

# Landing a job means nailing the interview

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The job interview is a critical component in your employment search. It is a prime opportunity for an employer to learn more about a potential employee and for the candidate to learn more about the company. Robert Weiss, a leadership consultant, states the goal of interviewing is to find employees who are “consistently good performers and possess the abilities and motivation to do the job for which you are recruiting.

Before your interview, ask yourself this question. If you know the employer is looking for an employee that is a producer and results driven, how do you convey that during the interview? Here are some proven interview tips that will help you demonstrate that you are the right candidate for the job.

**Do your homework.** Prepare for the interview by visiting the employer’s Web site. Review mission, vision and values of the company as well as the products or service they provide. If you know someone that works at the company talk to them about their experience. This information can help you develop questions that can be asked during the interview.

**Dress.** It is important to look good for an interview. Find out what the dress code for the company is before the interview. If the dress code is business casual wear a jacket, if the dress code is professional, wear a suit.

**Resume.** Have extra copies in a portfolio. It is not uncommon for people to be invited for additional interviews on short notice so have copies of your resume handy.

**Group Interviews.** The interview process varies by company—some interview one on one, others prefer a group situation. If you are interviewing in a group setting be sure to make eye contact with all of the members when answering a question.

**Be Yourself.** The potential employer is using the interview to determine your skills, experience and personality. An interviewer uses this time to get to know you.

**Answers to Questions.** Be ready to answer questions about your strengths, weaknesses, reasons for changing jobs, accomplishments, and challenges. Use

real examples and situations to illustrate your answers. Keep answers about difficult subjects to positive and factual.

**Ask Questions.** During the interview make notes about questions to ask based on discussion. You may have questions prepared before the interview but these will demonstrate your interest in the company and the position. The interview is your chance to decide if this is the right position for you.

**Firm Handshake and Eye Contact.** People have been hired because of their handshake. Remember when meeting people, eye contact is extremely important.

**It's OK to be Nervous.** No matter how prepared you are or how much you know about a company's interview process, you may be nervous on the interview day. Don't worry—it will keep you on your toes and can help generate discussion.

**Body Language.** Be aware during the interview of your body language and posture.

**Be Flexible.** Don't be surprised if the company has multiple job openings so be ready to explore a variety of options.

**Ask About Next Steps.** At the close of an interview be sure to ask the employer about the next steps in the process.

**Thank You.** Sending a personal, handwritten thank you note to each person you interview with is a polite gesture and a great way to make yourself stand out from the crowd.

**References.** Depending on the outcome of the interview, references may be requested. Call your references before the interview takes place for permission to use their names. This is done out of respect for the individuals and to prepare them for possible phone calls.

If you have further questions about the interview process, contact an employment or career professional and they will be happy to offer assistance. Doing your homework can lead to a job offer and many blessings this holiday season!

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