

Taking the Next Step in the Interview

Congratulations! You've landed the interview you've worked so long and haggardly for; relentlessly editing your resume, jumping through black holes of online submissions, and at least one phone screen with a recruiter. No matter the road, you've already made major strides of success. While the job market may be on fire, the competition is **endless**. If you get the opportunity and time of the interview, feel confident that you already have something to bring to the table. However it happens- Skype, a conference call, or a firm in person handshake - it is important to prepare in order to stand out from the sea of other candidates.



DO YOUR RESEARCH

One of the initial steps, if you haven't done so already, is to take a moment in order to invest researching your next **career**. That means your next manager, next possible colleague, and the mission you'll be working for as a professional. LinkedIn is a fantastic way to scout the names of who you'll be interviewing with - maybe take a moment to even connect directly with your recruiters. (Remember, even if this doesn't pan out networking is key)

Dissecting a company's website also provides you direction for your interview, questions to pose, as well as may be quizzed of you during an interview. Did you read their business history? Glassdoor reviews? The more you demonstrate you know about a company's backstory, the more invested you seem in the position at hand.

Research company of interest and key hiring managers on LinkedIn - you can choose to remain hidden or not.

Connect with your recruiter online.

Do multiple reviews of the organization through Glassdoor, Indeed, and other online avenues.



Research salary and role expectations for the specific title in which you are applying to based on your location.



CHECK THE MAP

In this day and age, Google Maps offers an application to where you can route your transit time, through any predictable rush hour, as well as by any mode of transportation. This resource alone deems tardiness to an interview as unacceptable. Take a moment to thoroughly confirm interview details - down to avenues, suite numbers, and names of important individuals you'll be meeting (**even** the receptionist).

If your newest opportunity puts you in an area you're unfamiliar - give yourself **extra** time. Drive through the unknown neighborhood before hand, or at least allow a fine grace period for you to commute through traffic, find parking, and pass through any level of security. In most scenarios, arriving ten to fifteen minutes early is seen as the most acceptable.

Utilize Google Maps to track your commute, based on the busiest or slowest traffic times.

Be realistic in how long it takes you to prepare before your interview, prepping for traffic, looking for parking, and possibly passing through security.

Take a practice drive a few days prior to your interview. If travelling for your interview, make sure you have all appropriate travel paperwork filed and hotel reservations.

Confirm all interview details with your hiring contact, such as street names, suite numbers, and important names during the process.





DRESS FOR THE JOB YOU WANT...TO BE PROMOTED TO

Hiring managers aren't just looking for people to fill the role on the paper. They're looking for the next investment for their teams. Time for training and onboarding cost organizations millions every year. In many work environments, how you dress says a lot about your identity as a professional. Are you looking to move beyond into a leadership role? Are you seeking to grow diversely? Make sure your attire exudes the appropriate amount of confidence. Often full suits are not always required - talk to your hiring contact to understand dress code expectations prior to your interview.

Always have a dialogue with your hiring contact on what the dress code expectations is. Full suits may or may not be required. Often Men are expected at least a button down shirt and pressed dress slacks, with Women's fashion varying (as long as appropriate).

How you dress to set your first impression says a lot of your professional character. Make sure you consider how you want others to see you when meeting.



PACK THE ESSENTIALS

The resume you put all of those grueling hours into? Sometimes the hiring managers don't even read it (a criminal truth, but one nonetheless). Prepare multiple copies, tucked away in a portfolio book or binder in tow to your interview.

Along with your CV, should the position be fitting, include recent copies of projects and accomplishments. Team leaders are often looking for real examples of ways you created change and innovation. References should also be updated and available on hand with at least two methods of contact.

It is also recommended to bring a notebook, and pen(s). If you feel as if you may forget them, print out a sheet of your questions as well that way you can help keep your conversation with hiring managers on track.



Pack multiple updated copies of your resume, project portfolio, and references ready for any interview.

Bring pen(s), as well as a notepad for during your conversation.

Other suggested items: Lint roller, Wrinkler Remover, Tissue, ChapStick, Bottle of Water, Spare Shirt.



PREPARE THE NIGHT BEFORE

Utilize the time prior to your interview to ensure you are prepared. Choose an outfit that is both comfortable and professionally appropriate. Gather all of your resumes copies and documents. Eat a healthy meal, limiting caffeine intake as much as possible prior to your meeting.

Find a productive way to channel interview jitters! Sing karaoke in the car, look at calming photos, or listen to smooth jazz in order to find a bit of balance before a stressful encounter.

Taking the time to focus on your centeredness, translates to others in the meeting room. Your ability to handle stress often gets looked at during the interview stage.

Eat a healthy meal (breakfast, lunch, dinner) before your interview, with lots of water.

Avoid caffeine in order to reduce pre-interview anxiety.

Memorize important interview questions - roleplay.

Lay out meeting attire, documents, and next-day essentials in order to give enough extra time.





ASKING QUALITY QUESTIONS

Realizing you are not the only candidate in consideration for this position, use strong questions as a way for hiring teams to remember you. By doing your research, staying engaged during an interview, and understanding your goals in obtaining the position you are able to often prepare quality questions that show focused intent when joining a new organization.

Examples of quality questions, are those that resonate around a company's main objectives, and also help you identify yourself as a stand out interviewee.

"I understand your team's mission is xyz, how can my role help contribute to that?"

"With this role you mentioned you needed leadership, what are you looking for in a leader?"

"Development is important to me as a professional, what type of initiatives to do you offer as an employer?"

Avoiding recycled interview inquiries takes your presentation another step further, ending the meeting on an impressive finish.

Utilize interview notes to ask questions related to key topics.

Prepare questions related to career initiatives.

Prepare questions related to company objectives.





WRAP IT UP WITH A THANK YOU

You came, you saw, you **hopefully** conquered. If you've interviewed well enough, you'll have caught at least key point of contact to send a thank you email to. Interviews often take a large chunk of a managers day - because hiring decisions affect so many individuals in an organization.

Digest your notes and the time spent in order to illustrate an appreciate note, thanking them for their audience and consideration. Humbleness and gratitude are character traits that go a long way in making yourself stand out in the candidate pool.

Try to get one, if not all important contact information from key hiring managers.

Utilize interview notes to construct a thoughtful note that thanks them for their time.

Use this as an opportunity to mention how you can help in the organization's goals.



ALL IN ALL

There is only so much that preparation can do in the way of guaranteeing success in an interview. Sometimes you can do everything right, even say everything right in the process and still not land it. Failure is alright and sometimes that is not meant to be your opportunity. Remember to see any rejections as a chance for feedback - continue to reach out. Your ability to remain mature even in situations that did not side in your favor, is the last act of showmanship you can demonstrate as a quality candidate.

