

INTERVIEW TIPS

OVERVIEW:

Advance preparation for the interview is KEY to calming down the “jitters” before the actual interview. It is normal to be nervous for the interview but lack of preparation will only enhance that tense, uneasy feeling. Please review the below to insure you perform at your peak for each and every interview. Remember to NEVER take any interview for granted as it may result in a strong, future contact even if the job you are interviewing for is not the ideal fit.

1. Researching a company (and a specific business unit) is a critical first step in preparing for an interview. Review the web-site, perform an internet search using Google and review Bloomberg/Reuters for recent company news. It is vitally important to be able to respond confidently to the question: "Why would you want to work for our company and/or our business unit?"

2. Proper business attire is very important which include a dark grey or blue suit with solid white or light blue shirts/blouses. In a corporate environment, the following is usually frowned upon: long hair (on men), goatees (on men), ear rings (on men), nose rings, etc. Please be sure to use your judgment and always put your best foot forward. Additionally, remember to bring an extra copy of your resume including 2-3 professional references from a direct supervisor/manager and an attaché or briefcase to carry your professional belongings.

3. Arrive to the interview 10-15 minutes early – NEVER be late for an interview. Be sure to have all interview contact information readily accessible in the event there is a mix-up or you're running late. In circumstances beyond your control, first call the interviewer directly to advise that you are running late; and then, secondly, call your Recruiter to give us an opportunity to call the employer, as well.

4. Upon initial greetings, always give a firm handshake, warm smile and direct eye contact. Please try to avoid excessive hand movements, poor eye contact and slouching in your seat. Integrate your personality and don't be afraid to smile since you will most likely be working with this person in close proximity. Both your skill sets and personality fit can be equally important to the interviewer.

5. Selling your skills is as important as listening to what the interviewer is looking for in his/her ideal candidate. Be prepared to sell your SRA (skills, responsibilities and 3-5

accomplishments) but it is critical you know which of those SRAs are requirements of the role. It is recommended that you ask questions that serve more as “information gathering” rather than “preferential”: i.e. “How much of the role involves accounting work versus the analytical component” (information gathering) rather than “I’d love to get more involved with the analysis” (preferential question).

Avoid over talking and instead focus on concise, clear, direct answers to the Interviewers’ questions. Also, remember NOT to over-talk the interviewer and wait until the appropriate time to respond to all questions/inquiries. Always make sure to answer questions honestly and never put information on your resume that you can’t back up on the interview. First impressions are critical and you don’t want to create any false perceptions of your capabilities.

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS “You May Be Asked”:

- Please give us examples of how you handled an adverse situation (i.e. tough client) or a stressful deadline?
- What attributes or skills separates you from other professionals in your field?
- List 3 of your biggest accomplishments and 1-2 weaknesses (or areas requiring improvement). Be careful with the “weakness” question; ask your recruiter how to handle.
- Why are you looking to leave your current position and what are you looking for in your next role?
- What do you know about our company and why are you interested in this position?
- What have you liked and disliked about your current & previous positions? (Remember to stay positive; negative comments about former employers are frowned upon)
- What are your short-term and long-term career goals?
- Do you have any supervisory experience? If so, is that a requirement of your next position?
- Tell me the biggest challenge in your career to date.
- Is there a particular industry or company size preference you have? For example, small versus large firm and tell me the advantages of each.
- Please explain your job moves and if applicable, why you were laid off or stayed less than a year in any position?

- How long have you been looking for a new job? If applicable, why do you feel it is taking so long for you to find the right position?
- How best would your supervisor/manager and staff (if applicable) describe you as a professional?
- What are you looking for in your base salary and/or total compensation? How did you arrive at these numbers? (Best answer: “My main focus is finding the right opportunity and a Fair Market Offer. I’d also prefer to have your recruiter negotiate on my behalf and leave you with the fact that I’m extremely interested & excited about this position and your company.”)
- Do you have any questions about the position or the company that I can answer for you? (Note, it is critical that you have relevant questions for the interviewer – see “next section.”)

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS “You Should Ask”

- I have a solid overview of the position; can you tell me more about the specific skills and responsibilities that are keys to my success in this role?
- How would you describe your ideal candidate?
- How would you describe a typical day for this role? What are some of the daily, weekly & month-end deadlines that I need to be aware of?
- Which groups will I be interfacing with and have exposure to on a regular basis?
- What has been the short and long-term career path for others that have been in this or similar positions within your company?
- Can you tell me more about your background and other members of the group?
- What do you like most about your current role?
- Is there anything else in my background that I can expand upon?
- **IMPORTANT:** Do not ask any questions regarding Compensation, Hours or Benefits.

INTERVIEW “STUFF TO ALWAYS AVOID”:

- **NO** backup copies of your resume; remember to always bring multiple copies
- Poor attention detail including an incomplete, inaccurate or sloppy application
- Arriving to an interview late and without a preemptive call to notify interviewer
- Unprofessional attire including jeans or casual clothes
- Poor eye contact & a weak, limp handshake
- Discussing compensation, hours & benefits **INSTEAD** of focusing on the opportunity
- Negative portrayal of past employers and/or job responsibilities
- Over-confident or lacking confidence – both can “hurt” your chances

- Indirect/vague answers to questions as opposed to direct/concise answers
- Lack of short term and long term career goals that are in sync with the responsibilities of the position
- Lacking any relevant questions for the interviewer; this is often interpreted as a lack of interest or motivation in the role
- Overanxious to bypass current role for future opportunities...”not willing to pay your dues”
- Too lackadaisical; interviewing only to get a better sense of market value OR to draw better compensation from current employer in the form of a “counter-offer”
- Obvious lack of interest or enthusiasm in the company or the role
- Unable to take criticism or responding harshly to aggressive questioning from the interviewer i.e. low GPAs or a lot of job moves should be accompanied by a concise, non-evasive explanations
- Inability to handle pressure; appearing too nervous during the interview. Remember, some nervousness is healthy BUT don’t allow it to prevent you from performing at a high level during the meeting