

INTERVIEW BOOT CAMP TIPS

Employers ask questions in a job interview that help them find out what your ambitions are; what your qualifications and accomplishments are, how you deal with conflict, how you problem solve, and what your leadership skills are like. They want to predict your behavior within their organization.

When answering questions make sure to follow 5 simple rules:

1. Listen to the Question that is being asked and make sure that you understand before you give your answer.
2. Be honest- be truthful about your qualifications and experience. There may be follow up questions later and you don't want to get caught up in 'stretching the truth'.
3. Be positive. No matter whether you are answering a question about problem solving, conflict or your boss or co-workers. Remain positive always! Never say negative things about your boss- remember-you are being interviewed by 'a boss'.
4. Answer the Question that is being asked succinctly- don't ramble and get off topic.
5. Structure your answers with these three simple steps:
 - a. Describe what you did
 - b. Tell why you did it
 - c. Tell what you learned from that specific professional experience.

The most common questions asked in an interview:

1. "Tell me about yourself?" - This question is about your personality and style in a professional work environment and your qualifications and skills that apply to the position you are being interviewed for. This is not a question about your personal information- age, how many children you have, marital status; nor hobbies!
2. Strengths and Weaknesses- when questions are asked about these, talk about the strengths that make you an excellent candidate for that specific position. When you discuss weaknesses- talk about strategies that you have developed or continue to work on in order to overcome weaknesses.
3. Conflict- Tell what, why, how you dealt with the conflict and what you learned from the experience. Remain positive!
4. Problem Solving- Be very concrete and specific. Give examples that demonstrate your ability to resolve issues that commonly come up in a professional environment. This showcases your ability to deal with unanticipated events and reveals your professional behavior.

TIP ONE:

Check out some of the 'job interview clips on youtube.com- put 'job interview' in the search box.

TIP TWO:

Anticipate the most common interview questions. Analyze and type concrete short responses or a bullet list. It should be no more than one sheet. The sheet can help you stay on track if you get nervous easily during an interview; it should be used only as a point of reference and not as a script. I have seen this done and was so impressed that I used this method myself. The list is simply a tool to help you stay on track, and to remind you of specific examples that exemplify your skills and abilities for each type of interview question. Also you may want to include a list of questions to ask to keep the interview a 2-way conversation and to learn more about the position and organization.

10 THINGS TO REMEMBER BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER A JOB INTERVIEW

1. Arrive early- Make sure you have plenty of time to get there a little early. This gives you time to get a feel for the flow of that specific work environment and also gives you time to relax and review any notes you have that will help you to describe your knowledge and skills. Arrive no more than 10 minutes early though.
2. Know the position- confirm by asking what your responsibilities will be in that specific position. Employers don't always give an accurate job description and knowing this at the beginning can help you focus your answers towards the responsibilities of that particular position.
3. Listen carefully to the questions. If you need clarification- ask before answering.
4. Remain Positive Always!
5. Always tailor your resume to each position you apply for- change the language slightly to reflect the job description. Make sure you are honest! Include a cover letter always!
6. Delay salary discussions- repeat after me, "I am open to fair compensation". Research other similar position salaries so you have knowledge of ballpark figures.
7. Make the interview a two way conversation- answer questions and then ask questions. In an ultimate interview situation, both people should talk an equal amount.
8. Know what the next steps are after the interview. Ask questions like, "what are the next steps?" "When will you be deciding on a candidate?" "What is your timeframe for hiring for this position?" This way you won't be wondering what happens next.
9. After (and during) the interview complete notes on any information that you found out or items you need to follow up on. This helps if you have a second interview and also helps with future interviews. What went well? What did not go as anticipated? Any additional information about the company?
10. Send a follow up letter thanking them for their consideration and time and the opportunity to interview for the position. Thank you notes are fine and should be sent within 24-48 hours of the interview. This requires the effort to actually get mailing addresses and names of interviewers. E-mails are less personal, but if this is the most you can do, it is better than not at all. Only about 50% of all interviewees send a Thank you letter, so just by this gesture you are making a good impression.