



INTERVIEW SUGGESTIONS

1. Preparation is the key to a successful interview

Spending an hour or two on the company's website and using Google or Yahoo to find out additional information is time well spent. You'll understand their products, their philosophy and their place in their industry. It will help you frame your conversation about your past experience and will help you ask meaningful questions.

2. The 'Essential 3+3'

When preparing for your interview, write down the three reasons that you think the company would be a great place to work...then prepare the three reasons why you'd be a strong fit for their organization and for the specific position. Dig below the surface a bit for some 'meaty' reasons in both directions. This type of preparation can tell you a lot about your interest in both the company and the job...and it can really set you apart from other candidates in the interview.

3. Hiring managers pay attention to what you say...and what you don't say

If your answers are long or unfocused, they're going to think you'll handle projects and their customers in the same way. Listen to the question, breathe, think about how to best answer it, and stay on point. If you're not sure how much information to share, **ask the interviewer how much information they'd like.** Understanding their issues and needs from the hiring manager's perspective is critical. You need to understand how your experience and knowledge will help the company be successful. You need to be able to articulate that information to the individual interviewing you.

4. Know your own background

Be able to cover each of your positions in a *concise and interesting* manner. Be able to do the same with your college experience. What was your biggest accomplishment? What was your key learning while you were there? Why did you leave? Be able to give a one or two sentence overview that hits the high points of your role.

5. You deserve feedback...ask for it

Ask mid-interview (when appropriate) how your background and experience matches up with what they're looking for. Ask why the last person was successful or unsuccessful. Address your skills accordingly and ask the interviewer if there are any 'gaps' that they're concerned with. If you wait till the end of the interview to ask, there may not be time to get an answer.

6. Google yourself

Really! You need to know what comes up and if it will make a hiring manager more interested in you...or less. Some things you can't change, but some things you can. It's good to know if someone with your name shows up as a bank robber...or worse.

7. Look at your LinkedIn profile

Is it in sync with your resume? Is it something you're proud of, or is it something you've spent five minutes on? It represents you – make sure it looks good.



GENERAL TIPS

- If it's an in-person interview, make sure you know where you're going—getting lost will look bad and make you crazy before a very important event (interview). Get there in time for the security sign-in process.
- Make sure you know who you're interviewing with, their title, address and role in the process
- If it's a phone interview – be extra sharp and focused. Energy level is important and is more apt to lag on a phone interview than in person.
- Be prompt—way too early is just as bad as late
- Dress appropriately—ask, if unsure – being over-dressed is always better than the alternative
- Be prepared—know the company, the opportunity, and your corresponding strong points
- Practice answering questions. Make sure answers are concise and interesting. Stay on point...do not drift
- Be enthusiastic and confident.
- Ask good questions, but don't 'grill' them. Compensation, benefits, and many other questions come later...after you both see this as a real possibility
- Be observant—check out the environment, the interviewer, and the employees. Could you be happy there—is it the right fit for you?
- Ask about their hiring process and next steps; 'closing' on an interview is just as important as it is with a customer
- Debrief promptly with your recruiter. Learn from the experience
- Get a business card and follow-up with a hand-written note or, at the very least, an email

Sample questions you might ask during the course of the interview:

- What skills do you feel are important in order to be successful in this position?
- Do you think that your last person in this position was successful? What are a couple of key things that led to that outcome (success or failure)?
- Describe the most successful person at your company who's in this role – why do you think they're so successful?
- What's the most critical problem that your team faces in the next quarter (year, etc.)?

Sample interview questions that might be asked of you:

Previous positions and bosses

- Describe your ideal job and/or boss. Tell me about your best boss – tell me about your worst boss. What were the best and worst aspects of your previous job?
- Review each position held. Why did you leave the position, and more importantly: a) What did you learn from working there? b) What legacy did you leave?
- What would your former boss or colleagues say about you?
- Of all the positions you've held, which are you most proud of and why?
- Describe some of your most important career accomplishments.



New job and company

- Why are you looking for a job?
- What unique experience or qualifications separate you from other candidates? What key attributes to you believe you will bring to our company and this position?
- Why are you interested in this position? Why are you interested in our company? What do you know about our company?
- If we offered you this position and you accepted – how would you approach the first 30 and 90 days?

You

- Tell me about yourself?
- Tell me about your biggest failure. Tell me about your biggest success.
- What are your strengths and weaknesses?
- What are your short-term and long-term goals?
- Describe a time when you were faced with a challenging situation and how you handled it?
- What motivates you? How do you motivate others?
- What was the last development goal you set for yourself; what did you base this goal on and what was the outcome?
- Describe a situation when a tight deadline was nearing. Did you compromise quality to meet the deadline? If not, how did you meet both?
- Discuss something that you handled poorly. What happened, what you would change if confronted with the same situation?
- Give me an example of when you had to manage or deal with unrealistic expectations.
- How do you handle tasks when you are given little or incomplete information?
- Tell me about a time when you took responsibility for making a mistake.
- Describe the most recent work-related conflict you have encountered. How did you handle it?
- Describe the last time you successfully contributed to improving an existing process.

Management

- Communicating poor performance ratings can be difficult. Describe how you've handled a situation like this with a direct report.
- Describe how you coached two different people to accomplish a comparable task. What similarities and differences were there in your approach?
- How would you describe your management style?