

# PREPARING FOR YOUR INTERVIEW

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It's difficult to think that you can enjoy being interviewed. After all, you're in an unfamiliar office, talking (usually) to a complete stranger, and wondering if you're going to do well. No one ever gets used to being interviewed, but you can be more comfortable by knowing what to expect.

Be observant prior to your interview; learn some things about the company. You can visit the business and ask the receptionist for any publications they may have, or use the time when filling out the application to look around you. This is called "reading the company."

## **Look to see:**

- How the employees are dressed
- The environment in which you might be working
- Do the employees look happy, sad, busy, bored?

## **After observing these things:**

- Does what you see please you? Bother you? Why?
- Do you think you would like to work there?

**If the answer is yes, then you're ready for action.**

## **BE PREPARED**

Before the interview, review the following checklist and try to answer "yes" to all of them.

- I know the company's address and location, and where parking facilities are located.
- I have researched the company and written down pertinent information.
- I have a good idea what this position entails.
- I know my interviewer's name(s).
- I have my resume, notes, and other papers that may be required such as licenses, transcripts, picture ID, etc.
- I have written down questions to ask the employer and items that I want them to know about me.
- I am dressed appropriately.
- I feel good about myself.

***Be sure to get plenty of rest the night before. You want to be at your best for your interview!***

\*Additional resources and/or workshops may be available.  
Please check with our Resource Specialist.

## DRESS APPROPRIATELY

An interviewer makes a decision about you within the first 90 seconds. Their judgment is based solely upon your appearance and the image you project. What you wear has a visual impact on others. Your appearance is a personal statement about yourself. Eighty percent of the interviewer's opinion is formed before you say anything.

You don't have to spend a lot of money on a wardrobe when you're looking for employment. One stylish outfit with matching accessories is fine. Be careful not to under-dress or over-dress. Much of it depends on the company and the position for which you're applying. Stay away from loud colors, heavy perfumes, or aftershave and wear a minimum amount of jewelry and make-up. Choose something that looks good, makes you feel professional, and is comfortable. Being properly dressed builds self-confidence.

## HELPFUL HINTS ON DRESS

1. Get your "interview clothes" **ready the night before** you go job hunting or for an interview. Shine shoes, press everything, and do a try-on in front of the mirror.
2. Be **neat** and **clean** from your hair to your shoes.
3. If your interview is at a company site and you are unsure about what to wear, **visit the company** or one similar to it (e.g., visit Nordstroms if you are planning to interview with Neiman-Marcus in Texas). Note what the executive employees are wearing. This will give you some ideas on what to wear.
4. Use little or **no perfume**, cologne, or after-shave lotion.
5. Be **conservative with jewelry**. For men, some interviewers/employers develop a negative impression of you instantly, if you wear a bracelet, neck chain, or earrings.
6. **Dress conservatively**, paying attention to color and style. Blues, grays, blacks and neutrals are the best bets.

## WHEN YOU LOOK LIKE A MILLION DOLLARS, YOU USUALLY FEEL THAT WAY!

**45% of the success or failure of an interview is directly dependent upon a person's appearance** (dress and grooming).

**35% depends upon the applicant's responsiveness** (facial expressions, smiling, verbal response).

**That's 80% of what determines success for the interview,  
and it's 100% controllable by the job applicant!**

**10% depends upon experience.** That's all! You see, by the time the employer has agreed to commit himself or herself to the time to interview an applicant, the employer is assuming you are either fully qualified or close enough. The hiring action is therefore not a conscious rational decision based upon consideration of one's qualifications nearly as much as it is an emotional gut reaction determined by whether the employer "likes" you or not.

**10% is various miscellaneous factors.**

## **JOB INTERVIEW STRATEGY**

### **Before the interview:**

1. Find out as much as you can about the company and its products or services. This will give you confidence and help you answer the interviewer when he/she asks "why do you want to work for this company?"
2. Get information about the salary scale in your area for the kind of job you are seeking. You will then have an answer ready when the interviewer asks what your salary requirements are.
3. Have in mind a few points about yourself and about your qualifications for the job. Anticipate some of the questions you might be asked, and decide which questions you would like to ask the employer.
4. Dress attractively yet conservatively. Dress one step above the clothes you will be expected to wear on the job.
5. Shower or bathe the morning of the interview. Be sure hands, nails, hair, shoes and clothes are neat and clean.
6. Bring extra copies of school certificates, resumes, letters of recommendation, samples of your work, etc.
7. Bring notepaper, pen, money, and any other necessary items with you.
8. Learn how to pronounce and spell the interviewer's name.
9. Plan to go to the interview alone.
10. Practice your interview with someone else and get some feedback.
11. Maintain your psychological well-being. Know who you are and what you have to offer. **BE POSITIVE!!**