

# Interviewing Skills

## Mastering The Job Interview

# Preparing for the Interview

## Research the employer

- What do they do?
- Reread job description / advertisement
- Read any employer brochures or “careers” info on the company website
- Are they in any professional organizations? Chamber of Commerce?
- Do they sponsor any community events or charities?
- What is their reputation around town?



# As you walk in the door ...

- What time should I arrive?
- Hallway interactions
- Reception area etiquette



# Interview Preparation

- Personal appearance and dress



"OH!... YOU DID DRESS UP FOR THE INTERVIEW."

# Interview Preparation

- Personal appearance and dress
  - Clean clothes
  - No wrinkles
  - No flashy jewelry or nail polish colors
  - Don't overdo it on perfume or aftershave! If you can smell it on yourself, you're wearing too much
  - Wear an outfit that matches the job; if a factory or warehouse job, you don't need to wear a suit- but you do need to look presentable
  - Update your look but dress appropriately



# Interview Preparation

- What to bring with you to an interview
  - Resume
  - Cover letter
  - Position description
  - List of questions you want to ask
  - “Portfolio” of work samples
  - Contact info for references
    - Should be typed, and include past employers or professors
  - Assemble all paperwork in a folder. Do not carry them in loose, it looks sloppy and disorganized



# The Interview



- What to expect at the beginning of the interview
  - Introduce yourself, thank them for seeing you
  - Small talk may help put everyone at ease, find common ground
- Handshake workshop: avoid handshake errors!

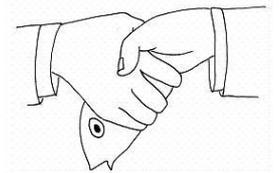
The “dead fish” handshake

Don't be a bone crusher

Offer a clean hand; not dirty, clammy, sweaty, or sticky

Don't hold on for more than 3 seconds

Always make eye contact



Lets practice our  
handshake

# The Interview - What image to project

- Body language means everything
- Don't show your frustration or your sadness
- Be someone you'd want to be around
- Show your personality that makes you who you are



## Interview tips

- Look them in the eye, but don't stare them down!
- Smile! Be cooperative, show you're fun to work with.
  - The interviewer is often nervous, too. A smile goes a long way. Show that you're a serious candidate, but that you're friendly, and easy to be around.
- Show that you're interested in the company in general. Ask questions about how they do business. Be engaged!
- Give concrete examples of work experience rather than generalities. Give specific details of accomplishments and skills, and why you would be a good fit for the position.
- Don't be bashful! You bring a lot of experience, skills.

# Getting the most from your interview

- Walk into the interview with three things in mind that you want the employer to know about you. Find ways to get these into the conversation!
  - Examples:
    - You have excellent problem solving skills. Tell them about a time when those skills saved the day
    - You handle stressful situations really well. Talk about how you're gracious and sensible under pressure.
    - You can handle anything! Maybe you were a single parent, maybe you are a cancer survivor, or maybe you recently lost your house. You are a survivor, and the kind of person they want on their team when times are tough.
- Employers want someone who can get the job done!

What are your 3 things?

# Common interview questions

- You already know the answers to them!
  - Tell me about yourself.
  - Tell me about your work skills and experience.
  - What are your strengths and weaknesses?
  - Why are you interested in this job?
  - Why should I hire you?
  - What type of work environment do you function best in?
  - What kind of wage are you looking for?
  - Is your availability limited?
- What do you say if you don't know the answer?



# Tough interview questions for mature workers

- Are you over qualified for this position?
- How long do you plan to work?
- When did you graduate?
  - Your technical skills are out of date
  - You are not up to date on the latest business practices
  - You have not kept pace with the industry and its changes
- Can you work for a younger boss?
- Can you work with a younger team? Can you relate and build a rapport?



# What interview questions do I ask?

- Why is this position available?
- What is a typical day like in this position?
- Who would be my supervisor?
- How will my performance be measured?
- What is the environment like here?
- What type of personality fits in well here?
- How quickly do people learn this position?
- How do you see this position evolving over time?
- When can you expect to hear back from them?

# Interview questions not to ask

- Questions about salary or pay raises
- Questions about:
  - Sick leave
  - Paid vacation
  - Holiday pay
- These are things you should discuss after you're offered the job, but before you accept it



# What to do after the interview

- Send a thank you note
  - Email is best. Send within a day of the interview
  - Keep it short
  - Reinforce that you would welcome the opportunity to work for them
  - Express interest in other potential opportunities if you are not selected for the current position
- Make notes for yourself about any unexpected questions you got during the interview so you can answer them next time
- Handling rejection
  - No one is right for every job
  - It's not personal
  - Stay focused on the value you offer employers
  - You have to “kiss a lot of frogs”...
  - Don't give up!

# Questions??

Resources:

[www.arrp.org](http://www.arrp.org)

[www.aarpworksearch.org](http://www.aarpworksearch.org)

[www.careeronestop.org](http://www.careeronestop.org)

[www.workforce3one.org](http://www.workforce3one.org)

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