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Career and succession planning pdf

When people begin their university education or start out on a new career path, they often do so without a clear sense of direction, and this can lead to a waste of valuable time and effort. Laying out a career plan can help to clarify your goals and implement the means by which you plan to achieve them. You will never accomplish your career goals if you do not know what they are. Laying out a career plan can help you by making these goals specific. Make goals about how much money you want to earn, the kinds of professional positions you want to attain by particular times, where you want to live and when you want to be able to retire. Set goals that are attainable and realistic but still make you stretch for difficult things. To reach your career goals, you may need to achieve a certain level of education and training. This may mean attending a university or professional training center, which requires a significant investment of time and money. In your career plan, decide on a specific area of expertise that will propel you into a career and give you the necessary returns on what your education will cost in both tuition expenditures and opportunity costs. A career plan must be more than just a goal for a peak career position and a specified field of study to get you there. A career plan should also include work that you plan on doing while you are pursuing your education, whether that be part-time jobs or internships. Though this type of work may not be directly related to your final goal, it can help to get you there, so try to get jobs and internships that will look good on your resume after graduation. Even after you graduate and move into your actual profession, you will probably start off in an entry-level position rather than the highest paying position possible for your profession. Investigate the nature of promotion in your selected profession, and include expected promotions in your career plan. A detailed career plan should be concrete, having a structure similar to a business plan that an entrepreneur would make. This should include basic financials: how much everything will cost and how you will pay for it. Calculate how you will fund your education — whether through personal earnings, grants or loans — and factor in loan payments when you look at your expected earnings and expenses after graduation. Burnsed, Brian. "How Higher Education Affects Lifetime Salary." US News and World Report. Aug. 5, 2011. (Feb. 5, 2012) Anthony; Rose, Stephen; Cheah, Ban. "The College Payoff: Education, Occupations, Lifetime Earnings." Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce. August 2011. (Feb. 5, 2012) Wayne. "Take Charge of Your Career Progress." The Telegraph. Mar. 18, 2009. (Jan. 30, 2012) Jessica. "The Hidden Job Market." CNNMoney.com. June 10, 2009. (Jan. 30, 2012) Jay. "10 Things Job Applicants Should Know." NYTimes.com. Dec. 21, 2011. (Feb. 3, 2012) Jenna. 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You need to walk in and give the prospective employer every reason to hire you -- and no reasons not to.The right experience and a solid résumé are important -- they're probably what got you the interview in the first place. But they're not enough. Employers are looking for somebody who will fit with the company. They want to know that you're compatible with the company culture and have the necessary people skills. They're looking for the qualities that come out only in an interview: enthusiasm, professionalism and the ability to perform under pressure.Look at every job interview from the employer's point of view. What would you want to know about a candidate? What qualities would you be looking for? What types of things would turn you off about an applicant? What kind of a person would you hire for this position? What questions would you ask, and what answers would you like to hear?The online job site CareerBuilder.com surveyed 2,700 hiring managers on the performance of candidates during job interviews. They found that many job seekers sabotage their chances of landing a position by making easily avoidable mistakes [source: CareerBuilder]. The good news is that you can put yourself in front of much of the competition by paying attention to some simple advice that will guide you through the interview process.Read on for 10 tips that can help you shine in your next job interview.You can't do your best in an interview if you haven't spent time preparing. Do your homework by researching the company. Start with an Internet search: Look at the company's Web site, read their mission statement, get hold of an annual report. What's their history? Who are their competitors? Has the company been in the news lately? Who are the important people in management?Study the job description carefully, and review your résumé. What are the areas of your experience that might have prompted them to call you in for the interview? What experiences and skills should you emphasize? If you can, stop by the company's office to pick up brochures and observe the atmosphere.Practice your interview beforehand. Have a friend ask you questions from a list of probable queries. Don't memorize your answers, but be confident about the key points you want to make. If possible, it can also be a good idea to learn something beforehand about the person who will interview you. You might try searching on Google, Facebook or LinkedIn.The CareerBuilder survey of hiring managers found that the most frequently mentioned mistake that job candidates make is dressing inappropriately for the interview. When applying for any kind of office job, men should wear a business suit and women a pantsuit or conservative skirt. For non-office jobs, that level of formality isn't necessary, but your attire should be neat and clean. When in doubt, always dress more conservatively than might be required. No jeans, sneakers or T-shirts, and it's generally best to skip cologne and perfume.Arrive about fifteen minutes before the interview is scheduled, and stop at a restroom to check your appearance. Keep in mind that from the moment you walk in, you are creating an impression. Be courteous and professional at all times. If the interviewer invites you to lunch, pass on the alcohol -- you need to be as sharp as possible.Bring a pen and a note pad. You should usually prepare a few extra copies of your résumé. Others involved in hiring may want to look over your credentials. You should also bring along any documents -- reports, graphs, project summaries -- that illustrate successful projects you've completed at other jobs.Your main goals as you approach the interview are to give a positive impression of yourself and to establish rapport with the interviewer. Smile as you greet the interviewer and use his or her last name with a courtesy title. Don't use the person's first name unless invited to do so. Maintain eye contact.Shake hands with a firm, confident grip. Don't sit down until invited to do so. Pay attention to your body language. Don't slouch -- it's better to sit straight up than to lean against the back of the chair. Don't fold your arms, cover your mouth or look away frequently -- these gestures can seem defensive and evasive to the interviewer.It's also best not to tell jokes. Humor can be a good way to break the ice in a social situation, but it can be dangerous in a job interview. You want to come off as professional, not flippant. You shouldn't offer your opinions about non-work matters like politics or social issues.Don't talk too much or too fast. Pause before you speak, and show that you're a good listener. One good tactic is to ask a question that lets the interviewer tell you something about himself or herself, such as when he or she started with the company. It shows your interest and puts the person at ease.Interviewing on the PhoneIf the interview is by phone, have a quiet place available where you won't be disturbed. Use a land line rather than a cell phone for better voice quality. If you've been caught off guard, ask whether you can have five minutes to prepare and then call the interviewer back. Have your résumé and notes in front of you, and refer to them when answering questions. Speak slowly and clearly -- your voice will play a large role in creating a good impression.Never complain about your previous boss or company. This was the second most common interview mistake cited in the CareerBuilder survey. You may have well-justified complaints about how you were treated or how your previous company operated, but keep them to yourself. Employers don't want to hire disgruntled workers.You shouldn't speak badly about your former colleagues, either. You want to show that you are eager to fit in -- not a person looking to assign blame. Don't talk about the bad economy or the sorry state of the industry. You also shouldn't discuss personal problems like financial worries or family complications.When you talk about previous jobs, put the emphasis on solutions and accomplishments, not on difficulties and frustrations. If asked why you left your former company, put a positive spin on it: You might say you're looking for greater opportunity or new challenges.When interviewers ask general questions, they are trying to judge how suited you are to the job. They're not trying to elicit irrelevant personal details, nor do they want to hear your life story. Look on all these questions as chances to focus on your strong points. Remember to use specifics in your answers. Plenty of candidates say they are team players or goal-oriented, so be sure to give examples to show that you are.Here are three common questions that come up in many job interviews:Tell me about yourself. Have a short, pointed answer down pat. Emphasize the experiences that make you right for this job. Don't ramble. Instead, make your case in a clear, logical way.What are your strengths? You should practice your answer to this one in advance. You don't want to come off as arrogant, but you do want to put the focus on job-related skills. It's always a good idea to emphasize that working effectively with others is one of your strong points.Why do you want to work here? This is a chance to emphasize both your knowledge of the company and the qualities that make you a perfect fit for the job. You might want to refer to the company's mission statement.In addition to the easy questions, you should expect the interviewer to ask difficult questions or ones intended to make you reveal faults that would disqualify you. That's one of the reasons for the interview. Remember that you don't always have to answer the question directly -- you can talk around it. Look for ways to give the question a positive spin.Here are three examples of challenging questions commonly asked in job interviews:What are your weaknesses? An answer that turns a positive trait into a weakness -- like "I'm impatient to get results" -- is too evasive. It may be better to choose a minor flaw and tell how you compensate. For example, "I haven't always been completely organized, but I make up for it with a day-planner and strict attention to priorities." Focus on the lack of a particular skill, not on a character flaw.What did you dislike about your last job? This question should not tempt you to run down your previous employer. Better to mention that the job didn't offer as many challenges as you would like and go on to explain an important accomplishment.How do you handle conflict with your colleagues? If you've rarely had conflicts, emphasize that -- the interviewer may be trying to weed out candidates who can't get along with others. Picture yourself as a peacemaker, someone who finds a way to work constructively even with difficult co-workers.Dishonesty on a job interview can sabotage your chances of getting the job. If you don't know the answer to a question, say so. A bluff is not likely to work. For example, when you're asked whether you've had experience with a particular type of software, don't say you're familiar with it if you aren't. The interviewer may ask further questions that reveal your lie. Instead, be truthful but mention that you're a quick study when it comes to learning new skills.Don't pad your résumé or include outright lies. Emphasize your accomplishments on previous jobs or at school, but don't exaggerate. You could be tripped up later if the interviewer checks on your record. Giving credit to colleagues and to those who helped you is always a good tactic.You should prepare ways to spin things like employment gaps, frequent moves or weakness in your education or skills. You might explain that you were pursuing volunteer work or taking time off because of family obligations. If you don't have formal training, mention that you've learned more through experience than you might have in school.Asking the right question during an interview is almost as important as giving good answers. The questions you ask should show your interest in the job. They can demonstrate that you've taken the time to learn something about the company and the position. Not asking good questions suggests a lack of interest.For example, you might ask about the challenges of the job. What are likely to be the main projects you'll be working on? What skills will you need in order to advance? What positions might come open in the future? One of the important things the interviewer is looking for is your commitment to the job. No company wants to hire and train an employee who will soon move on.Ask for details related to the job, too. To whom will I be reporting? Who are the other members of the team I'll be working with? How much travel will be involved? What are main goals of the department where I'll be working?Until you've been offered the job, it's often best to defer all money discussions. Ideally, a job interview should focus on whether you're right for the position. It's not uncommon, though, for interviewers to bring up money. Be ready to handle the questions.If you are asked for your salary history, tell the interviewer you would rather not discuss it at this point. Try to bring the discussion back to your qualifications. If the interviewer asks what salary you expect in your new job, explain that you are looking for a good fit with opportunities for advancement. If you name a figure at this point, you might either price yourself out of the job if your number is too high, or unnecessarily limit your negotiating position if you name a lower salary.Tell the interviewer that you are happy to talk about the salary after a job offer is made. Say you are confident that a highly regarded company such as this one will offer a competitive salary. If the interviewer insists you give a figure, mention a salary range in the higher end of what you expect the job will pay. Let the person know you are willing to negotiate a final figure when you know more about the job duties and benefits.This is an important tip that's easy to overlook once you've completed an interview. Your follow-up should start at the interview itself. Make sure you get the interviewer's business card before you leave, as well as the names and contact information for any other people you've met. Soon after the interview, write down the important points you've discussed. Take some time to evaluate how you did in the interview.Before you leave, ask the interviewer how the hiring process will proceed. When are they likely to make a decision? Is there any more information they will need from you?Send the interviewer a thank-you note saying that you appreciate the person taking the time to talk to you and emphasizing your continuing enthusiasm for the job. A personal, handwritten note is best, but at least send an e-mail, if you think that's a better way to get in touch with the person. In it, be sure to convey your thanks to others you've spoken with, too.If you don't hear back when you expect to, call and inquire. Sometimes the process takes longer than expected. Your call shows that you are interested and raises your name again.Read on for lots more information to help you land a job.BusinessSchoolEdge.com "35 Things To Avoid At Your Job Interview" (accessed July 15, 2010). "Employers Reveal the Outrageous and Common Mistakes Candidates Made in Job Interviews." February 24, 2010 (accessed July 15, 2010). Rosemary. "Top 10 interview mistakes." CNN/Career Builder. May 12, 2008 (accessed July 15, 2010). Kevin. "Prepare for the Interview." CollegeRecruiter.com (accessed July 15, 2010). Carolyn. "A guide to interview-ese." New York Daily News. June 14, 2010. Sarah E. Big Blunders Job Hunters Make." Online WSJ.com. June 28, 2010 (accessed July 15, 2010). Jennifer Saranow. "On Refusing to Disclose Your Salary in a Job Interview." New York Times. 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