How to Make Job Interviews Successful

You've clawed, scratched, written, mailed, called, networked, and sought favors. Now is when it counts. Nothing is as important as making the right first impression in a job interview. Here are some tips to help:

1) **Be Prepared:** Do everything you can to get ready ahead of time. Research the company; go beyond their website. Refer to your resources about Questions to Ask Interviewers and Questions Interviewers ask students. Prepare and anticipate additional questions. Practice = Confidence. Utilize training tools; do mock interviews and/or videotape yourself. Nervousness is still expected. Channel it.

2) **Dress Professionally:** Wear a professional business suit. When in doubt, it's better to overdress.

3) **Get Organized:** Bring a labeled manila folder containing extra copies of your resume, a list of references, and a notepad.

4) **Be On Time:** Plan to arrive 10 – 15 minutes early. Be pleasant to everyone, even as you drive in. Make eye contact and smile. Read the organization's material while waiting. Initiate handshakes and introductions

5) **Always Be Honest:** Answer questions truthfully. It is unethical to lie about skills, past employment, etc. Don't be afraid to ask for clarification to fully understand a question. Go beyond "yes" and "no" – expand on questions and comments to keep the conversation going.

6) **Show Interest:** Lean in, nod, and ask questions to demonstrate your interest. Mimic the interviewer's body language. Be mindful of theirs and watch for cues.

7) **Best Foot Forward:** Always present the best of your qualifications without stretching the truth. Be honest. Emphasize your book knowledge, skills, accomplishments and ability to apply them in work situations. Don't exaggerate. Provide the interviewer with examples of previous work experiences.

8) **Professional Image:** Even if the interviewer has a casual approach, be sure to maintain a professional image. Don't try to be humorous. Emphasize the positive. Close the interview with confidence. Thank the interviewer and ask when you may hear back. The first and last impressions you make are most enduring. Don't accept an internship or job on the spot. Make a thoughtful decision.

9) **Take Notes:** Once the interview is over, take notes on names and titles, as well as any remaining questions or comments you have. Complete notes for your own records while they're still fresh.

10) **Follow Up:** Write a thank you note within 48 hours after the interview. See Guidelines resource.

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