

# ResumeMaker's Top 25 Tips for Interviewing

The job interviewing stage of your job search is the most critical. You can make or break your chance of being hired in the short amount of time it takes to be interviewed. Anyone can learn to interview well, however, and most mistakes can be anticipated and corrected. Learn the following top 25 interviewing techniques to give you that winning edge.

- 1. Bring extra copies of your resume to the interview.** Nothing shows less preparation and readiness than being asked for another copy of your resume and not having one. Come prepared with extra copies of your resume. You may be asked to interview with more than one person and it demonstrates professionalism and preparedness to anticipate needing extra copies.
- 2. Dress conservatively and professionally.** You can establish your uniqueness through other ways, but what you wear to an interview can make a tremendous difference. It is better to overdress than underdress. You can, however, wear the same clothes to see different people.
- 3. Be aware of your body language.** Try to look alert, energetic, and focused on the interviewer. Make eye contact. Non-verbally, this communicates that you are interested in the individual.
- 4. First/last impressions.** The first and last five minutes of the interview are the most important to the interview. It is during this time that critical first and lasting impressions are made and the interviewer decides whether or not they like you. Communicate positive behaviors during the first five minutes and be sure you are remembered when you leave.
- 5. Fill out company applications completely - even if you have a resume.** Even though you have brought a copy of your resume, many companies require a completed application. Your willingness to complete one, and your thoroughness in doing so, will convey a great deal about your professionalism and ability to follow through.
- 6. Remember that the purpose of every interview is to get an offer.** You must sufficiently impress your interviewer both professionally and personally to be offered the job. At the end of the interview, make sure you know what the next step is and when the employer expects to make a decision.
- 7. Understand employers' needs.** Present yourself as someone who can really add value to an organization. Show that you can fit into the work environment.
- 8. Be likeable.** Be enthusiastic. People love to hire individuals who are easy to get along with and who are excited about their company. Be professional, yet demonstrate your interest and energy.
- 9. Make sure you have the right skills.** Know your competition. How do you compare with

your peers in education, experience, training, salary, and career progression? Mention the things you know how to do really well. They are the keys to your next job.

10. **Display ability to work hard to pursue an organization's goals.** Assume that most interviewers need to select someone who will fit into their organization well in terms of both productivity and personality. You must confirm that you are both a productive and personable individual by stressing your benefits for the employer.
11. **Market all of your strengths.** It is important to market yourself, including your technical qualifications, general skills and experiences as well as personal traits. Recruiters care about two things—credentials and personality. Can you do the job based on past performance and will you fit in with the corporate culture? Talk about your positive personality traits and give examples of how you demonstrate each one on the job.
12. **Give definitive answers and specific results.** Whenever you make a claim of your accomplishments, it will be more believable and better remembered if you cite specific examples and support for your claims. Tell the interviewer something about business situations where you actually used this skill and elaborate on the outcome. Be specific.
13. **Don't be afraid to admit mistakes.** Employers want to know what mistakes you have made and what is wrong with you. Don't be afraid to admit making mistakes in the past, but continuously stress your positive qualities as well, and how you have turned negatives into positive traits.
14. **Relate stories or examples that heighten your past experience.** Past performance is the best indicator of future performance. If you were successful at one company, odds are you can succeed at another. Be ready to sell your own features and benefits in the interview.
15. **Know everything about your potential employer before the interview.** Customize your answers as much as possible in terms of the needs of the employer. This requires that you complete research, before the interview, about the company, its customers, and the work you anticipate doing. Talk in the employer's language.
16. **Rehearse and practice interview questions before the interview.** Prior to your interview, try to actually practice the types of questions and answers you may be asked. Even if you do not anticipate all of the questions, the process of thinking them through will help you feel less stressed and more prepared during the interview itself.
17. **Know how to respond to tough questions.** The majority of questions that you will be asked can be anticipated most of the time. There are always, however, those exceptional ones tailored to throw you off guard and to see how you perform under pressure. Your best strategy is to be prepared, stay calm, collect your thoughts, and respond as clearly as possible.
18. **Translate your strengths into job-related language of accomplishments and benefits relevant to the needs of employers.** While you no doubt have specific strengths and skills

related to the position, stress the benefits you are likely to provide to the employer. Whenever possible, give examples of your strengths that relate to the language and needs of the employer.

- 19. Identify your strengths and what you enjoy doing.** Skills that you enjoy doing are the ones that are most likely to bring benefit to an employer. Prior to the interview, know what it is that you enjoy doing most, and what benefits that brings to you and your employer.
- 20. Know how you communicate verbally to others.** Strong verbal communications skills are highly valued by most employers. They are signs of educated and competent individuals. Know how you communicate, and practice with others to determine if you are presenting yourself in the best possible light.
- 21. Don't arrive on time—arrive early!** No matter how sympathetic your interviewer may be to the fact that there was an accident on the freeway, it is virtually impossible to overcome a negative first impression. Do whatever it takes to be on time, including allowing extra time for unexpected emergencies.
- 22. Treat everyone you meet as important to the interview.** Make sure you are courteous to everyone you come in contact with, no matter who they are or what their position. The opinion of everyone can be important to the interview process.
- 23. Answer questions with complete sentences and with substance.** Remember that your interviewer is trying to determine what substance you would bring to the company and the position. Avoid answering the questions asked with simple "yes" or "no" answers. Give complete answers that show what knowledge you have concerning the company and its requirements. Let the interviewer know who you are.
- 24. Reduce your nervousness by practicing stress reduction techniques.** There are many stress-reducing techniques used by public speakers that can certainly aid you in your interview process. Practice some of the relaxation methods as you approach your interview, such as taking slow deep breaths to calm you down. The more you can relax, the more comfortable you will feel and the more confident you will appear.
- 25. Be sure to ask questions.** Be prepared to ask several questions relevant to the job, employer, and the organization. These questions should be designed to elicit information to help you make a decision as well as demonstrate your interest, intelligence, and enthusiasm for the job.