

Surviving a Job Interview

By

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Introduction

Many job hunters search painstakingly for the perfect position only to suffer a disappointment if the one you desire most is not offered. The purpose of this lesson is to help job seekers prepare for the second most critical phase of job hunting, the job interview (the first being getting the interview). By investigating the sources provided, you will be able to know and practice the best-known secrets of preparing for a successful job interview.

The Task

Prepare to be interviewed for a job. Consider the following questions.

- What do I already know about job interviews (Positive and Negative)?
 - Do I have experience being interviewed before? What do I recall about it? What did I do well, or was there room for improvement?
 - Think. What would be my perfect job? What would an employer want an employee to know in that position? Am I ready to answer those tough questions?
 - Even if I've got all the right answers to the interviewer's questions, how will I present myself? Do I appear and act professional?
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Resources

Monster Career Center (Interview Skills Help)

<http://content.monster.com/jobinfo/interview/>

CareerBuilder's Web Guide (Interview Help)

http://www.careerbuilder.com/wg_int.html

The Art of Interviewing (Vast Info)

<http://www.bsu.edu/careers/intrvjsb.html>

CareerWeb (Interview Skills Help)

http://www.cweb.com/rescen/car_advice/welcome2.html#interv

Corporate Gray Online (Interview Skills Help for transitioning military)

http://www.greentogray.com/articles/feat_top_interv.html

CareerCity (Interview Skills Help)

<http://www.careercity.com/content/interview/>

USA JOBS (Government Employment)

<http://www.usajobs.opm.gov/>

MSN Careers (Interviewing)

http://content.careers.msn.com/gh_int.html

Headhunter.net (Interview Assistance)

<http://www.headhunter.net/JobSeeker/CRC/IntAssist.htm>

College Grad Job Hunter (Interview Help)

<http://www.collegegrad.com/intv/index.shtml>

Note: Most resources above contain numerous links to other sources.
(Overall, there hundreds of other resources among these sites)

***Only Research links that may provide you with NEW information.**

The Process

1. Begin by writing some answers to the question proposed in “The Task”.
2. With a partner, discuss your answers, then record at least 10 of the most critical skills you think you should master before attending a job interview.
3. Access the resources provided and research the following:
 - a. What are the most frequent tips offered in preparing for a successful interview?
 - b. Based on what you discover, how does this compare to your list? Revise your list, as you and your partner feel necessary.
 - c. Write down notes/information about the most critical interview skills you’ve recorded. These notes will become a study resource as you prepare for an actual interview. Remember you can access

the resources provided in this lesson anytime you feel you need additional information.

4. Arrange a mock interview with an employer who conducts job interviews as a regular part of his or her job. Ask the interviewer to provide you with a written and oral post-interview critique.

5. Each partner prepares to interview the other. One partner will play the role of interviewer, while the other is interviewed. First, select a position that you would like to be interviewed for. Independently, write down questions that you plan to ask the other person when you interview them. (Preparing for this interview should involve research into the company your interviewing with)

6. Conduct the interview. Locate a place to hold the interview, preferably in a professional atmosphere. Both partners dress as if attending an actual interview. Do the interview.

7. Critique the interview. Immediately following the session, write down observations made during the interview. Now, refer to the notes you made from the resources. Annotate any remaining remarks about the interview. Discuss each other critiques from the interview. Make suggestions for improvement.

8. Reverse roles and repeat steps 6 & 7. When both interviews are complete, go to step 9.

9. Attend your interview that was arranged in step 4. Prepare for this interview as you did for the previous one, but use the knowledge and skill that you gain following your critiques. You should involve research into the company your interviewing with, just as you did before. Following the interview, ask the interviewer to complete the critique and debrief you on your performance.

10. Evaluate your learning. Review your understanding of interviews in step 1. Compare your prior knowledge with the knowledge you gained in steps 6, 7, and 10. Write a 1-2 page summary of how you will prepare for job interviews in the future.

Evaluation

Improved interview skills can be considered evaluated at the end of the mock interview with the actual employer. How confident did you feel? Self-evaluation can be made when considering your confidence in being prepared for a job interview. However, if interviewing is a new skill for you, additional rehearsal may provide more learning opportunities.

Conclusion

You have assessed your own ability to survive a job interview. Have your knowledge and skills improved? What can you do to make them better? (Practice, practice, practice) The process of preparing for an interview remains the same. Practice with different people. Follow up with others who have been interviewing lately and get their reactions to the interview process. What do they have to say? Remember, experience counts. Nothing speaks louder than the wisdom you will gain from your actual job interviews.