



Job Interview: The All Time Classic Do's and Don'ts

There is a ton of advice out there for job seekers, and if you are in the position of interviewing for a job, it could be helpful to have all of it in one place, neatly categorized into do's and don'ts of interviewing.

DO:

- Research the company and the position you're applying for.
- Research common interview questions and practice your answers.
- Dress appropriately for the job you want, be neatly groomed, and dress relatively conservatively. Bring breath mints.
- Map out how to get to the location before the interview, and plan to arrive 10 minutes early. If something happens and you must be late, phone the office as soon as you know that you are running behind.
- Bring all requested paperwork with you to the interview including your resume, an application, references, identification, etc. Extra copies of your resume and a portfolio (if applicable) are also good to bring.
- Be polite and cordial to everyone you meet; you never know whose opinion will count.
- Offer a firm handshake and make eye contact when meeting someone.
- Repeat the person's name to help you remember it.
- Maintain good eye contact during the interview.
- Approach the interview with enthusiasm about the job and the company.
- Stress your achievements and talents.
- Give detailed answers to questions with examples. Explain how you would go about tackling the assignments and challenges of the position.
- Have an opinion when asked.
- Answer questions like, "What's your biggest flaw?" intelligently, but honestly.
- Show off any research you've done about the company, position, and industry with examples or educated questions.
- Take time to think about how to answer an unexpected question. You can repeat the question to give yourself a little extra time.
- Prepare to answer questions about your salary requirements.
- Ask intelligent questions about the job, company, or industry. It pays to prepare a few before the interview.
- Close by indicating that you want the job and asking about next steps.
- Get business cards from your interviewers, or at least make a note of the correct spelling of their names.
- Write down some notes after your interview so that you don't forget any details of what was discussed.
- Write a thank you note and send it within 24 hours of the interview.
- Evaluate the interviewer, the company, and the position to be sure it's right for you.

Continued...

Interviewing Do's and Don'ts, continued...

DON'T:

- Rehearse your answers so much that you sound like you're just reciting from memory.
- Dress too casually, too flamboyantly or in revealing clothing.
- Arrive smelling (too much perfume, cigarette smoke, etc.).
- Be late to your interview if you can possibly avoid it.
- Arrive stressed.
- Bring anyone else with you to the interview (a parent, spouse, friend, child, pet, etc.).
- Address your interviewer by his or her first name until invited to do so. Don't assume you know how to pronounce their name, either; it's better to ask the receptionist to be sure. Don't assume that a female interviewer is a Mrs. or a Miss; use Ms. unless told otherwise.
- Slouch, fidget, or yawn while being interviewed. Don't chew gum or bring food or drink into an interview.
- Tell jokes.
- Bring up controversial subjects.
- Be aggressive.
- Be self-aggrandizing, insinuating that you are perfect and have zero flaws.
- Take out any frustrations about the job search process on your interviewer.
- Speak negatively about your current or former company, boss, or coworkers.
- Lie.
- Offer up any negative information about yourself if not asked.
- Make excuses.
- Be afraid to ask for clarification if you don't understand a question.
- Answer every question with a simple "yes" or "no" answer.
- Bring up personal or family problems.
- Ask personal questions of your interviewer.
- Answer your cell phone, check messages, or text during an interview.
- Act as though you're desperate and would take any job.
- Act as though you're just shopping around or interviewing for practice.
- Indicate that you're only interested in the job because of the salary, benefits, or geographic location. Don't indicate that you intend the job to be a "stepping stone" to something else.
- Bring up salary, benefits, vacation time, or bonuses until after you've received an offer.
- Say that you don't have any questions.
- Call immediately after the interview to find out if you got the job, or make repeated phone calls.

Need more help?

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