

JOB INTERVIEW PREPARATION: HOW TO PREPARE FOR AN INTERVIEW IN 3 STEPS

This is what to do before, during, and after a job interview.

I cannot stress the importance of interview preparation too much! You only get one chance to prove to a potential employer why you're the right candidate for the job. It's imperative you walk into each and every interview with a premeditated plan for selling yourself. Unfortunately, too many well-qualified candidates fail to spend enough time preparing for interviews and subsequently lose out on good offers.

Interview prep not your forte? Try implementing this simple 3-step job interview preparation plan to help you score your ideal career.

Step 1: Before the interview

Landing the interview is an accomplishment in its own right. But you still have a lot of prep work to do if you want to walk away with the job.

Research the company

First, you'll need to research the target company. Go through the company's website, editorials and annual reports. Read up on their ongoing projects, future plans and ultimate goals. Try to figure out the size of company, how many employees they have and what kind of work environment they offer. You'll use this information to demonstrate your knowledge of the company during the interview.

Research the interviewer

If you are given the recruiters' name beforehand, look into their social media profiles (LinkedIn, Facebook, etc.). Try to find out their title, experience and overall personality. This will help you prepare questions and give you more confidence to face him/her in person.

Prepare questions

Once you research the company, generate a list of questions that may be asked by the interviewer. Practice your responses. This will help ease your nerves when it's time for the real thing. Next, prepare a list of questions to ask the interviewer. Ask about the role expectations, the culture, growth opportunities— anything that will give you a clearer picture of what it would be like to work for this organization. Asking questions shows you're not only engaged in the interview, but interested and already thinking about your future with this company.

Prepare copies of important documents

Make copies of your resume/CV and other important documents (cover letter, list of references, etc.) in advance. You don't want to be scrambling to get your documents organized the day of the interview! Most recruiters will bring a copy of your submitted documents to the interview, but if they fail to, you'll be a step ahead.

Step 2: Day of the interview

You've done the necessary prep work. Now let's wow the recruiter.

Dress For Success

As a general rule, it's best to dress in formalwear, or at the very least, business casual. Men, if you do not own a suit, wear a nice dress shirt and slacks. Women have a little more flexibility, but you can't go wrong with a nice blouse, blazer and a long skirt (trousers are also acceptable). Accessories are fine too, in moderation. Neutral colors such as black, gray, brown and blue are suitable for both men and women.

Eat something

Too many candidates make the mistake of not eating before interviewing and suffer from a lack of attentiveness as a result. Before you go into the interview, eat a meal that contains vitamin E, omega 3 and antioxidants. This will improve brain functionality and help you stay alert.

Arrive early

Make sure to arrive at least 15-25 minutes before the interview begins. Arriving early sets the tone that you are a professional and will be reliable if offered the position. Don't use your phone or other mobile devices to pass time when waiting. Instead, you should spend this time practicing your prepared questions and responses in your head.

Answering the questions

Speak clearly and with confidence when interviewing. Play up your strengths and translatable skills to show how you could be a potential asset to the target company. Keep your answers short, simple and honest. Don't try to be over smart— instead present yourself as a confident and sensible professional. Never use slang words, clichés (ig. "I'm a people person") or criticize a former employer when interviewing.

Step 3: After the interview

You were well-prepared and your answers to the recruiter's inquires provoked their interest. It's time to solidify the deal.

Leaving the Interview

After the interview has concluded, shake hands with the interviewer(s) and thank them for their time. If they don't tell you when they will contact you going forward, ask about their expected decision-making period. Keep your head held high and leave with confidence.

Following up

After an appropriate amount of time (approximately 24 hours), follow up with the recruiter. Send each interviewer a thank-you note. Seventy-five percent of interviewers confirmed that thank-you notes impact their decision process. So do yourself a favor and send a well-written, personalized response that reiterates why you're the best candidate for the position.

Knowing exactly what is expected of you before, during and after an interview will put you in the best position to prove you're the best candidate for any job. Incorporate these tips into your interview strategy and your dream job will be yours in no time!

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