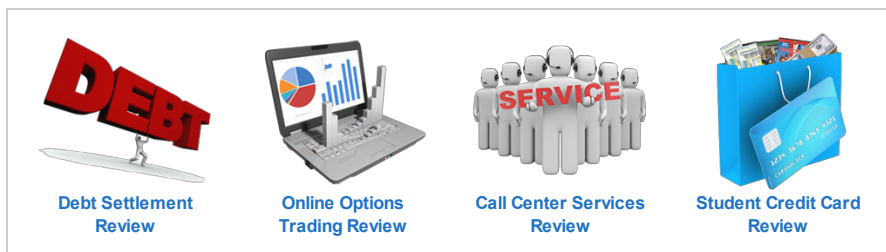




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## Nailing the Interview

By Ryan Goodrich

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The interview is the bane of every applicant's existence. You get to sit under the proverbial interrogation light and are forced through a barrage of interview questions. The questions oftentimes seem so numerous and personal that you are waiting for them to just ask for your shoe size or Social Security Number. Interviews are no easy ordeal and you should prepare accordingly.

### Learn About Your Prospective Employer Before The Interview

Demonstrate how proactive you are. Showing up for an interview without knowing anything of the company is quite unimpressive and uninspiring. Visit the company's website, read about the products they sell, the people that work there, and the successes they've had. Look for [press releases](#) about the company so you have potential ammo for topics of conversation. Your interview is the one and only time you have to shine, so even if it's not in your nature to look before you jump into an interview, LOOK. Look, look and look some more. Then look again, just to be sure.

### Think About How Your Past Experience Relates To The Job You're Applying To

Even your time working as a fry cook at the local fast food restaurant has some [application](#) to the job you've applied to. It's up to you to get creative in how you market and draw upon your past experience. For example, working in a fast food restaurant may have taught you the importance of hard work, teamwork, and problem solving. In reality, the job may have been quite boring, mind-numbing and the manager was a complete jerk. The interviewer wants to know if you can pull the positive from even a negative job.

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### Practice Your Responses To Common Interview Questions

You may think this will be easy and you can just wing your responses in the interview. Doing so would be a big mistake. You should be able to formulate responses almost immediately after an interviewer asks their question. Pondering too long is never a good thing and should be avoided at all costs. You want to convey your confidence and preparedness in all things. Don't ramble, keep your responses brief, and tie one or two professional experiences to your answer to demonstrate your competence.

## Show Up For The Interview Early

By early, we don't mean a minute or two before the appointed time. Show up 10-15 minutes in advance not only so you have time to catch your breath, but so you can examine your surroundings and make any last-minute changes to any of the responses you've practiced. Punctuality is always a good indicator that candidates take interviewing seriously, stressful as it may be to make the time for an early entrance.

## Be Honest About Your Mistakes And Find A Positive Spin On Them

Never try to hide the mistakes you've made at previous jobs. Interviewers want to know that you'll not only be able to fess up to your mistakes, but that you'll [learn](#) from them and do better the next time around. Employers want to avoid mistakes, but they also want to hire employees that know they're only human and will act responsibly in the office.

## Bring Additional Copies of Your Resume As Well As References

The interviewer may forget to print a copy of your resume or there may not have been enough copies to go around to the other interviewers. Demonstrate your consideration for how busy the office may be and hand out your copies. References should be provided at the interview rather than in advance (unless otherwise asked by the employer).

## Send A Thank-You Letter Or Note The Same Day As The Interview

After the interview has taken place, race home to write up a personalized thank-you letter (try to remember the interviewer's name so you can address it to them) to send either via post or email. Mention specific points of the interview that you noted or were impressed with. Stress your qualifications for the position and thank the interviewer for their time. The sooner the letter gets sent, the fresher you will remain in the interviewer's mind. Few candidates send thank-you letters, so make yourself [stand out](#) with one.

The key to succeeding in an interview is preparation and research. You have proved you were a qualified candidate because they called you back [after you applied](#) for the position. Follow these steps and you'll be able to impress any employer so long as you maintain an assertive, yet confident air. For additional help check out [job and resume services](#) online.

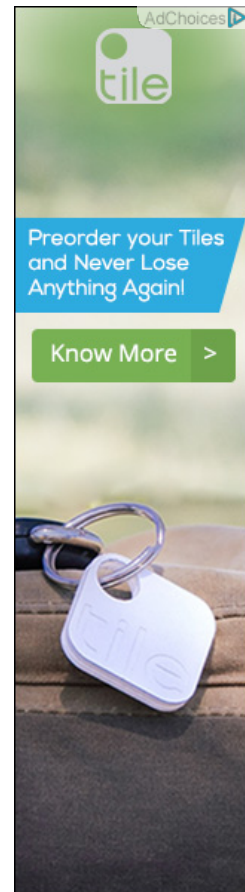
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