Interviewing Prep: Job Interview Checklist for Job-Seekers

Are you going on a job interview soon? Use this thorough checklist to guide you through the interview-preparation process and move you closer to successfully attaining the job you seek.



Job Interview Checklist for Jobseekers: Have You?

- [ ] 1. Thoroughly researched the organization I'm interviewing with, the industry, my interviewer, and the job itself.
- [ ] 2. Conducted research so I know all interview logistics, such as parking, office location, paperwork, attire, and the type of interview that will be conducted. I have called to confirm the interview time.
- [ ] 3. Prepared and practiced for the interview without memorizing or over-rehearsing my answers. I've reviewed the questions I think I may be asked in the interview, as well as my planned responses to them. I have composed my responses in writing
- [ ] 4. Enlisted a friend or family member to do a mock interview with me.
- [ ] 5. Visualized myself going through the full interview experience and performing magnificently. I imagine myself confidently sailing through the interview.
- [ ] 6. Asked for good directions and/or searched for a map/directions from an Internet map site, such as Mapquest, Google Maps, or Yahoo Maps.
- [ ] 7. Taken a practice run to the location where I'm having the interview — or otherwise made sure I know exactly where it is and how long it takes to get there.
- [ ] 8. Gotten a good night's sleep. Brushed my teeth and used mouthwash. Bathed or showered. Used deodorant soap and put on deodorant. For confidence, spritzed on a tiny bit of cologne without overdoing it.
- [ ] 9. Planned interview attire that is appropriate for the job, the company, and the industry. I have prepared every element of the outfit, including shoes, jewelry, hose, tie, accessories. Inspected each element carefully. I have ensured that my outfit is clean and neatly pressed. I've checked for spots and removed them. I've checked for rips or tears and sewn them or chosen another outfit. I've checked for runs in my hose. I've ensured that my shoes are clean and polished. I have a Plan B for attire if I come across any disasters.

- [ ] 10. Packed emergency-repair items I might need: small sewing kit, extra pair of pantyhose, spot-remover wipes, tissues, comb and brush, hairspray or gel, makeup for touchups, breath mints, an umbrella, extra copies of my resume in case I have more than one interviewer, and my career portfolio.

Job Interview Checklist for Jobseekers: You Will

- [ ] 1. Plan to arrive about 10 minutes early since late arrival for a job interview is never excusable. If I'm running late, I'll phone the company.
- [ ] 2. Greet the receptionist or assistant with courtesy and respect and make a good first impression.
- [ ] 3. Not chew gum during the interview.
- [ ] 4. If presented with a job application, fill it out neatly, completely, and accurately.
- [ ] 5. Bring extra resumes to the interview. (Even better, if I have a job skills portfolio, also bring that with me to the interview.)
- [ ] 6. Not rely on my application or resume to do the selling for me; I know I need to sell myself to the interviewer.
- [ ] 7. Greet the interviewer with a big smile and call him or her by his or her title (Ms., Mr., Dr.) and last name. I'll confirm the pronunciation of the interviewer's name (if questionable) with the receptionist before going into the interview.
- [ ] 8. Shake hands firmly and avoid a limp or clammy handshake!
- [ ] 9. Wait until I am offered a chair before sitting. I will be aware of my body language and posture at all times; I will sit upright and look alert and interested at all times. I will avoid fidgeting or slouching.
- [ ] 10. Avoid telling jokes during the interview.
- [ ] 11. Make good eye contact with the interviewer(s).
- [ ] 12. Show enthusiasm about the position and the company.
- [ ] 13. Avoid smoking, even if the interviewer does and offers me a cigarette. I'll avoid smoking beforehand so I don't smell like smoke. Whether or not I smoke, I will brush my teeth, use mouthwash, or have a breath mint before the interview.
- [ ] 14. Avoid using poor language, slang, and pause words (such as "like," "uh," "you know," and "um").
- [ ] 15. Speak with a strong, forceful voice to project confidence.
- [ ] 16. Maintain a high confidence and energy level, but avoid being overly aggressive or cocky.
- [ ] 17. Avoid acting as though I would take any job or am desperate for employment.
- [ ] 18. Avoid controversial topics.
- [ ] 19. Refrain from saying anything negative about former colleagues, supervisors, or employers.
- [ ] 20. Ensure that my strong points come across to the interviewer in a factual, sincere manner.
- [ ] 21. Never lie. I will answer questions truthfully, frankly, and succinctly and not over-answer them.
- [ ] 22. Stress my achievements and avoid offering any negative information about myself.
- [ ] 23. Avoid answering questions with a simple "yes" or "no;" instead, I will explain and give examples whenever possible. I will describe those things about myself that showcase my talents, skills, and determination.
- [ ] 25. Refrain from bringing up or discussing personal issues or family problems.
- [ ] 24. Show off the research I have done on the company and industry when responding to questions.

- [ ] 26. Remember that the interview is also an important time to evaluate the interviewer and the company he or she represents.
- [ ] 27. Realize that a short pause before responding to a question to collect my thoughts is OK, but avoid long pauses. Repeating the question aloud or asking for the question to be repeated to buy some time to think is OK.
- [ ] 28. Conduct myself in a way that demonstrates my determination to land the job I am discussing. Avoid closing the door on an opportunity until I am sure about it.
- [ ] 29. Refrain from answering cell-phone calls during the interview; in fact, turn my cell phone off (or set to silent ring).
- [ ] 30. Show what I can do for the company rather than demand what the company can do for me.
- [ ] 31. Postpone inquiring about salary, vacations, bonuses, retirement, or other benefits until after I've received an offer. I will be prepared for a question about salary requirements but will try to delay salary talk until I have an offer
- [ ] 32. Ask intelligent questions about the job, company, or industry, knowing that if I don't ask any questions, I'll be indicating a lack of interest.
- [ ] 33. Close the interview by telling the interviewer(s) that I want the job and asking about the next step in the process. (Some experts even recommend closing the interview by asking for the job.)
- [ ] 34. Request business cards from each person I interviewed with — or at least ask the correct spelling of their first and last names. I'll avoid making assumptions about simple names (was it Jon or John?); I'll get the spelling.
- [ ] 35. Immediately write down notes after the interview concludes so I don't forget crucial details.
- [ ] 36. Write thank-you letters within 24 hours to each person who interviewed me. (See some sample thank-you letters.) I will follow all the rules of following up after the interview.

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