

## **Interview Tips and Guidelines for Recent Graduates**

### **Before the Interview**

#### **Do your homework:**

- Research the company's website
- Become familiar with the company's products/services and past history.

#### **Dress Professionally:**

- **No** jeans or casual wear
- Men/ wear a suit and tie-Should be well groomed
- Women wear a suit outfit-not too much make-up or perfume

#### **Be Early:**

- Try to announce yourself 5 to 10 min. early
- 20 min. or more is too early to announce yourself

#### **Prepare Questions in Advance:**

- What do you want to know about the company
- Job responsibilities

#### **Bring Several Copies of your resume:**

- At least 3-5 copies
- Resumes should be organized and neat

#### **No Cell Phone:**

- Turn it off OR Leave it in the car

### **During the Interview:**

- Treat all people you encounter with professionalism and kindness.
- Don't let the employer's casual approach cause you to drop your manners or professionalism.
- Don't address the interviewer by his or her first name unless you are invited to.
- Let the interviewer guide the interview. Don't interrupt, even if you are anxious and enthusiastic about answering the question.

- Be aware of your **non-verbal behaviors** - sit straight, smile as often as you can, make eye contact. Sit still in your seat; avoid fidgeting and slouching.
- Be enthusiastic, confident and energetic, but not aggressive, pushy or egotistic.
- Don't make negative comments about previous employers or professors (or others).
- **Listen very carefully** to each question you are asked and give thoughtful, to the point and honest answers. Ask for clarification if you don't understand a question. It is OK to take a few moments of silence to gather your thoughts before answering.
- Make sure you understand the employer's next step in the hiring process; know when and from whom you should expect to hear next. Know what action you are expected to take next, if any. Always thank the interviewer for his or her time.
- When the interviewer concludes the interview, offer a firm handshake and make eye contact.
- **Be prepared to discuss anything on your resume.** Be prepared to answer questions/issues you really don't want to answer. For example:
  - Your greatest weakness
  - Your lack of related experience
  - Your low GPA
  - Your lack of leadership experiences
- **Be honest** but try to turn the negatives into something positive. For example: "Although I don't have much related experience I feel confident I will learn and adjust quickly."
- Try to avoid any weaknesses that will eliminate you from the position. For example, tardiness, impatience, acting unprofessional, absent minded.

### **After the Interview:**

- After the interview, make notes right away so you don't forget critical details.
- If you are working with a recruiter, call that recruiter immediately while the facts of the interview are fresh on your mind. The recruiter will want to know what you thought went well and what you may have concerns about.
- Always **send a thank you letter/email** to the interviewer immediately.

### **Popular Questions:**

- **What Are Your Weaknesses?**

Handle it by minimizing your weaknesses and emphasizing your strengths. Stay away from personal qualities and concentrate on professional traits

- **Why Should We Hire You?**

Summarize your experiences and strengths. Try to relate them to the position you're interviewing for.

- **Why Do You Want to Work Here?**

The interviewer is listening for an answer that indicates you've given this some thought and are not sending out resumes just because there is an opening. Talk about the company and your relevant experience.

- **What Are Your Goals?**

Sometimes it's best to talk about short-term and intermediate goals rather than locking yourself into the distant future. For example, "My immediate goal is to get a job in a growth-oriented company."

- **Why Did You Leave (Or Why Are You Leaving) Your Job?**

If you're unemployed, state your reason for leaving in a positive context.

If you are employed, focus on what you want in a new position.

- **What Can You Do for Us That Other Candidates Can't?**

What makes you unique? This will take an assessment of your experiences, skills and traits.

- **What Are Three Positive Things Your Last Boss OR Professor Would Say About You?**

It's time to pull out your old performance reviews or recommendations. This is a great way to brag about yourself through someone else's words.

- **Why are you interested in this field?**

Compare schooling and past work experiences/projects.