# Interview Tips

* Arrive early and prepared
* Deliver a firm handshake (smile and maintain eye contact)
* Have resume and supporting materials ready
* Use concrete, positive examples to reflect your best skills and attributes
* Listen
* Show enthusiasm
* Speak clearly and slowly
* Keep hand gestures and movement to a minimum but include enough to be expressive and engaging.
* Follow the interviewer’s lead, but make sure you highlight all the information you feel is important.
* Ask questions
* Wrap up when it’s clear the interview is ending (ascertain needed follow-up action).
* Thank the interviewer for the interview.
* Collect business cards from each interviewer.

## **The “Tell Me About Yourself” Question**

This broad question can throw many interviewees. Develop a summary of your background in relationship to the job. Include your desire to work for the organization, as well as your qualifications for the position.

## **The “Weakness” Question**

Interviewers often ask about strengths and weaknesses. While strengths are easier to express, weaknesses present more of a challenge. An effective way to answer this question is to think of a weakness you have overcome and share the process with the interviewer. In addition to having an example of something that you have overcome, also have an example of something you are working on just in case the interviewer asks.

## **The Salary Question**

* Postpone salary discussions until you are offered (or an offer seems likely for) a particular position.
* Research so you know your worth and the value of the job in the marketplace and geographic location.
* Rehearse selling your skills at the right price. When it comes time to discussing salary, you can’t be sure that the company’s first offer is the best offer unless you ask. Ask some questions on benefits, vacation, stock options, etc. before zeroing in on salary. This will give you a better perspective on your entire package. Then, explain your knowledge of market value and reiterate your skills and contributions that add value to the employer. You might then ask, “Is there any flexibility in the salary portion of the offer?”

### **Tips:**

* Look for a “win-win” situation. Remember that the offer negotiation may be one of the first steps in developing a relationship with a new employer.
* Be realistic. Most entry-level jobs do not have much room for negotiation.
* Know your needs. What do you realistically need to live comfortably?
* Relax and remember that you are having a conversation, not a battle.

## **Follow-up**

By the end of the interview, you should know what happens next. For example, know what the organization’s timetable is for hiring, or if you are expected to send further material, such as references, to the employer. If the interviewer doesn’t communicate this information, ask directly. Close the interview by expressing interest in the job. Get a business card. Send a thank you message within 48 hours to everyone you interviewed with to strengthen the good impression you made in the interview. Take the opportunity to highlight your interest and qualifications and expand briefly on any interesting topic that was discussed during the interview.

## **References**

References should not be included on your résumé. A separate document should be created which includes contact information identical to your résumé and the word "References" clearly displayed. The name, title, organization, address, phone number, and e-mail of each reference should be written on your reference sheet. Do not send references unless you are asked. When gathering references, make sure you ask your potential references if they are comfortable providing you with a positive reference. Make sure you keep in touch with references, keep them up to date on your career path, experiences, and goals.