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Tips for the Successful Interview



Resources and References

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Seven Tips to a Successful Interview

- Relax
 - Keep smiling
 - Be enthusiastic
 - Be honest
 - Make lots of eye contact
 - Remain positive
 - Don't get thrown off—make sure your confidence and preparation shows
- (Fry, 2000)

Closing the Interview

- Expression of Interest
 - The Values Statement
 - Request feedback from the interviewer
 - Establishing the path forward
 - The thank you
 - The parting impression
- (Beatty, 1995)



How to Get the Job or Internship You Want

Define the job you want by answering these questions:

- What skills will you use?
- What are your personal characteristics?
- What kind of people/organization do you want to work for?
- What type of salary/benefits desired
- What knowledge you can contribute?
- How you can grow in the organization and the future potential?

(Kay, 1996)

Once you determine the type of job you want; start looking and prepare to apply by:

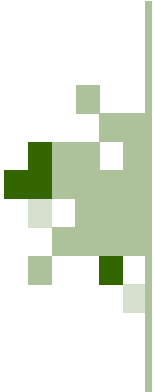
- Putting together your resume
- Developing a professional portfolio
- Writing a strong cover letter



The Nine Key Elements to Happiness in your New Positions

- **Uses your talents and skills**
- **Fits your personality, style and personal characteristics**
- **Challenges you to think and grow**
- **Pays you what your worth**
- **Suits your personality, style and values**
- **Supported by management whose values are in alignment with yours**
- **You believe in and support the organization**
- **Appreciation and recognition for your contributions and hard work**
- **Builds and enhances your skills, expertise and reputation in your field.**

(Kay, 1996)

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- **Communication skills—expressive, articulate, concise, focused and direct (Beatty, 1995).**

Seven Evaluation Factors

These are the seven items that an interviewer will look for and most likely be evaluating your interview performance on:

- **Assertiveness and Enthusiasm**
- **Communication Skills**
- **Record of Success**
- **Rational Thought Process**
- **Maturity**
- **Planning and Organization**
- **Reaction to Pressure**

(Yeager and Hough, 1990)

5. The Strategic Objective Technique

(look at your ability to perform the key elements on the job)

- *As you think about some of the organizations long term goals and objectives, what are some of the changes and improvements that are going to be needed in this position in order to accomplish these goals?*

(Beatty, 1995)

The Interview Day

- Arrive early
- Dress properly
- Proper greeting—warm smile, friendly handshake and good eye contact
- Body language—good posture, maintain good eye contact, avoid nervous movements, avoid tendency to talk too much with hands
- Present and express energy and enthusiasm

Preparing for the Interview

Steps necessary before the interview:

Do your homework

You should know:

General Organization Information

- What does the organization do
- Who runs the organization—names, titles, and philosophies
- Organization history
- Key problems and challenges

Position Information

- Position title
- Size and scope of the position
- Responsibilities
- Key challenges and problems
- Why the position is open
- Who is the “ideal candidate”

Organization Culture/Work

Environment

- Philosophy or mission of the organization
- Management style (participative, controlling)
- Profile of your future supervisor/the interviewer



Potential Questions from the Interviewer

The interviewer may ask questions in the following areas:

- **Strengths**

What do you consider your greatest strengths or assets?

- **Weaknesses**

What has been your single most significant work-related failure to date? Why? How can you improve?

- **Education**

How did your education prepare you for your career?

- **Job Performance**

What would you list as being your three most significant accomplishments? In your current position? Since joining the company? In your career to-date?

- **Work Preference**

How would you describe the type of

opportunities for improvement, and what kind of improvement would you most like to see?

- *If you could change something about how this position has been performed in the past, what would it be and what improvement would you most like to see?*

3. The Key Problems Strategy

- *What are some of the key problems you would most like to see tackled by a new person in this position?*
- *What are some of the fundamental problems in this position that a successful candidate will need to be able to solve?*

4. The Key Challenges Strategy

- *What are some of the major challenges to be faced in this position?*
- *From an improvement standpoint where do you feel the major challenges of the position lay?*



Potential Questions for the Interviewer


These are some questions that you should be prepared to ask during the interview called the *Five Winning Strategies*:

1. The Perfect Candidate Strategy

- *How would you describe the perfect candidate for this position?*
- *What factors do you feel are most important for success in this position?*
- *What do you feel are the ideal qualifications for this position?*

2. The Performance Improvement Strategy

- *As you think about how this position has been performed by others in the past, where do you feel there are*



work you like to do? What aspects of your current position do you find least/most satisfying?

- **Motivation and Drive**

What are you currently doing to improve your overall job performance? What are your three most important job objectives and why are they important?

- **Personal Traits and Characteristics**

Which of your personal traits and characteristics have proven most beneficial to your career?

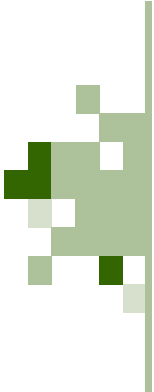
- **Interpersonal Skills**

Tell me about a time when you had a major conflict with another employee. With what kind of persons do you most enjoy working? Why?

- **Preferred Work Environment**

In which past work environments were you happiest/unhappy? Why were you happy/unhappy? What factors most influenced your feelings?

- **Preferred Supervisor's Style**



*Who was the best boss you ever had?
Why? What were some of this boss's key characteristics?*

- **Planning and Organizing Skills**

What do you believe about the relationship between planning and organization success?

- **Organization Philosophy**

What do you feel is essential to creating a successful working environment?

- **Operating Style**

How is the way you approach your work different from others? In what way is your work style unique?

- **Communication Skills**

What evidence can you provide that documents the effectiveness of your overall communication skills?

- **Management Style**

What do you believe are the characteristics of an effective manager?

- **Creativity**

*What is the most creative thing you have done?
What are the various approaches that could be used to solve the following problem?*

- **Entrepreneurship (Risk Taking)**

Tell me about some of the risks you elected to take in order to bring certain improvements about? What were the risks, what were the improvements you were aiming for, what was the outcome?

- **Persistence**

Describe a work situation where you faced overwhelming odds but managed to prevail. What odds did you face? How and why did you prevail?

(Beatty, 1992)