

## INTERVIEW TIPS

The objective of the interview is to convince the interviewer that you are the most qualified potential team member.

Do your homework prior to the interview. Reading a company's annual report, brochures, newsletters, and other material, can make you an informed candidate.

Use a firm handshake and smile when you meet people, address them by name, and maintain eye contact during the conversation.

Present a profile of yourself in under two minutes...a two minute commercial.

Place yourself in the position of the interviewer so you can listen and respond from his or her perspective.

Demonstrate interest in the company, the job and especially the interviewer.

Prove you are capable of performing rather than merely describing. Provide examples and illustrations.

Be positive, polite, and personable.

Do not fabricate, guess or generalize, and do not engage the interviewer in a debate.

If you do not understand the question, say: "I am sorry, I do not understand the question."

Remember, you are also interviewing the company. Make sure it meets your needs.

"You don't get a second chance to make a first impression."

## GOOD QUESTIONS TO ASK

## A PROFILE OF QUALITIES THAT COMPANIES ARE LOOKING FOR IN AN EMPLOYEE

The ideal employee is highly motivated, uses common sense, pays attention to detail, can anticipate and solve problems, and is a team player. The following presents a profile of ten desired employee characteristics:

Intelligence and initiative.

Ability to communicate clearly.

Sets good example for others.

Ability to anticipate and solve problems.

Courtesy and diplomacy.

Ability to be self sufficient yet contribute as a team member.

Flexibility to alter plans when required.

Ability to handle details while possessing an overall perspective.

Oriented towards accomplishment rather than activity.

Ability to do the right things right the first time.

"Don't be content with being average. Average is as close to the bottom as it is to the top."

## QUESTIONS YOU MAY BE ASKED

Tell me about yourself.

What are your goals? Short-term & long-term.

What do you like doing the most?

May I take notes?

What are your strengths...weaknesses?

How did you learn of our company?

What do you know about the company?

Why do you want to work for the company?

Tell me about your previous job experience.

NOTE: Recent graduates and other persons entering the marketplace should discuss part-time jobs, school activities and personal accomplishments.

Why did you leave your previous jobs?

How would you handle this job?

Why should we hire you?

Are you willing to work evenings and weekends?

Are you able to travel...relocate?

What are your salary requirements?

When are you available to start?

May I contact your previous employers?

May I have a list of references?

Is there anything more you would like to know?

"Opportunities are usually disguised as hard work, so most people don't recognize them."

Is the company having a good year?

What are the company's latest sales and profits results?

What are the most recent trends in sales and profits?

Who are the company's major competitors and what are the company's competitive strengths?

Where does the company see itself going in the next three to five years?

What are the responsibilities of the job?

What type of person are you looking for?

What qualities would the ideal candidate have?

Is this a new position or has the job been held by someone else?

If so, is the person still with the company?

What about others who started in this position over the past few years?

Have any of them been promoted? Into what position?

Where can this job lead for a top performer?

How will I be evaluated? By whom? When?

What education and training programs are provided?

How will the final decision be made?

By whom? When?

What is the next step?

Is there anything else I need to know?

Close by thanking the interviewer for his or her time and the opportunity to discuss the situation.

"You will be judged by your questions

as well as your answers."

### FIVE DEADLY QUESTIONS

The following questions will kill your chances of getting the job:

What is my salary? Do not ask about salary until the interviewer has raised the subject first. This may not happen until the second interview or even later when an offer is extended. As curious as you may be, you must be patient or risk leaving the impression that you are more interested in money than being a team player.

How much vacation and sick leave will I get?

Asking about these issues makes you seem as if you are asking for time off before you have even started the job. Some interviewers may perceive this as a sign of lack of dedication, however unfairly. Naturally, you want to get this information. However, the best way to do it is by asking for a copy of the personnel manual, by talking to the personnel administrator, or by speaking with other employees before taking the job. You should be briefed on benefits at the appropriate time. If not, just ask, "What about the benefits?" after the salary issue has been raised.

How big is my office? A dedicated team player produces good work regardless of the office environment. Questions regarding office size may be seen as a concern about

job appearance rather than the essential elements of the job. Usually, during a tour of the operation, you will be shown the area where you will work.

When will I be promoted? This question is impossible to answer. Promotion depends on timing and your performance. Opportunities for promotion depend on change, such as growth and turnover. Your suitability for promotion depends on your prior performance together with your abilities to plan, organize and get others to perform. Questions regarding promotion should be concerned with the

opportunities for advancement, rather than on a commitment that cannot be given.

Any negative question! Any question that is negative or solicits a negative response places the interviewer in an unfavorable and sometimes awkward position. In addition, it makes you look like a negative person. All questions should be asked in a positive manner.

"Nothing is quite so annoying as to have someone go right on talking when you are interrupting."

NOTE: All information contained here was taken from a book titled The Job Search Organizer.