Interview Tips

Before the interview:

- Do your homework. Know about the firm, the industry, the competitors and the market so you can be well-prepared to participate actively during the interview.
- Find out as much as you can about the corporate culture. Dress accordingly. It’s always a good idea to dress more conservatively if you are unsure.
- Prepare questions for the interviewer about the position, duties, and travel required, if appropriate.
- Bring a pen, paper for notes and copies of your resume and other documents that you may be asked to produce.
- Make sure you know exactly where you are going. Have the address and directions ready well ahead of time. Plan to arrive fifteen minutes before your scheduled appointment. Ask about parking accommodations.
- Know approximately how long you will be there so you are not rushed to get to another appointment.

During the interview:

- Be yourself!
- Greet the interviewer confidently, say your name clearly and express your appreciation for the opportunity to be interviewed. Shake hands if you are comfortable with that.
- Use positive body language: smile naturally, maintain frequent eye contact, sit up straight and nod as the interview brings up points with which you agree.
- Don’t look at or read any papers or personal items in the interviewer’s office.
- Don’t interrupt, but take the opportunity to ask for further explanation, or clarification on any point.
- Participate actively, without being too familiar.
- Use clear, specific examples to support your statements.
- Speak only for a minute or two at a time. The interviewer will guide you, so be aware of not monopolizing the conversation. You want to have a dialogue.
- At the end of the interview, ask what the next step in the recruiting and selection process will be:
  - “What would the next step in the recruiting process be?” or
  - “When may I expect to hear from you?”
- Thank the interviewer and follow up immediately on anything that you have been asked to do.

After the interview:

- If you are in the process of doing several interviews, immediately write down all the contact information, follow-up needs and personal observations in your notes.
• Think about the questions you were asked and felt that you could have done a better job answering. Jot down the questions and “new” answers for the future.
• Re-evaluate the situation: i.e. is this a job possibility that motivated you even more after the interview?
  o If not, it may not be a good match for you.
  o If so, immediately write a note or send an email to the interviewer thanking him or her for the time and interest shown. If you can specifically mention any aspect of the job for which you feel particularly qualified, mention it. (This is not another cover letter. It should be a short 4-5 sentence note.)
• Do not call the interviewer or company back until the timeframe you have been given for the following step is very near: i.e. If you were told that you would be hearing something “sometime next week,” and you have not hear anything by Wednesday PM or Thursday AM, you might want to call. The challenge is to let enough time go by so you are not harassing them, but not too much so they know you are still very interested.

Some Ethical Considerations

• Do not accept a job while you are waiting for your “first choice” to come through! **You can request a reasonable extension.** If you have a couple of offers pending, say something like, “Thank you for considering me. Would it be possible to have until _____ (no more than one week) to give you an answer?” Don’t babble on about other offers. Just be direct and succinct. If the interviewer says they can only wait two days for example, take it and get back to them. You will have bought a little time. If you feel pressured by the recruiter to say “yes” and are really not sure, say so.
• Remember that you are choosing the firm just as they are choosing the employees to work for them. Value the experience, knowledge, commitment and ethics you will bring into the organization. If you are not comfortable with the culture, don’t take the job!
• If you are privy to confidential information, other candidates who may have applied for the job and did not get it, for example, keep that information to yourself.
• Don’t tell Recruiter A that Recruiter B at another organization is offering you a bigger salary, greater benefits or better perks in an attempt to pressure Recruiter A unless it is absolutely true. What if Recruiter A knows Recruiter B? It’s a small world.
• Be careful of what you say about the firm, the interviewer or the hiring manager. Your words may come back to haunt you!