

Interview Tips

An interview gives you the opportunity to showcase your qualifications to an employer, so it pays to be well prepared. The following information provides some helpful hints.

Preparation:

- Learn about the organization.
- Have a specific job or jobs in mind.
- Review your qualifications for the job.
- Be ready to briefly describe your experience, showing how it relates to the job.
- Be ready to answer broad questions, such as "Why should I hire you?" "Why do you want this job?" "What are your strengths and weaknesses?"
- Practice an interview with a friend or relative.

Personal appearance:

- Be well groomed.
- Dress appropriately.
- Do not chew gum or smoke.

The interview:

- Be early.
- Learn the name of your interviewer and greet him or her with a firm handshake.
- Use good manners with everyone you meet.
- Relax and answer each question concisely.
- Use proper English—avoid slang.
- Be cooperative and enthusiastic.
- Use body language to show interest—use eye contact and don't slouch.
- Ask questions about the position and the organization, but avoid questions whose answers can easily be found on the company Web site.
- Also avoid asking questions about salary and benefits unless a job offer is made.
- Thank the interviewer when you leave and shake hands.
- Send a short thank you note following the interview.

Information to bring to an interview:

- Social Security card.
- Government-issued identification (driver's license).
- Resume or application. Although not all employers require a resume, you should be able to furnish the interviewer information about your education, training, and previous employment.
- References. Employers typically require three references. Get permission before using anyone as a reference. Make sure that they will give you a good reference. Try to avoid using relatives as references.
- Transcripts. Employers may require an official copy of transcripts to verify grades, coursework, dates of attendance, and highest grade completed or degree awarded.