

# Interview Strategies

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As you know, success rides largely on the impression you make during the interview. No matter how much experience you have in this area, it never hurts to be completely prepared. Polish your performance with these interview strategies, which have helped other exceptional candidates find exceptional positions.

## Step 1: Before the interview

- **Plan ahead.** Take the time to do thorough research and practice your performance until you feel ready.
- **Research the employer.** Being knowledgeable about the interviewing company obviously conveys your interest in the position. Seek out info about the company's core business, history, structure, philosophy, and recent market performance. Sources could include the company's website, annual reports, professional associations, and periodicals such as local newspapers, magazines, and business and trade journals. Your Lock Search Group consultant can also supply important company data.
- **Understand the position.** Read the placement ad or job description carefully. Ask yourself what are the roles, responsibilities, and expectations of the position? What qualifications are required? What personality traits would be an asset?
- **Review your résumé.** Have a solid grasp of the contents of your résumé. (Some interviewers will be watching to see if you contradict yourself.) Be prepared to talk about past work experiences and accomplishments listed, as well as why you left each position.
- **Practice your answers.** Prepare a list of questions the interviewer may ask. The interviewer will likely ask you questions about relevant qualifications, knowledge of the industry, your expectations of the position, and personality traits that will influence your performance. Taking your research into account, think about how your skills and experiences correspond to the traits the employer is looking for in a candidate. Be prepared to discuss your strengths and to identify areas where you know you can make improvements.
- **Prepare a list of questions.** Every interview is a two-way process. The interviewer will expect you to ask well-informed questions about the responsibilities, goals, and challenges of the position, as well as general questions about the company. Avoid asking about salary, holidays, benefits, and other perks unless prompted to do so. If you have questions about compensation, ask your Lock consultant before the interview.
- **Get the details right.** Double-check to ensure that you have the correct time and place, as well as the name of the interviewer.

## Step 2: Day of the interview

- **Look the part.** The reality is that appearances do count. This means dressing appropriately for the position you want. If you are unsure of the company's dress code, lean toward conservative, opting for traditional business attire. Being well-groomed and well-rested are equally important.
- **Take along the necessities.** Bring extra copies of your résumé, plus a pen and notepad to take notes. If you have a portfolio of relevant work, be sure to bring that with you too.
- **Be early.** Allow enough time for traffic and parking. Then add 10 or 15 minutes extra so you can prepare and relax when you arrive.
- **Arrive with the right attitude.** Enter every interview with a positive attitude. Be enthusiastic about the position without appearing overzealous. Act confident but not boastful. When the interview is over, thank the interviewer for his or her time.
- **Body language matters.** Your body language reveals a lot about your personality. Greet everyone with a firm handshake and a smile, and make eye contact.

## Step 3: After your interview

- **Follow up with your Lock consultant.** Discuss any critical points or concerns about the interview with your Lock consultant, who can provide you with valuable feedback. However the interview went, send the interviewer a thank-you note.