

Ten Interviewing Rules

In the current job market, you'd better have your act together, or you won't stand a chance against the competition. Check yourself on these 10 basic points before you go on that all-important interview.

1. Look Sharp.

Before the interview, select your outfit. Depending on the industry and position, get out your best duds and check them over for spots and wrinkles. Even if the company has a casual environment, you don't want to look like you slept in your clothes. Above all, dress for confidence. If you feel good, others will respond to you accordingly.

2. Be on Time.

Never arrive late to an interview. Allow extra time to arrive early in the vicinity, allowing for factors like getting lost. Enter the building 10 to 15 minutes before the interview.

3. Do Your Research.

Researching the company before the interview and learning as much as possible about its services, products, customers and competition will give you an edge in understanding and addressing the company's needs. The more you know about the company and what it stands for, the better chance you have of selling yourself. You also should find out about the company's culture to gain insight into your potential happiness on the job.

4. Be Prepared.

Bring along a folder containing extra copies of your resume, a copy of your references and paper to take notes. You should also have questions prepared to ask at the end of the interview. For extra assurance, print a copy of Monster's handy Interview Planner.

5. Show Enthusiasm.

A firm handshake and plenty of eye contact demonstrate confidence. Speak distinctly in a confident voice, even though you may feel shaky.

6. Listen.

One of the most neglected interviewing skills is listening. Make sure you are not only listening, but also reading between the lines. Sometimes what is not said is just as important as what is said.

7. Answer the Question Asked.

Candidates often don't think about whether or not they actually are answering the questions asked by their interviewers. Make sure you understand what is being asked, and get further clarification if you are unsure.

8. Give Specific Examples.

One specific example of your background is worth 50 vague stories. Prepare your stories before the interview. Give examples that highlight your successes and uniqueness. Your past behavior can indicate your future performance.

9. Ask Questions.

Many interviewees don't ask questions and miss the opportunity to find out valuable information. Your questions indicate your interest in the company or job.

10. Follow Up.

Whether it's through email or regular mail, the follow-up is one more chance to remind the interviewer of all the valuable traits you bring to the job and company. You don't want to miss this last chance to market yourself.

It is important to appear confident and cool for the interview. One way to do that is to be prepared to the best of your ability. There is no way to predict what an interview holds, but by following these important rules you will feel less anxious and will be ready to positively present yourself.