

Top 10 Interviews Dos & Don'ts

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There's no question that in today's highly competitive job market, applicants need to do everything they can to set themselves apart from the competition. Oftentimes it's the little things that you do prior to, during, and after the interview that help you stand out above the rest. The following is our list of the top ten interview dos and don'ts that may give you an edge when competing for a job.

Do – Have a good understanding of the company you are interviewing with and the position you are interviewing for. Ask your recruiter or HR representative to provide you with a position description and use the internet to research current company news, events, and general information on the company.

Don't – Go into the interview without doing your research. Hiring managers gauge your interest in a position by how well you prepare for the interview. Not doing your homework prior to the interview could very well cost you the position.

Do – Dress well for the interview. As the old adage goes, "you never get a second chance to make a first impression." This certainly holds true with interviewing. If you are unsure of what to wear it's best to play it safe and dress for success.

Don't – Dress too casual. If you are interviewing for a position that will allow you to dress more casually (i.e. most manufacturing jobs), then you may have some leniency. However, do not just assume that you can wear jeans and a t-shirt to an interview unless you are told you can by the HR Representative or Recruiter.

Do – Treat everyone you interact with respect and courtesy. Nobody should be viewed or treated as unimportant or lower regardless of their position within the company.

Don't – Chew gum or bring your own food or beverage to the interview. Simply put, it is rude and disrespectful to the employer. If you are offered a beverage at the interview you may accept the offer but that's it.

Do – Let the company know why you are the best fit for the position you are interviewing for. Tell them the skills you can bring to the table and why you should be chosen over the other candidates. Sit up straight and make eye contact. Ask for the job and be confident!

Don't – Fidget or act uninterested during the interview. Many skilled interviewers will pick up on this immediately and cut the interview short if they do not feel that you are engaged and interested.

Do – Prepare questions in advance and be ready to ask those questions when the interviewer provides the opportunity. If an opportunity is not presented, feel free to ask the interviewer if you can ask a few questions as the interview is close to its conclusion.

Don't – Be unprepared for the "typical" interview questions. Most interviewers ask questions such as: reasons why you left previous positions, what your greatest accomplishments are, and what interested you in the position. An internet search can provide you with a list of the most frequently asked questions asked during the interview.

Do – Be honest. If you were terminated from a position then tell the interviewer why without going into a tremendous amount of detail. Take responsibility for your actions and behaviors and provide examples of how you learned from your mistakes. Dishonesty is never a good way to start off a relationship with your employer and if it's found out that you were dishonest, many employers immediately remove you from consideration.

Don't – Talk ill of your former employers or supervisors. Even if you feel as though you were treated unfairly in a previous position, simply state that it was not a good fit and let it go. Never let yourself appear as bitter or angry.

Do – Respond to questions thoroughly and concisely and use your past experiences to answer the questions. When finished answering the question feel free to ask the interviewer if your reply addressed their question appropriately.

Don't – Over or under-answering questions. Oftentimes when we are nervous during an interview, we tend to do one of two things; 1) over-answer the question by getting into details about things unrelated to the original question, or 2) under-answer the question by providing one- or two-word answers and little detail. Do your best to be thorough and provide enough details to address the question without getting carried away.

Do – Listen closely to the interviewer and take the time to evaluate the company. An interview is a two-way street and you could very well find out something about a company during the interview process that would attract you or deter you from working there. A good cultural fit is very important on both sides.

Don't – Leave your mobile device on during an interview. If you can leave it in your vehicle then do it. If you must have your phone with you then turn it off or put it on silent mode during the interview. Never answer a call or text during your interview.

Do – Ask for a business card and send a thank you note (handwritten or email) to each interviewer after the interview is complete. Your follow up after the interview will show your level of interest to those that you interviewed with.

Don't – Give the impression that you are only interested in salary. Do not ask about salary or benefits until it is brought up by one of your interviewers. Focusing on salary may indicate that this is the only reason you want the position.

There you have it! While no interview techniques are guaranteed to get you hired, following the above guidelines will start you off on the right foot. The key is being prepared, be honest and do your best! Happy interviewing!