

# 10 Tips to help you ace your next job interview

To be sure, a job interview can be a stressful and nerve-wracking experience. You're being sized up, sometimes subtly, and you may never know when you've given an answer that displeases your interviewer, or causes him or her to silently dismiss you as a viable candidate for the position.

That's why it's important to practice your interviewing skills before the big day, to help you get comfortable answering the usual questions about your work experience, education and skills.

Following are tips on avoiding a few common blunders during the interview process. These tips go beyond the well-known principles of

- conducting some research on the company before the interview day;
- being a few minutes early for the interview;
- dressing appropriately (you can never go wrong in a well-fitting business suit);
- bringing extra copies of your resume and a list of your references; and
- giving impeccably honest and straightforward answers to the interviewer's questions.

## Demonstrate good interpersonal skills

1. When meeting interviewers, look them in the eye, smile and shake their hands. Also be pleasant to everyone you meet at the company, including the receptionist, secretary, human resources clerk, etc. Sometimes they're asked later by the interviewer for their feedback on you.
2. Let the interviewer direct you to which seat to take in the interview office.
3. Remain pleasantly professional and tactful throughout the interview (a down-beaten, dejected attitude could turn off the interviewer).

4. During the conversation, never (ever) say anything negative about any past employers. This only serves to make you look bad. If you had an unpleasant experience at a previous job, simply say you learned a lot during your time there, and you believe the experience has made you a better employee.
5. Don't ramble on and on. But don't resort to delivering abrupt one-word answers (which could make the interviewer feel as if he or she is pulling teeth). Find the happy medium of answering the interviewer's questions succinctly, yet thoroughly.
6. Pay attention to your language. Avoid using "um," "you know" and "like" in your responses. After being asked a question, take a second or two to breath, collect your thoughts and then respond.

## Pay attention to your body language

7. Don't slouch or chew gum during the interview. These could make you look disinterested in the job. And absolutely do not answer your cell phone or send a text during the interview. Turn off your cell, and place it out of sight, perhaps in your pocket or briefcase.
8. Don't bite your fingernails, pick at your clothes, continually shift in your seat, play with your hair or talk too much with your hands, as these all signal nervousness. You want to project a calm and composed persona, if you can. If you're feeling nervous, take a deep breath and exhale slowly and silently.

## Be prepared to ask intelligent questions about the job

9. Come to the meeting armed with several questions, and jot down a few more as they occur to you during the interview. Interviewers are likely to think highly of you if, at the end of the conversation, they ask, "Do you have any questions of us?" and you actually do.



10. But do stack your questions appropriately. T your first question of the interviewer should be about salary, number of vacation days, avail- flex time or health benefits. By making those questions, you signal to the interviewer that more interested in pay and perks, and not th job.

Remember, you have only a few minutes to i good impression on the interviewer. Use that tim and effectively, and you'll soon be hearing, "We for you to join our team."