

# Interview Preparation

BEFORE, DURING & AFTER

## BEFORE THE INTERVIEW

- **Reflect** on what the employer is looking for based on job posting and the qualities you possess that fit those requirements
- **Research** company (products, services, mission, goals and projects), industry and competition
- **Prepare and practice** answers to anticipated interview questions
- **Practice your 30-second Elevator Pitch** – include relevant education, experience and strengths, and reinforce your suitability for the job. This answers the inquiry: “Tell me about yourself?”
- Write at least 4 **success stories** to answer behavioural questions (*Behavioural Questions Tip-sheet*)
- List 4-5 **questions to ask** about the job, the company or industry (*Questions to Ask Tip-sheet*)
- **Research salary** and determine your worth (*Questions to Ask Tip-sheet*)
- Get permission from your **references** and get your reference list ready (*Reference List Tip-sheet*)
- **Dress for success!** Research and ensure you dress professionally and appropriately

## COMMON INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

- Tell me about yourself.
- Why did you leave or why are you leaving your last/current position?
- What do you know about this company?
- Why do you want to work for this company?
- What are your goals?
- What are your strengths and weaknesses?
- How would your last/current boss and colleagues describe you?
- Why should we hire you?
- What are your salary expectations? (*Questions to Ask Tip-sheet*)
- Do you have any questions for us? (*Questions to Ask Tip-sheet*)
- Tell me about a time you worked on a difficult team
- Tell me about a time when you had to deal with a difficult customer or coworker and how you dealt with it
- Tell us about a time when you had to go above and beyond the call of duty in order to get a job done
- Tell me about an accomplishment you are truly proud of

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## WHAT TO BRING WITH YOU

- Several copies of your resume on quality paper
- List of your references (at least 3 references)
- Questions to ask interviewers
- Bottle of water
- Pens and a pad of paper on which to take notes
- Directions to interview site and contact info of the company
- A portfolio if applicable

## ON ARRIVAL

- Turn off your cell phone
- Arrive early (10 to 15 minutes)
- Respect everyone you meet with
- Greet the interviewer with a **firm handshake**
- **Smile** and **make eye contact** with anyone you speak to

## DURING THE INTERVIEW

- **Focus** on the points you have prepared without sounding rehearsed or stiff
- **Sit up straight, smile, maintain eye contact**; sit still and avoid fidgeting and slouching. Do not cross your feet/ keep an open gesture
- **Listen** and give thoughtful and to-the-point answers. Ask for clarification if you are unsure. It is ok to pause and gather your thoughts before speaking
- **Avoid making negative comments** about previous/current employers, professors or co-workers
- **Be enthusiastic**, confident and energetic, but not aggressive or pushy
- **Thank the interviewer** for their time at the close of the interview, ask for a business card, offer a firm handshake, smile and make eye contact

## AFTER THE INTERVIEW

- **Make notes** so you don't forget critical details
- **Send thank you note or email** within 24 hours; reiterate your interest (Thank You Letter Tipsheet)
- **Follow up** if the employer said they would decide in a week, call them after the week is up to follow up
- **Ask for feedback** on your interview if you receive communication that you were not successful

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