

## Interview Preparation Guide

### Research

1. What new products, services, equipment, or innovations are currently in play or on the horizon?
2. Is the company in the midst of downsizing, layoffs, or restructuring? Has the company been acquired by or is it merging with another company?
3. How is the company's financial solvency (revenue, profits, labor costs)?
4. What is the employee turnover rate?
5. What is the company's promotion percentage (in-house vs. outside)?

### Plan/Prepare

- ✓ As soon as your interview is scheduled and confirmed, set aside your interview outfit, including what shoes, jewelry, and bag/attaché case/portfolio you are going to wear and carry day of.
- ✓ Make sure your calendar is clear. You do not want to inadvertently double-book and or fail to give yourself enough time in-between appointments. Of course, with your interview being the most important appointment of the day.
- ✓ Find yourself nervous during interview where you feel you are going to pass out or start foaming at the mouth?

Practice. Practice. Practice. Conduct mock interviews. There are experts who recommend practicing responses to certain standard questions. While this is not wrong, it does not focus on your skills, strengths, and accomplishments. If you master this knowledge, namely, what your skills, strengths, and accomplishments are, you can give an articulate and convincing response to just about any question you are asked.

If you are changing your field or industry, you should dedicate a considerable amount of time practicing mock interviews. The goal is to effortlessly (as effortlessly as possible) communicate your transferable skills and how you can and will address the employer's pain points (problems). Again, practice, practice, practice.

- ✓ Have a printed copy of your résumé and cover letter handy, along with a list of professionals who have agreed to give you a recommendation. Aim for three names; people that know you professionally who you have worked for or with.
- ✓ Respond to any inquiries or requests for information from the executive assistant / coordinator who scheduled the interview. Some companies require that certain forms be completed prior to the interview. Do not forget to do this, as this will be your first encounter with personnel from the company or department. Use this opportunity to show yourself attentive, punctual, and able to follow directions.

### **Morning of (Night Before):**

- ✓ Get a good night's sleep. You do not want to be exhausted for your interview, e.g., yawning, with red, watery eyes.
- ✓ Get up early. Allow yourself enough travel time to get to your destination on time. (You know the saying, 'Early is on time, on time is late, and late is unacceptable'?) You want to give yourself some leeway to find the right cross street, elevator, floor, or passageway to the location.
- ✓ Check your bag. Make sure you have the printed copies of your résumé, cover letter, and recommendation list.

### **Arrival:**

- ✓ Greet front desk personnel. Smile and be personable.

When the executive assistant or one of the members of the interview panel comes to get you, stand up straight, make eye contact, extend your right arm, shake the other person's hand (if this is no longer socially acceptable, perhaps extend a fist bump or elbow tap), and smile. When extending your greeting, use the person's name. (Hi Bob. Pleasure to finally meet you. Good morning, Amy. Thank you; good to meet you.)

### **Upon Entering the Room:**

- ✓ Greet
- ✓ Smile
- ✓ Make Eye Contact
- ✓ Firm Handshake, where socially acceptable

### **End of Interview:**

- ✓ Give a last-minute one- or two-line pitch (optional)
- ✓ Say Thank You
- ✓ Smile
- ✓ Make Eye Contact
- ✓ Firm Handshake, where socially acceptable
- ✓ Once, you exit the location, breathe, and show yourself some self-appreciation. You did it!
- ✓ Start thinking of your follow up thank you email.