

Seneca

WORK-INTEGRATED
LEARNING

Interview Preparation

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Aq6y3RO12UQ>

WHAT IS AN INTERVIEW?

An **interview** is a conversation between two or more people (the interviewer and the interviewee) where questions are asked by the interviewer to obtain information from the interviewee.

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

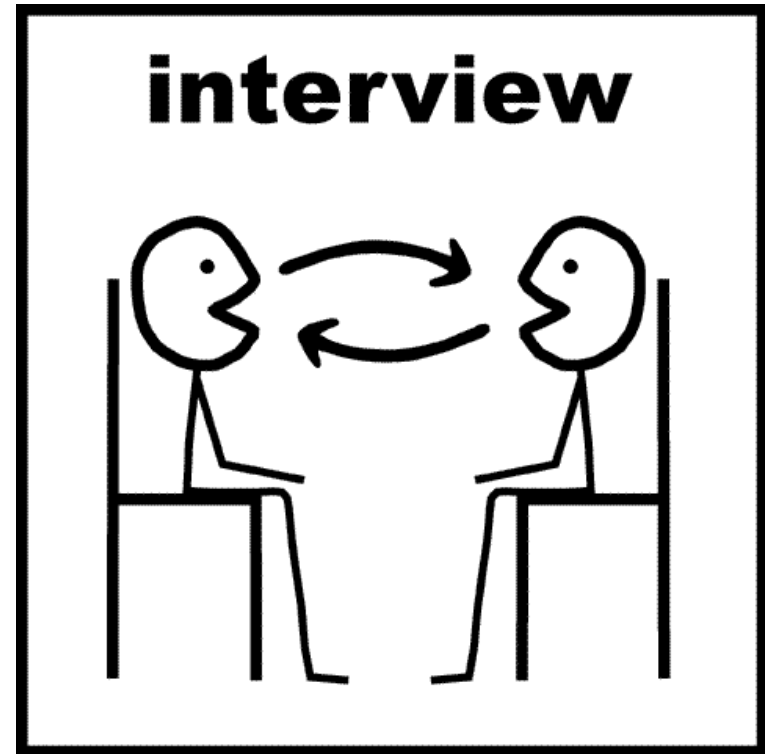
PART OF AN INTERVIEW

- Greeting and Small Talk
- Review of Interview Structure & Posting
- Employer Questions
- Your Questions
- Closing
- Thank You



TYPES OF INTERVIEWS

- The Directed
- The Undirected
- Panel Interview
- Group Interview
- Telephone
- Behavioural
- Testing



PURPOSE OF AN INTERVIEW

- ***An employer*** needs to find out if you are the best candidate for the job.....
 - 1st impression – assess your presentation
 - Are you interested in the job? Why?
 - Good fit with company culture?
 - Potential to be a keeper?
 - Do you have the skills required?
- ***Candidate*** needs to find out if it's a good opportunity
 - Is the position as described in the posting?
 - Will the job allow you to grow/reach career goals?
 - Do you like the work environment? The team?
 - Potential for long term employment?

WHEN DOES THE INTERVIEW START?

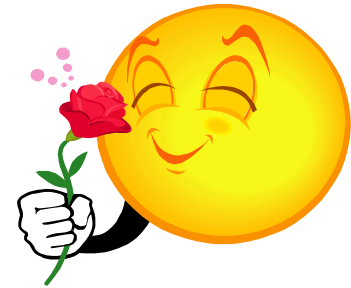
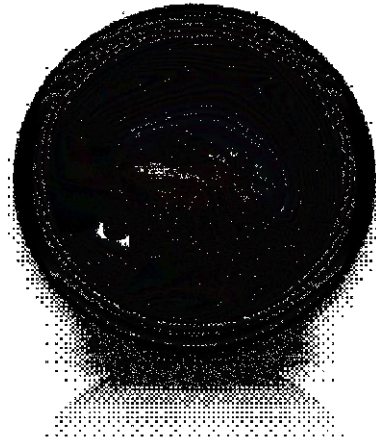
...when you are invited to
participate in the interview

THINGS TO CONSIDER...

- Name of person who will be interviewing you
- Date and time of interview
- Location and directions (transit? commute? traffic?)
- How many interviewers? Who are they? (job titles)
- Do I have to bring anything?
- How long is interview?
- Testing involved?

4 SENSES TO A SUCCESSFUL INTERVIEW

- Sight
- Hearing
- Scent
- Touch



Give the employer a reason to hire you...



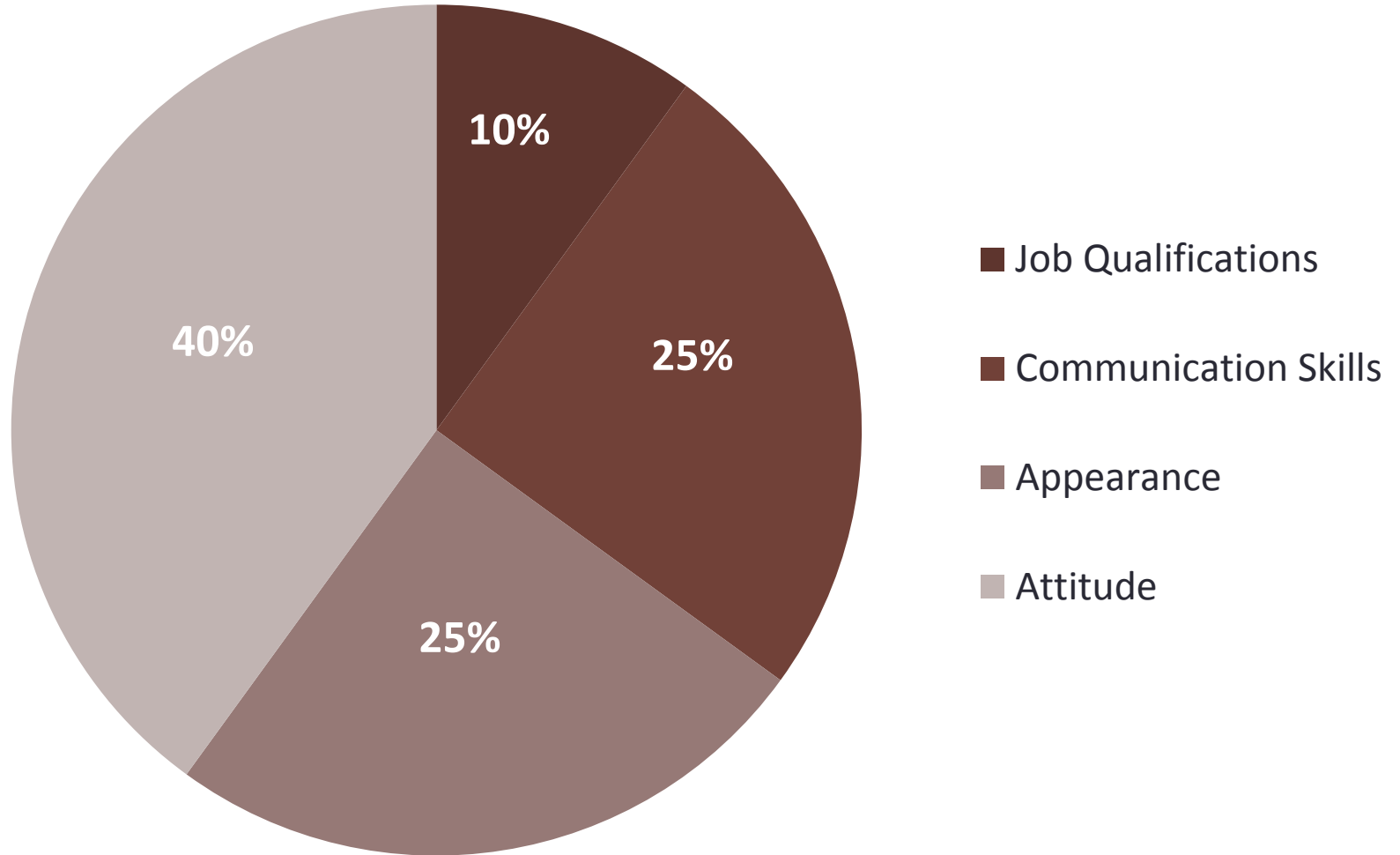
...and they may do exactly that!

Don't give the employer....



...a reason NOT to hire you

HOW ARE YOU RATED DURING AN INTERVIEW?



PREPARING FOR THE INTERVIEW

- **Know the employer** and the job!
- Research the company – they will expect you know something about them!!
- Visit the site beforehand
- **WORST MISTAKE** – going to an interview with lack of confidence, assuming the interviewer holds all the cards
 - You're there for a reason!

**You want to prepare for an interview in
such a way that the Employer says
“How can we *not* hire you?”**

INTERVIEW PREP

- **Know yourself!**
- Think about why you want this job
- Why are you a good match – skills/strengths
- Think of S.T.A.R stories
- Practice interview questions
- Review your application documents
- Prepare you references
- Brainstorm your questions for the interviewer
- Extra copies of documents to bring to interview (pen, notepad)
- Prepare your portfolio/review online portfolio

Remember...the interviewer wants you to succeed!!

Know Yourself

Understand
The Job

Anticipate
Questions

Rehearse
Responses

Plan your
route

Get a good
night sleep!

Be Punctual!

RELAX!

Arrive Alone

Bring extra's!



What You Wish You'd Known Before Your JOB INTERVIEW

Common nonverbal mistakes made at a job interview

From a survey of 2000 bosses

21% —
Playing with **hair** or touching face

47% —
Having little or **no knowledge** of the company is the most **common mistake** job seekers make during interviews

Failure to make **eye contact** **67%**

Lack of smile **38%**

Bad posture **33%**

21% —
Crossing arms over their chest

9% —
Using too many **hand gestures**

Handshake that is too weak **26%**

33% —
Fidgeting too much

In a survey of 2000 bosses **33%** claimed that they know within the first **90 seconds** of an interview whether **they will hire someone**



The average length of an interview is **approximately 40 minutes**

Statistics show that when meeting new people the impact is:

7% From what we **actually say**

38% The quality of our **voice grammar** and overall **confidence**

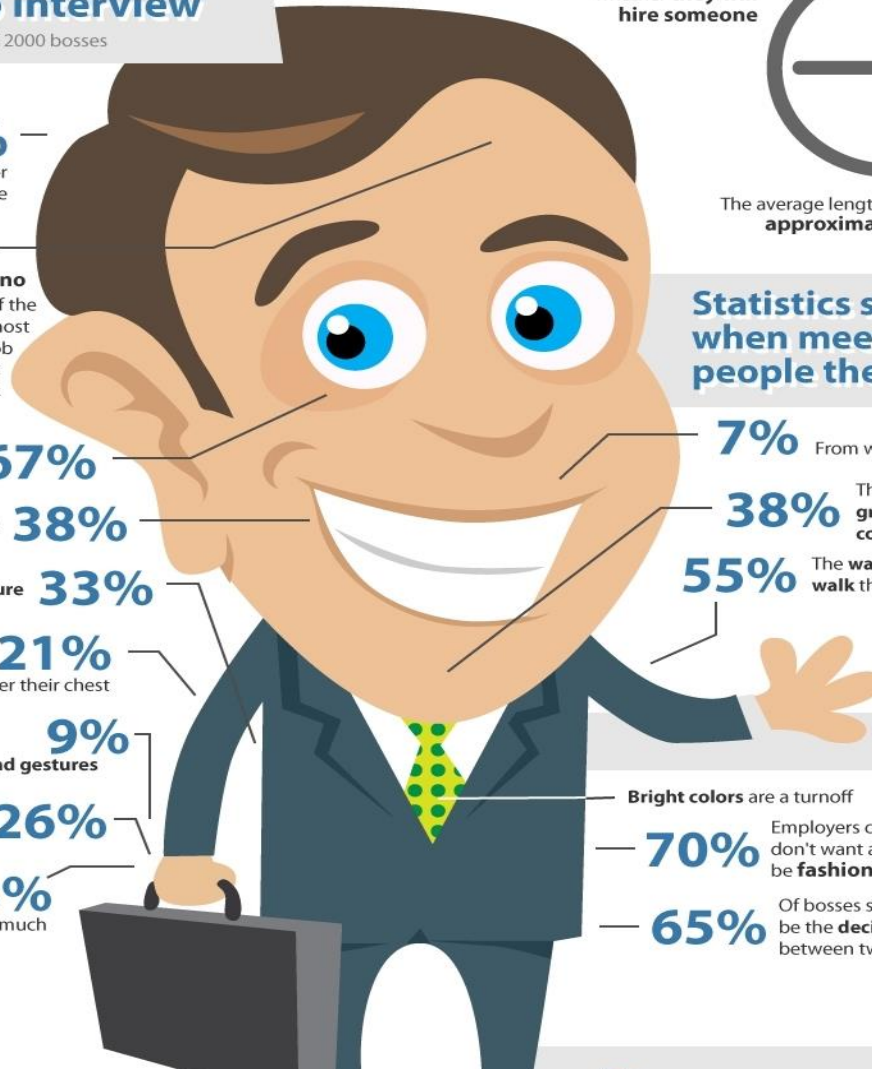
55% The **way we dress, act and walk** through the door

Clothes

Bright colors are a turnoff

70% Employers claiming they don't want applicants to be **fashionable or trendy**.

65% Of bosses said **clothes could** be the **deciding factor** between two similar candidates.



THE INTERVIEW



ARRIVAL & GREETING

- Arrive to the interview 10 minutes early (alone!!)
- Turn off cell phone!
- Take a few minutes to relax, check your appearance
- Introduce yourself to the receptionist, mention your appointment
- Review your notes while waiting quietly
- Stand to greet the interviewer and introduce yourself
- Offer a firm handshake (initiate, if the employer does not)
- Wait until you have been asked to sit or ask if you can be seated
- Sit down, get yourself set up (pen, pencil, notepad, documents)
- Offer extra copies of your documents to the interviewer

NON-VERBAL BEHAVIOUR

- You have ONE chance to make a good first impression!
- Project an open, positive, and enthusiastic attitude
- Be aware of non-verbal behaviours
 - Posture – balanced and relaxed, forward-facing
 - Hands – no fidgeting
 - Any nervous habits?
 - Facial expression – SMILE shows interest (and no one wants to work with a grumpy person)
 - Voice tone
 - Timing/pace of speaking
 - Active listening

TYPICAL QUESTIONS

- Tell me about yourself (organized response: S-skills, E-education, E-experience)
- Why did you apply for this job? Why do you want to work here?
- What do you know about our company?
- What are your strengths?
- What would you consider a weaknesses?
- What motivates you?
- Tell us why we should hire you?
- Where do you see yourself in 5 years from now?
- Have you ever failed at something?
- What do you do to deal with stress?
- Why did you select your academic program? How will it help you in this role?
- Tell me about one of your most recent accomplishments.

Tell me about yourself...

- You WILL be asked this question
- What to include:
 - Educational background
 - Previous work experience (relevant or transferable)
 - Top skills and characteristics
 - Anything that might set you apart from the competition
- **S – skills**
- **E – education**
- **E – experience**

What are your strengths?

- Don't be modest, but also not too arrogant
- Opportunity to display your confidence in your ability to do the job
- Remember – if you do not convey confidence in yourself and your abilities, the employer will not be confident in you either
- Be prepared with your top 3 strengths
- Briefly support your answer (general example of how you demonstrate this skill)
- Relate it to the position (I believe this “skill/strength” will help me to “perform/accomplish a particular requirement of the position”)

What's your greatest weakness?

- Yes, you will likely be asked a variation of this question
- Choose something NOT crucial to the job and not a personal characteristic that could be more difficult to change
- Choose something you are actively managing or trying to improve or develop
- Describe what you are doing to manage or improve your weakness
- *I tend to be xx or have difficulty with xxx and these are the strategies I am using to manage or improve it....*

Tell me about your greatest accomplishment...

- Why employers ask this and what are they hoping to get out of your answer...employers are paying attention to
 - What it is
 - How you approach obstacles
 - Techniques for problem solving, detail-oriented, team work, interpersonal/communications skills
 - What's important to you

BEHAVIOURAL QUESTIONS

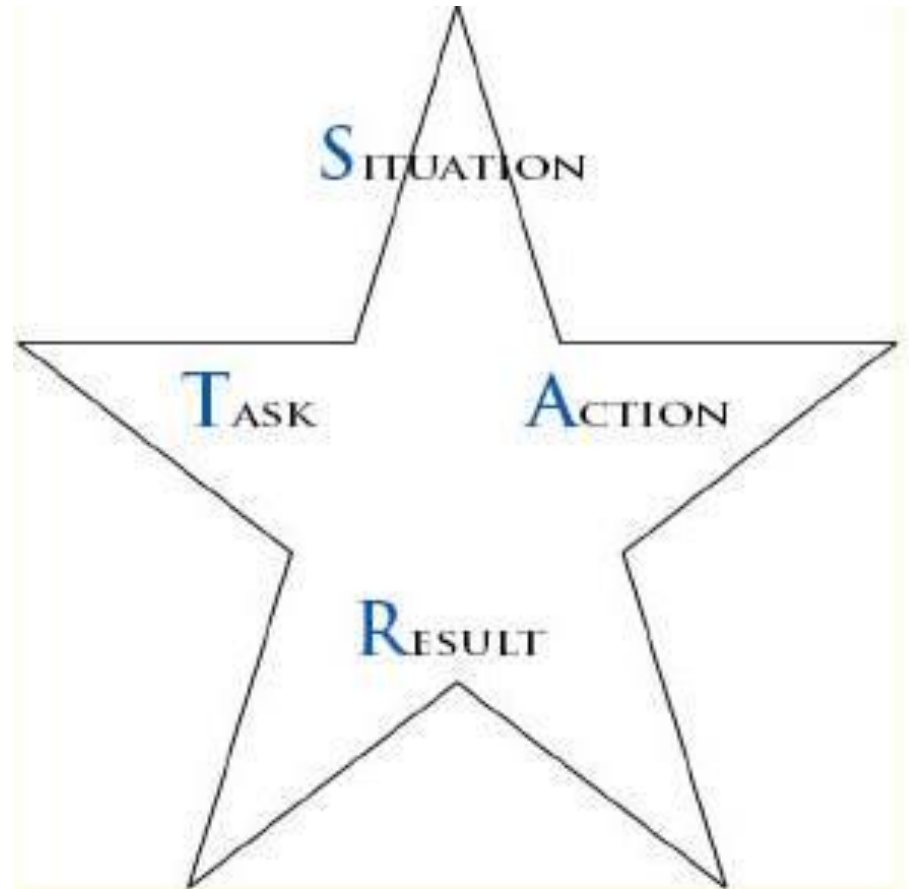
The questions will be driven by the skills needed for the job

- Describe to me a time that you had to put in extra hours to complete a project.
- Tell me about a time that you worked in a team where there was conflict between team members.
- Tell me about a time your were creative in solving a problem, what was the problem and what did you do?
- Tell me about a time when you were disappointed in your behavior.

*** Past behaviour is a valuable predictor of future performance – employers want to know what you have done in the past and how you will do it in the future*

S.T.A.R. TECHNIQUE

- The idea is to tell a story while demonstrating your skills & abilities – proof of “been there, done that”
- Used properly, the STAR structure is invisible to the listener, simply comes across as a well-articulated example.
- Create a bank of answers in this format and you will always be prepared



S. T. A. R.

Situation or Task:

Describe the situation you were in or the task that you needed to accomplish – be specific, not general. Provide enough detail for the interviewer to understand the situation at-hand

Action or Activity:

Describe what you actually did. The action you took, making sure to keep the focus on you. Even if you are discussing a team project, talk about what you did.

Result:

How well the situation played out. Describe what happened, how the event ended, what you accomplished, and what you learned.

***Don't ramble or get off track, keep
your answers focused and to the point!***

Tell me a story...

- Concrete, specific examples from work, school, volunteer, extra-curricular activities
- If you're talking about an example involving a team, be sure to discuss the part YOU played, focus on "I"
- If the outcome wasn't positive, talk about what you learned or would do differently next time

EXAMPLE...

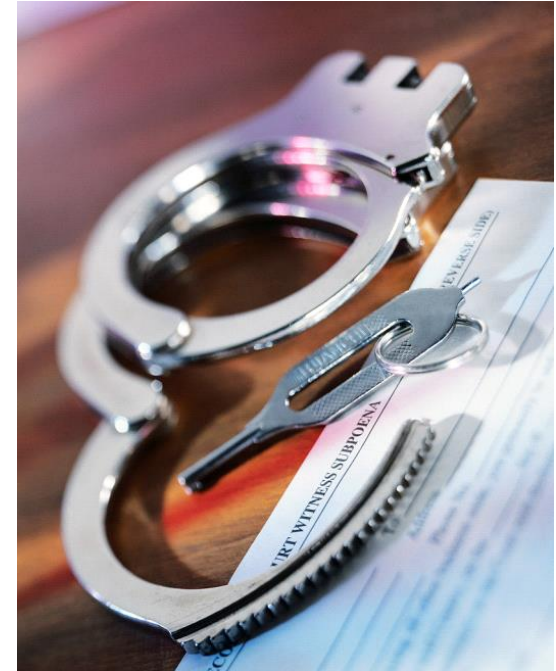
- **Situation** – "We were due to be delivering a presentation to a group of 30 interested industry players on our new product and Stuart, the guy due to deliver it, got stuck on a train from Kingston."
- **Task** – "It was my responsibility to find an alternative so it didn't reflect badly on the company and we didn't waste the opportunity."
- **Activity** – "I spoke to the event organizers to find out if they could change the running order. They agreed so we bought ourselves some time. I contacted Susan, another member of the team, who at last minute could step in. She agreed to drop what she was doing and head to the event."
- **Result** – "Stuart didn't make the meeting on time but we explained the problem to the delegates and Susan's presentation went well – a bit rough around the edges but it was warmly received. Stuart managed to get there for the last 15 minutes to answer questions. As a result we gained some good contacts, at least two of which we converted into paying clients."

EXAMPLE...

- **Situation:** "A customer called complaining that they have waited more than two weeks for a reply from our sales team regarding a product inquiry."
- **Task:** "I needed to address the client's immediate inquiry and find out what went wrong in the normal process."
- **Activity:** "I apologized, got the details and passed them to our head salesperson, who contacted the client within the hour. I investigated why the query hadn't been answered. I discovered that it was a combination of a wrong mobile number and a generic email address that wasn't being checked. I let the client know and we offered a goodwill discount on her next order."
- **Result:** "The client not only continued to order from us but posted a positive customer service tweet."

ILLEGAL QUESTIONS

- Race
- Ancestry
- Place of Origin
- Political Belief
- Religion
- Marital Status
- Physical or mental disability
- Age
- Gender, sexual orientation
- Pregnancy
- Conviction for criminal offence unrelated to employment



HOW TO HANDLE ILLEGAL QUESTIONS

- Could you tell me how my age, marital status, race might have a bearing on the position I am applying for?
- That's an interesting question, I'd be happy to answer it if you could tell me the reason for asking.

QUESTIONS FOR THE EMPLOYER

- Only ask questions to which you want an answer
- Prepare 2-3 good questions before the interview
- Do not ask questions that you can get easy answers for from resources such as the internet or job description
- Do not ask questions about salary, vacation, or other benefits until offered the job
- Do not ask questions that raise flags such as 'do I have to work overtime?'
- Do not ask questions that were already answered during the interview
- Ask anything about the company you are genuinely interested in knowing
- If you do not ask questions, the employer will think you are not interested!

EXAMPLES

- What kind of orientation or training is available to new employees?
- Is there a specific percentage of time devoted to each of my responsibilities?
- How would you describe the culture of your organization?
- How are employees evaluated?
- What is a typical day like in this position?
- What are the greatest challenges currently facing your organization/team/deparment?
- When do you plan to make a hiring decision?

CLOSING

- THANK the interviewer
- Give a firm HANDSHAKE
- Reinstate your INTEREST in the job
- Use the NAME of the interviewer
- Get the name CONTACT information of the interviewer(s)

THANK YOU

- Send a THANK YOU card/letter/email to the employer within 24 hours of the interview
 - Fill out a thank you card after the interview and leave it with reception on your way OUT
 - Send an email when you get home
- This is your chance to provide any extra information you forgot to mention during the interview
- Show your enthusiasm, re-state how excited you are and how much you want the job

<http://www.thesocial.ca/real-life/money/kevin-oleary-on-how-to-nail-your-next-job-intervie>

INTERVIEW TIPS

Have some ideas prepared...

- Researching the company's marketing initiatives and presenting skills you bring to the table that can help them with existing strategies, and new ideas, can set you apart from other candidates

Bring your Portfolio or Work Samples if applicable

- Most of the interview is talking about past experiences and story telling.....it's a good idea to show the employer what you can do and not just talk about it

Social Media

- Creep the company on social media before you go for your job interview
- Know which sites they have profiles on, which ones they don't and what type of content they tweet, post, etc.

FINAL THOUGHTS

- LISTEN! Listen to the interviewer, do not interrupt them
- Eye contact – make and share eye contact with all interviewers
- Know and understand what the employer is looking for
- Answer the questions you are asked and give specific examples
- It's ok to ask for the question to be repeated or to come back to it later (just remember to go back to it!)
 - It's ok to ask questions throughout the interview – request relevant info or ask for clarification
- Show enthusiasm!
- Don't speak badly of others
- Review your interview questions
- Practice, practice, practice.....



It was a mistake for Eric to wear a t-shirt to his job interview, and it was a bigger mistake to wear that particular t-shirt.

Links to check out....

- <http://www.workopolis.com/content/advice/article/ten-reasons-why-qualified-candidates-dont-get-hired/>
- <http://www.workopolis.com/content/advice/article/interview-cues-that-youre-not-going-to-get-the-job-and-how-to-turn-it-around/>

NEXT WEEK

- Practice interviews in class next week