

## TIP FROM THE TRENCHES

### Are You Ready for the Interview

You want to work for the company, they've seen your credentials and they've asked you in for an interview. You want the job. Here are some suggestions that will help make sure your interview goes as well as possible.

#### Preparing for the Interview

Thorough preparation is critical. It is great for your confidence in the interview room and it leaves a very positive impression with the interviewers.

- **Get the logistics right.** Time, location, interviewer's name and position title
- **Do your research.** Find out as much as possible about the company: size, scope, location of branches and offices, financial/share performance, range of products and services, etc. The company website and annual report are two good resources
- **Do more research.** Make sure you have key data about your existing and most recent employers
- **Do even more research.** Ask former co-workers to tell you about your professional traits. What did they most admire? **Try to find some faults as well.** This leaves you more prepared for questions such as "what are your greatest faults" or "if I were working with you..."
- **Prepare questions.** The employer will be trying to work out whether you for the available role. You should also take the opportunity to ensure that the company is right for you
- **Practice (see below).** Take time to run through some of your answers. Don't over-rehearse, but make sure that you are coming across confidently
- **Present yourself well.** Find out what the company culture is regarding business dress code. If in doubt, go more formal not less formal. Make sure you are well groomed on the day

#### What You Should Practice

When practicing for an interview, you should focus on the way you answer questions.

- **Be descriptive.** Don't answer just "yes" or "no". Avoid over-answering. Make your answers colorful but not lengthy
- **Sell yourself** to the interviewer but without exaggeration or lies. You are there to market yourself, "blow your own trumpet" and explain why you'd be right for the role but don't come across as arrogant
- **Avoid making negative remarks** about your current employer, past employers or colleagues
- **Be determined.** Make it clear that you want the job, even if you are given information in the interview that sheds a new light on the role. Be positive, then evaluate the opportunity again after the interview
- **Have positive body language** and maintain good posture
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Remember: expect unexpected questions. It's fine to pause for thought. It's also acceptable to admit you don't know the answer.

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③ How your performance will be evaluated

- 14. Connect with colleagues.** Get to know as many people as you can especially your teammates and those with whom you will work regularly. Establish the foundation for a relationship, and trust and information will follow.
- 15. Identify key players.** Find out who the decision-makers, influencers, stars and up-and-comers are. Notice the traits they have in common and try to emulate them.
- 16. Uncover hidden agendas.** Identify any political forces at work. While you want to avoid getting involved in politically charged situations, it's helpful to be aware of undercurrents.
- 17. Take initiative.** As you finish assignments and are ready to handle a bigger workload, ask for more. Pick projects that have support from upper management and buy-in from your staff.
- 18. Do not make major changes.** Even if your interviewer told you the company was looking for fresh ideas, proceed carefully. Show respect for those who have invested energy in a project or system before trying to change it. There may be obstacles you are not aware of. Ask why things are done the way they are and seek feedback from people whose support you need. Applaud what is being done right and frame changes as enhancements.

**Be a team player.** Do not engage in gossip. Always make your boss look good. Share credit with your workmates.

*This article is courtesy of Careerbuilder.com*

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