



Coming In First: Interview Techniques That Win Job Offers

Simply getting an interview is more challenging than ever in the current job market. Mastering the art of the interview is critical. Knowing interview etiquette, articulating skills, and responding to the tough questions are all “must have” tools for job seekers. Here are some pointers to help you come in first!

1. **Arrive early, but not too early!** Allow time to park and find the office, especially if you’ve never been there. Arrive too early and look desperate.
2. **Dress the part.** Wear your best suit. Women, minimize jewelry and make up. Women, no pants suits! Men, a white shirt and classy tie still make a positive statement.
3. **Look the interviewer in the eye.** Make eye contact long enough to note his or her eye color. Any longer is too intense, and less appears shifty.
4. **Learn how to shake hands properly!** A wimpy handshake is unforgivable. Crushing the interviewer’s hand is combative.
5. **Take note of the interviewer’s office.** Take a deep breath. Then, if it feels right, comment on sports trophies, family photos, artwork or whatever helps the connection.
6. **Allow the interviewer to ask questions.** Don’t take over the conversation. You’ll learn far more by allowing the interviewer to direct the initial conversation.
7. **Show genuine interest in the employer’s need.** Keep your answers focused on specific contributions. Be brief. Focus on mutual benefit and future-based questions.
8. **Anticipate the tough questions.** Know your weak points. Be prepared to answer questions about gaps and why you left previous positions. Eliminate negative language and anger.
9. **Practice, Practice, Practice.** Get help on mock interviewing. Ask for help in anticipating questions and get constructive input on your responses before you interview.

Ask for the Job. At the least, express your interest. Send a hand written thank you note the same day.

Focus On These Things: listen to the entire question, answer the question directly, keep your answers brief

Keep a Positive Focus: never bash past employers, talk about solutions, address the employer's needs

Anticipate Questions: prepare your thoughts, tailor your answers, prepare intelligent questions

Do Your "Due Diligence": research the company, read their press releases, learn about the hiring manager

What Not to Say: "What is the salary range?", "This job is a good stepping stone", "I want your job next"

What You Must Say: "I am interested in this job", "What are the next steps?", "What else do you need to know about me?"