

I Want to Teach in Your School

A job interview to teach in a public school or in any institution of learning for children or youth is unlike any other kind of job interview. And it is worth our time to discuss what makes that kind of job interview so different so you can go in and land that job you want and get the next step of your career in teaching well on the way.

In a job interview for a teaching position, two things dominate the discussion. The first one is the regular interview stuff such as your résumé, your background, your education, any publishing history you have and your job history. So to quickly get that part of the interview in order, bring a well prepared resume with you. Now when preparing your resume, keep in mind that the resume does not get you the job. The resume gets you in the door for the interview and serves as a skeleton outline of who you are so the school and the administrator interviewing you knows that at a basic level, you have the credentials to be a good teacher at their school.

It is the second aspect of a job interview for a teaching position that will make the difference between whether you will be hired or not. And that is how the interviewer does when he or she envisions you teaching in one of the classrooms in their building. During the interview, the questions that are asked and the way the interviewer looks at you tells you that he or she is picturing you teaching the students in their school and how you represent yourself as well as your demeanor and personality are what will give that administrator a good feel for your teaching style as well.

So customize everything about your interview presentation around looking and acting like the kind of teacher this administrator wants in his or her school. You can start with your outfit. Don't dress so formally that you bring the appearance of a harsh school marm. Look at the actual wardrobe you will wear when you are teaching a class of this new boss. Pick out something visually pleasing, relaxed and yet professional so the administrator feels that you would be a warm and yet efficient personality to influence young minds in their school.

In an interview setting, we often worry about what we will say in response to questions. But what will be the determining factor in whether you land the teaching position is not what is said verbally but what you communicate with your facial expressions, the way you express your ideas and the enthusiasm you bring to the interview. These are subtle nonverbal elements of your interview demeanor that the interviewer may not even know are influencing the decisions of who to hire. But they are powerful messages that can really only be

communicated through inflection, genuine interest in the interview process and personality.

There are a number of questions the interviewer is trying to get answers to that he or she can never really ask out loud. But these questions are very much a part of this interview and the extent to which you answer these questions correctly will make all the difference when the hiring decision is made. Some of the questions include...

- . Does this person love children?
- . Does this person have a passion for teaching?
- . Will this person fit in with the culture of our school?
- . Will the students enjoy this new teacher?
- . Is this teacher even tempered and able to handle crisis?
- . Will this teacher comply with our policies and procedures?
- . Is this teacher a creative person?
- . Will this teacher stay with us for a long time so I don't have to do this interview again?

All of these questions can be answered in the way you present yourself, in your smile, your laugh and your ability to relax during the interview. The kinds of stories from our past and how you tell those stories will surface that you really do love to teach and you are the kind of teacher who bonds naturally with students and brings out the best in them. And if you can get that message across during the interview, you will land the job every time.

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Word Count 729