

Mastering the Interview: Quick Tips

The interview is a conversation to assess if you and the organization are a good match. Great interviewing isn't about memorizing the "perfect" answers; it's about clear communication and thoughtful preparation. This handout covers some quick tips for conquering the interview process.

Before The Interview: Preparation

- Print your professional documents (resume, cover letter, references list) and bring multiple copies with you to the interview
- Research the organization to learn more about who they are and what their mission is
 - Website, social media pages, news articles
- Thoroughly review the position description and create a list of ways that your experience aligns
 - What are their needs, and how can you contribute?
- Brainstorm examples of commonly asked interview questions
 - Utilize the STAR (situation, task, action, result) method for behavioral questions
- Develop your personal elevator pitch, a brief 30-60 second "commercial" about who you are, why you are interested, and why you are a great fit for the position. *Please see our "Crafting Your Elevator Pitch: Quick Tips" resource for additional information.*
- Craft 3-4 thoughtful questions for the interviewers to ask at the end of the interview
- Prepare your logistics
 - Virtual: Test your technology, including internet connection, camera, and microphone
 - In Person: Plan your transportation, route, and parking plan

During The Interview: How to Stand Out

- Arrive or log on 10 minutes early, ensure proper lighting if virtual, dress to impress, make eye contact, offer a firm handshake if in person, smile, show enthusiasm and listen carefully
- Align your answers with the skills needed for the role, utilizing relevant examples
- Embrace the pause; it is okay to pause to think about an answer before answering
- If you don't understand a question, ask for it to be repeated or clarified
- Ask the questions that you prepared ahead of time to show genuine interest
- Collect business cards from each of the interviewers

After The Interview: Follow-Up

- Write down any additional notes or questions about the organization or position
- Send a brief, personalized thank-you email to everyone who interviewed you within 24 hours
 - Include any information you may have left out of the interview, reiterate your interest
 - Make note of specific topics that resonated with you after the interview