Follow-up

- Send a thank you note (email is also appropriate—*and quick!*)
- Follow-up with a phone call to determine the status

Interviews can be practice.

The better you can craft your presentation, the better you will do in the future!