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Executive Search & Placement

Interviewing Tips

You Want to Get a Job Offer— You Can by Following These Proven Techniques

Preparation

Prior interview preparation will enable you to be confident, overcome interviewing inexperience, and sell yourself and your qualifications. Begin by preparing your employment, educational and miscellaneous inventory sheets which will outline your qualifications. On these 8 1/2 x 11 sheets, which are for your eyes only, state the facts, do not be modest, do not minimize your strengths, be specific when describing results.

Never Go on an Interview Without First Researching the Company and the Open Position

One hour in the library or on the Internet utilizing Standard and Poors, Dun and Bradstreet or Moody's Reference Material, will enable you to know the company's products/services, markets, sales volume, locations and subsidiaries.

Prior planning requires you to inventory all responsibilities performed and to state how well you carried them out, in relation to the job you are interviewing for.

Prove your competency by stating how well you performed in the past by using the 1-2-3 mini-story technique. For example, state the problem, describe your solution and emphasize the positive results. - Practice!

Strive to project eagerness and interest, be a conversationalist by being yourself. - Practice!

Conclude the interview by getting a "what-will-happen-next" summary, accepting an offer on the spot if it's what you want, show interest in the job by asking for the offer.

Write a brief follow-up letter, and report your progress to your executive recruiter. - Practice!

How to Answer Questions

The question answering rule says, "Answer every question in terms of your background or qualifications or in terms of the job to be filled."

1. "Tell me about yourself" means, "Tell me about your qualifications." Pre-plan a five to ten minute answer describing your education and then mention each job in terms of accomplishment or performance indicators.

2. Personality questions attempt to determine if you have the qualities being sought. "What kind of manager are you?" "Are you creative?" Answer these questions in terms of the obvious answer supported by past or present experiences as proof of your claim.

3. Motivation questions are asked to determine if you would enjoy the job. "Describe your ideal job." "Would you prefer to work for a large or small company?" "What did you like most/least about your last job?" Answer these questions following the question answering rule. Be specific and emphatic.

4. Salary questions. When asked what you desire, say, "I'm presently earning \$_____ and I am flexible & willing to consider all offers." If possible, avoid answering the question until an offer is made.

5. Prepare for tough questions. Anticipate what they will be. They will focus on reasons for leaving and quality of performance. Be brief, but factual. Write out your answers, refine and memorize.

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Ask Questions—Employers Like to be Interviewed, Too!

Have a list, don't cross examine, make them job related, ask open ended questions (who, what, when, where, how) that require an explanation.

1. Interest questions pertain to job opportunity, the company, its people, and its products/services.
2. Job satisfaction questions pertain to importance of job, responsibility and authority, recognition and career potential.
3. Past performance questions concentrate on people who previously held the position, their performance and where they are today.
4. Sales questions help you determine the kind of person the employer wants to hire in terms of education, experience, future performance and personality. When you understand the kind of person the employer wants to hire, you can then say, "I can do the job you want done because I've done it before and have done it well." Or describe your compensating asset and/or education.
5. Ask for the job. "I can do what you want done and I want the job!"
6. Avoid questions relating to salary, fringe benefits, vacations and retirement until the job is offered and you have talked with your recruiter.

Dress Properly

For men: conservative suit, white shirt, contrasting tie, shoes shined, socks over calf. For women: skirted suit, or dress with matching jacket, neutral colored hose, simple pumps, minimum make-up.

After the Interview

Contact your executive recruiter immediately after interview and communicate what transpired. If you're interested in the position, your recruiter will help you get it.