



### Interview Quick Tips

**Be On Time**  
**Dress for Success**  
**1<sup>st</sup> Impressions Mean Everything**  
**Talk and Act Professionally**  
**Speak Clearly and Slowly (Especially for a phone interview)**  
**Be Positive**  
**Sell Yourself**  
**Be Enthusiastic**  
**Ask For The JOB!!!**  
**Send a Thank You Note Immediately afterwards**

### **How to sell yourself in an interview**

Sell yourself! Learn as much as possible about the position, the company, and the interviewers themselves. The more detailed information you have about the company and the position, the better prepared and more interested you look. Go to the library and visit the company's web site.

Employers want someone who wants to work for them. Demonstrate this by:

1. **PREPARING QUESTIONS.** No matter how thorough the employer is in the interview, you must ask questions. This demonstrates interest and thinking ability.
2. **EMPHASIZING AREAS OF YOUR BACKGROUND.** Think of specific examples that demonstrate your skills and abilities. Sell yourself by having *brief* examples of work experiences you have had which show your decision-making abilities, or your technical expertise, or examples of how you interact with your coworkers.
3. **ASKING, "WHAT IS THE NEXT STEP?"** Tell the employer you were intrigued prior to the interview and are now even more interested.

### **Questions the Employer May Ask**

Below is a list of commonly asked questions in an interview. Consider carefully how you would answer:

#### ***The big one: Tell me about yourself***

Three steps to answering that question:

1<sup>st</sup>—Tell them what you do (what technologies you work with—i.e.: Lead generation, customer selection/requirements, etc.)

2<sup>nd</sup>—Tell them about a recent accomplishment you've had—briefly

3<sup>rd</sup>—Tell them what you're looking to do (**based on the position open**)

*The close:*

Then say something like "...but before I get into detail about my background, I would like for you to tell me what you are looking for so I can be specific about which skills I should elaborate on."

#### **Other common questions:**

1. Why are you willing to leave your current employer? —Or—Why did you leave your last employer?
2. What do you know about this position and company? Why are you interested?

3. What are your short-term and long-term goals?
4. How do you feel about your current job/supervisor? What do you like the most/least?
5. What are your strengths/weaknesses?
6. What are you currently making for salary? What type of salary are you looking for? How do you justify the increase?
7. What information is important to you in making a decision about this job change?
8. Who have you learned the most from? What was it? Why was it important?
9. What was your greatest accomplishment/biggest failure?
10. You say you have experience in the \_\_\_\_\_ area. What do you mean by experience?
11. Why do you think you can do the job I described?
12. If you were offered the position and accept it, in two years how much money do you feel you should be making?
13. When I call your former employers, what are they going to say about you?
14. Why do you want to relocate? Aren't your family ties in \_\_\_\_? What does your spouse think about relocation? Traveling?
15. What does your spouse think about your changing jobs?
16. Why should we hire you?
17. When are you available to start?

#### **Answers to questions...ground rules to help you:**

- \*Keep your responses positive—your prospective employer does not want to hear about your past or current problems, nor do they want to hear anything negative about your past or current employer.
- \*If you are a natural talker, be brief, clear, and concise. Don't deviate too far from the questions asked. Keep tangents to a minimum.
  - But, if people tell you you don't talk much, then be careful not to give one word answers to questions. Be sure to elaborate and explain what you mean.
- \*Be honest--and be smart. Keep it professional. Honesty doesn't mean you have to tell your next employer everything about your personal life.

#### **Questions for Candidates to Ask**

Make sure to listen carefully when the interviewer is speaking to you...**don't make them repeat themselves!** Logically, you will not want to ask all of the questions below, but it will give you some ideas.

#### **Company questions:**

- How long has your company been in business?
- What are the strengths of the company currently -- engineering, management, product, sales, marketing, etc.?
- Where can this organization improve?
- Who is our main competition? (best not to emphasize your tone when saying the underlined word—just note the fact that it is different)
- What is our percentage of market share compared to the main competition?
- What has been the company's growth over the past year?
- What is anticipated in the near future in terms of growth or expansion?
- Where do you see this company in 5 years? 10 years?

#### **Position questions:**

- Why is this position open?
- Why did the last person in this position leave? (If the previous person in this position was promoted)...What did he/she do to earn that promotion? (If the last person was terminated) What were the shortcomings of the individual you are trying to replace?
- What key attribute are you looking for in an individual for this position?
- What do you want this position/department to contribute to the organization?

How many peers will this position have in the company?

Would all of us report to the same person? Who?

Where will this position lead career-wise?

What can I do to improve the performance in the position you have open?

**Interviewer questions:**

Could you tell me about your background?

How did you obtain your position?

What attributes did you possess that appealed to the company?

Why did you come to work for XYZ co.?

What are your goals and what can I do to help you reach them?

**All about you:**

I feel I have the qualifications discussed, what specifically do you expect or want me to do in this area?

How many people have you interviewed at this point and is there something specific you are not finding?

If I were hired, how could I make an impact on this company?

What do I have to do to get this job?

**\*\*\*\*\*At the end of interview...**I have most of my questions answered and feel confident I can contribute to your firm and that is exactly what I would like to do. What other questions can I answer that would help you make a decision?