

Acing through an interview

A resume gets your foot at the door but it is an interview that gets you through the door. An interview provides you with an opportunity to show you are the right fit for the job with a potential employer. It gives you the chance to elaborate on the information you have provided in your resume and to learn more about the company and the job.

In a job market where it is highly competitive, the candidate who has the most qualifications and experiences may not get the job. Often, the job offer is given to the candidate who is prepared, exudes confidence and passion, and has the aptitude and willingness to learn.

Here are some practical ways to get you ready for the all-important interview.

Research the company

Before going for an interview, it is good to learn as much as possible about the organisation. In most interviews, you may be asked, "What value can you add to this company?" By having knowledge of the company at your fingertips, you will be able to use this information to your advantage. For example, is the company focused on training? Are they service-oriented? You will be able to fit your answers accordingly.

Another benefit of research is to show that you have taken the extra step to know more about the company. It demonstrates your interest and your commitment to give 100% to anything you do. Preparing yourself also gives you some form of control, making you less edgy and nervous.

Dress professionally

First impression counts. The moment you step into the room, you set the tone for the interview. Projecting a professional image speaks a lot about you. Be well groomed, dress appropriately (suits are not always necessary) and do not overdo the cologne/perfume and jewellery.

Prepare in advance

It is crucial to be on time for the interview. Know the location of the interview and be there five to ten minutes in advance. Rushing around to find the facility can add to your nervousness. Find out the interviewer's name beforehand and greet the person by the last name. Always be prepared to discuss every aspect of your resume and bring along a copy of it together with supporting documents.

Keep your body language in check

Actions speak louder than words. Use your body language to show interest. When you greet the interviewer, smile and shake the interviewer's hands firmly. Keep an upright posture, relax and maintain a steady eye contact that conveys alertness, confidence and enthusiasm. Listen carefully to the interviewer, nod sparingly and respond in a clear and concise manner.

Think before you speak

Be sincere and truthful in your communication. Before you speak, choose your words carefully and get to the point. Be careful not to seem as bragging when talking about your strengths. Avoid making negative remarks about your present or former employers but communicate your reasons for leaving rationally.



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End the interview at a right note

Prepare a few questions beforehand and have them focused on the organisation or position. Avoid being aggressive and asking questions about salary and benefits unless you have been offered the job. At the end of the interview, thank the interviewer for his time and consideration. Enquire about the next step and send a thank you note to indicate your interest and commitment to the job.

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