

April 2009



# PREPARE FOR COLLEGE

## Interview Tips Via Phone

### Phone Interview Tips

A phone interview may seem less important than an in-person interview, but you should prepare for it just like you would an in-person interview. If you don't impress the interviewer over the phone, you'll never get a chance to do so in person!

Prepare with these tips for a successful phone interview:

**Treat a phone interview like a regular in-person interview.** Think about why you're interested in the position and what strengths you can bring to it. Get ready to talk about your experiences and skills.

**If the time is inconvenient or you're in a loud and distracting place, ask if you can talk another time and suggest a few times when you'll be available.** Remember, it's important to make a good impression over the phone. You don't want to be distracted or interrupted.

**If you get a message from an interviewer asking you when you'll be available, make sure to call the interviewer back that day to let him/her know when you can be reached.** A prompt response lets the interviewer know that you're very interested in the position.

**Practice interviewing.** Practice talking to your instructors, families and friends about why you're a great candidate for the position.

### Follow Up – Send a Thank-you

There may be many applicants interviewing for the same position. One way to set yourself apart and show that you were interested in the job is to send a formal thank-you note. You should either hand write your note or send an e-mail note to the employer. Remember to ask them for their business card with all the information you need to contact them. Please note: there may be cases where they have requested specifically not to be contacted by e-mail. Be sure that your method of follow up and thank-you is appropriate to the employer, neatly written and grammatically correct. Do **NOT** use "hip" lingo, "texting" abbreviations or slang. In your thank-you note you should include the following:

- Thank you for meeting with me.
- I am interested in working for your company.
- Add something specific that interested you or impressed you that you learned about during the interview.
- I look forward to hearing from you.

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## Interview Tips for In Person Interviews

### **In-Person Interview**

Congratulations! If you have been invited to an interview, you have probably completed an application and have submitted a great resume. Now it is time to advance to the next step, the in-person interview. To help you prepare, review the tips below and keep them in mind before, during and following your interview.

### **First Impressions Matter – Dressing for the Interview**

When considering what to wear to your interview, you must dress professionally and in a business-like manner. This may not mean wearing a suit but here are some suggestions for you to think about when planning your outfit:

- Do keep things simple
- Do wear clean clothes
- Do wear outfits that fit but aren't too tight or too loose
- Do appear well-groomed
- Don't wear jeans
- Don't have exposed midriffs or low cut tops
- Don't wear ripped or distressed clothing with holes
- Don't wear your hair in a "wild" style
- Don't wear multiple layers of clothing or anything that might be considered as extreme
- Don't wear lots of accessories, perfume/cologne or make-up

Don't carry cell phones or electronic devices such as I-Pods, MP3 players, etc. with you to the interview. If you must carry your cell phone, be sure to have it put away and powered off throughout the entire interview.

### **Be On Time – Plan your Travel Time**

One of the worst impressions you can make on a potential employer is to be late to your interview. Research how far you'll have to travel to get there and how long it should take, then add fifteen to twenty minutes of travel time to that in case of heavy traffic or difficulties with public transportation. It is always best to arrive early for your interview.

### **Be Prepared – Introductions and Employer Questions**

Once in the interview, it is important to greet the employer with a handshake and make eye contact throughout your entire interview. This is where you can let your winning attitude and intelligence shine. You must always speak clearly and in a tone that is audible and respectful to the interviewer. You will be asked many questions during the interview process. It is important to have an idea about what your employer might ask so that you are well prepared with some positive responses that best reflect you!

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Here are some questions you'll most likely hear:  
Tell me about yourself.

How would your instructors describe you?

What do you like best about school?

Tell me about any extracurricular activities that you participate in.

Have you had another job previously?

What did you like or dislike about that job?

Tell me about a problem you encountered and how you resolved it.

Why should I consider hiring you instead of the other applicants?

For more suggestions about what kind of questions you may be asked and how best to answer them, go to: <http://www.groovejob.com/resources/interview/questions/>

Remember, you should always try to answer questions in an honest and positive manner.

### It's OK To Ask

Not only the employer can ask questions at the interview. You should feel confident that you are a valuable asset to the employer and demonstrate that you want to know more about your potential job. Here are a few things you might want to ask.

- What is the most important thing I need to know about this job?
- What opportunities are there for me to learn new skills here?
- Is there anything else you need to know about me?
- Will I be trained by you or by someone else once on the job?

### Be Courteous – Say Thank-you

Remember, it is very important to say thank-you at least twice during the interview itself. It is a good idea to start off your conversation by thanking your employer for taking time to meet with you. Additionally, when you are leaving the interview, make sure to thank them again for the opportunity to talk with them and state that you look forward to hearing from them soon!

### Follow Up – Send a Thank-you

There may be many applicants interviewing for the same position. Set yourself apart by sending a handwritten or e-mail formal thank-you note. Ask the employer for their business card with the information you need to contact them. There may be cases where they have requested specifically not to be contacted by e-mail. Be sure the follow up and thank-you is appropriate to the employer, neatly written and grammatically correct.

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