Interview Tips

Effective Interviewing Tips

- **Know as much as possible about the company.** This can make your interview more interactive and could be just what you need to get ahead in a competitive job market.

- **Practice answering typical interview questions** so you will be prepared and comfortable during the actual interview.

- **Compile a list of examples** where you have successfully used the skills you have acquired that will be beneficial to the employer. Emphasize what you can do to benefit the company rather than just your interest.

- **Prepare a list of questions** you want to ask the interviewer. Remember, you are also interviewing the employer to see if this company and position are a good fit for you.

- **Plan your wardrobe ahead of time** - and try it on prior to the day of the interview. This is not the time to worry about finding another outfit if this one does not fit.

- **Make sure you know where you are going** and give yourself plenty of time so you can arrive ahead of schedule.

- **Know the name of the interviewer** and use it during the interview. Do not call the interviewer by his or her first name unless you are invited to do so.

- **Bring an extra copy** of your resume.

- **Do not ask about salary and benefits** until the employer brings up the subject.

- **Write a thank you letter** and email within 48 hours of the interview. This ensures that the employer will remember you.
STAR Interviewing Technique for Success in Behavioral Job Interviews

One strategy for preparing for behavioral interviews is to use the STAR Technique, as outlined below. Read up on the technique, and then try it out with a list of sample behavioral interview questions.

**Situation or Task**
Describe the situation that you were in or the task that you needed to accomplish. Describe a specific event or situation, not a generalized description of what you have done in the past. Be sure to give enough detail for the interviewer to understand. This situation can be from a previous job, from a volunteer experience, or any relevant event.

**Action You Took**
Describe the action you took and be sure to keep the focus on you. Even if you are discussing a group project or effort, describe what you did—not the efforts of the team. Don’t tell what you might do, tell what you did.

**Results You Achieved**
What happened? How did the event end? What did you accomplish? What did you learn?

Sample Behavioral Interview Questions

One of the keys to success in interviewing is practice, so take the time to work out answers to these questions. Be sure not to memorize answers; the key to interviewing success is simply being prepared for the questions and having a mental outline to follow.

Sample behavioral-based interview questions:

- Describe a time when you were faced with a stressful situation that demonstrated your coping skills.
- Give me a specific example of a time when you used good judgment and logic in solving a problem.
- Give me an example of a time when you set a goal and were able to meet or achieve it.
- Give me a specific example of a time when you had to conform to a policy with which you did not agree.
- Please discuss an important written document you were required to complete.
- Tell me about a time when you had to go above and beyond the call of duty in order to get a job done.
- Tell me about a time when you had too many things to do and you were required to prioritize your tasks.
- Give me an example of a time when you had to make a split second decision.
- What is your typical way of dealing with conflict? Give me an example.
- Tell me about a time you were able to successfully deal with another person even when that individual may not have personally liked you (or vice versa).
- Give me an example of a time when something you tried to accomplish and failed.
- Give me an example of when you showed initiative and took the lead.
- Give me an example of a time when you motivated others.
- Tell me about a time when you delegated a project effectively.
- Tell me about a time when you were forced to make an unpopular decision.
Tips in Marketing Yourself

- Know your skills, interests and values
- Consider your strengths and weaknesses
- Be able to discuss decisions you have made and the thought process behind them
- Identify accomplishments you are proud of and things you might have done differently
- Provide examples to demonstrate how you have developed your skills
- Be able to articulate why you are interested in this field
- Define your long-term goals