Twelve Ways to Improve Job Interviews

The employment interview is often the key and final hurdle in the job campaign. Letters, applications, references, resumes and other resources are designed with one goal, to secure an interview. Your actions during the interview may determine if you will receive a job offer. Remember that the best candidate does not always get the job—many times the person who best prepares for the interview is hired.

1. TAKE PRACTICE INTERVIEWS

Learn the kinds of questions you may be asked and develop the best answers. If your qualifications are weak in some areas, determine how to express them as positively as possible.

2. RESEARCH THE ORGANIZATION

Look at magazine articles, brochures or catalogs, or talk with customers/clients to familiarize yourself with the organization. And the work facts based upon your research into your interview conversation.

3. EXPRESS QUALIFICATIONS

Know three good reasons why you are an outstanding candidate and subtly work them into your responses.

4. LISTEN TO THE INTERVIEWER

Adjust to the interview's style and try to ascertain why particular questions are being asked. Respond completely to all aspects of a question.

5. DON'T MONOPOLIZE THE CONVERSATION

While interviews usually want more than a simple "Yes" or "No" answer, you should also avoid long discourses. Make your answers accurate, brief and as interesting as you can.

6. BE POSITIVE

This is no the place to knock your school, past employers, professors, etc. An optimist is more useful in an organization than a pessimist. If you can be enthusiastic about past experiences, you are likely to be positive about future employers.

7. PEOPLE HIRE, NOT ORGANIZATIONS

Remember that people make hiring decisions and your goal to make effective contact with the interviewer. Hopefully, he or she will end up liking/respecting you.
8. ASK QUESTIONS

Reflect your self-esteem by asking questions about the organization and the job. This is another place to demonstrate that you researched the organization. Hopefully, the interview will mention salary so you won't have to ask.

9. POINT OUT WHY YOU LIKE THE ORGANIZATION

Are their reasons why you think the organization is a particularly good one? Are there factors which led you to single it out of many other of its type? If so, citing them can help build a link between you and the employer.

10. EXPRESS INTEREST

Assuming the job/organization interests you, take time near the end of the interview to express that interests. Unless you say you like the job/organization the employer has no way of knowing this.

11. LEARN WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

Is your file complete? Is additional information needed? Are your references complete? What are the next stages in the employment process and when might they occur?

12. EXPRESS THANKS

Thank the interviewer for his or her time and interest, just as you would thank anyone who spent time helping you. If appropriate, thank the receptionist/secretary or anyone who also helped you. But don't linger.

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