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**Successful Interview Preparation**

**Questions:**

* What are your feelings going to an interview? What are your concerns?
* What do you think are the key factors for a successful interview?
* What is your objective for the interview?

Interview Objective: make it as easily as possible for the hiring manager to make the decision to hire **you**

**Before Interview:**

* Research about the company: what products or services do they sell? What is the company’s position in its industry? Its reputation/what is the company known for? Its strengths/ weaknesses?
* Know about the job details: what is the job description? What are the job requirements? What are specific responsibilities? Who will you be working with?
* Find out who the interviewers are? Ask for the interview schedule if not given one. This helps you to anticipate focus areas and potential questions
* Prepare a list of potential questions and your answers. Prepare a list of your specific examples

Typical Skills and Qualities Companies Look For:

* 1. *Job skills – do you have the job technical skills?*
  2. *Problem solving skills/Creativity*
  3. *Team work – how effective you are in working with people?*
  4. *Communication skills – can you listen and understand people’s questions/comments? Can you express your thoughts, opinions, your analysis, clearly and compellingly?*
  5. *Dedication/commitment (taking the extra step, going above and beyond, taking the initiative)*
* Prepare a list of questions you want to ask the interviewers

**At Interview:**

* Speak clearly (especially if it’s a phone interview), remember to breath
* Maintain eye contact
* Show energy, enthusiasm. Engage in conversation
* Turn negative/tough questions to your strengths
* When answering “problem solving, open ended” type of question, focus on your thought process/approach to the issue. Often times, it’s not about the right or wrong answer
* Remember to ask good questions (listen to the interviewer, ask clarifying, follow up questions) and use the answers to tailor your response. This enables you get the info you want and a way to “standout”
* Thank the interviewer and ask for his/her email address at end of interview

***Practice and Be Prepared***

**Helpful tips:**

* Show up on time (5 minutes early). Don’t be late
* Bring a copy of your resume, and a pen to take notes (best resume you can create – include extra curricula activities, volunteer work)
* Dress business professional (unless you are told otherwise)
* Turn your phone off
* Take notes as needed so you can ask follow up questions
* Don’t ask about salary, vacation days, benefits, etc. during interview?
* Don’t get rattled by the question. Think about the type of question and refer to your mental list of answers and examples?
* Listen to the question carefully and ask for clarification if not clear
* Don’t say “I don’t know” but explain how you would approach the problem/issue/situation
* Aware of social media (LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook, etc.). Don’t include things that may reflect negatively on you

**Some Potential Interview Questions (behavior):**

1. *You’re given a business problem*: customer satisfaction on our service is down this year, how do you fix it? Our sales this quarter were below target. What steps would you take to increase sales?
2. Tell me about your last job?
3. What accomplishments you were most proud of?
4. What are your biggest strengths?
5. What are your biggest weaknesses?
6. Tell me about a major mistake you’ve made?
7. How do you resolve a conflict with a co-worker at work?
8. If you’re working on a team and the project’s going to be late because a member of the team is not delivering on their task, what would you do?
9. Your manager gives you an additional project and you feel that your plate is already full. How do you handle this situation?
10. What did you like about your last job? What classes or projects did you like/dislike in school?
11. What drives you? What motivates you? How do we help you do your best work?
12. How do you rate your communication skills?
13. Where do you see yourself 3 years from now?

**Potential Questions You May Want to Ask:**

1. What would be my specific duties in the first 90 days?
2. What are the key success factors in this job?
3. What are the key challenges in this job?
4. What are the key attributes of successful people/high performers at this company
5. What experience and learning/growth will I be able to gain from this job?
6. What interviewer likes about the company and what are the challenges he/she sees in the future?
7. What are the next steps in the hiring process?