

The Interview Tips From the Experts

File: Career Advice/Frequently Asked Questions

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▶ Read USA TODAY (or your local paper)

By reading a current newspaper the day before and the day of, you'll be informed of most things going on in the world: business, sports, weather, and current events. You'll be ready to knowingly small talk on most issues.

▶ Show Up

Most executives and hiring managers are busy and run a tight schedule. Show up on time, 15 minutes early is too early.

▶ Dress

Save the jewelry, piercings, cuff links, monograms, and ankle bracelets for another day. There is too much to lose and nothing to gain. We all know what the appropriate dress is.

▶ First impressions

According to Dr. Joel Goldberg, people evaluate each other 5 different ways in the first two minutes of a meeting. The worst is the power handshake. Nothing turns me off more than the grab and bend.

▶ Be what they are looking for

There is nothing better than knowing what they want before you show up. Your resume should be tailored towards the interviewer's requirements. As Covey said, "A common mistake is too much talking. Be a good listener, digest the information, then tailor your response as your background relates to the dialogue. It's basic selling that works."

▶ What means most to interviewers?

Tell them what you are good at, not what you are responsible for. The best example of that is our first secretary in Rochester. She neglected to put on her resume she received awards in high school and college for perfect attendance. A remarkable achievement like that in your past that matches what they want usually prompts the interviewer to ask you "How did you do that?" All of the sudden, you have center stage.

▶ Decisions

If you get a chance, tell them what they were and how they impacted your life. They'll get to know the real you. You are you, aren't you?

▶ Happiness

Most job seekers are not happy in their current positions. Were you ever happy at work? If you were and the position you are interviewing for fits that, make sure you convey certain things in the past you might want to replicate.

▶ Money

When asked, tell the truth and the whole truth. Whatever your W2 is what the answer is. Any stutter or hesitancy is a turn off. How can you be making around \$85,000? What you should say is "My base pay is \$83,400." Save the fluff [401k, dream bonus etc.] stuff for negotiating the entire package. In addition, if you're making \$85,000, don't tell them \$90,000. Eighty-five is as good as ninety, and if they ever find out it was eighty-five; your credibility just went out the door.

▶ Body language

You might be sending a bad message and don't even know it. Arms crossed are interpreted as resisting the topic; face touching displays disbelief; slouching is sloppy. Read up on it and be alert.

▶ Know what you are getting into

If you're out to lunch with your potential boss, watch how they treat the server and how they tip. It's how you'll be treated in 6 months and how your raise will be in the future. You are better off knowing now than later.

▶ The follow up thank you note

And, finally, after the interview don't forget to send a thank you note - handwritten, with a real stamp, and sent the same day. An e mail won't be nearly as appreciated or noticed. You'll be remembered [and hired].