

Preparing for a job interview.

From the moment you begin your job search, you should begin preparing as though you have an interview the next day. Take a look at the following **interview tips** for ideas on how you can become better prepared for your next job interview and get a few steps ahead of the competition.

Preparation Interview Tip No. 1

One of the first tasks you should tackle is setting up your interview **wardrobe** and materials. The day of the interview you are likely going to be somewhat nervous and flustered.

Taking the time to make sure you have everything will go a long way toward calming your nerves on the day of your interview and insuring that you arrive on time.

While you are job searching, you should have at least one set of **interview clothing** that is ready to go at a moment's notice. Also make sure you have a bag packed with anything you think you might need on the day of the interview.

Preparation Interview Tip No 2

There's no way to know every question that will be asked of you during the interview, but almost all employer ask a number of the **same basic questions**. Take the time to practice your responses to these questions.

For example:

- "Tell me about yourself."
- "Why are you interested in applying for this position?"
- "Where do you see yourself in five years?"

Preparation Interview Tip No 3

It's great to practice sample interview questions, but to really get a step ahead of the competition you need to kick it up a notch. **Practice** your interviewing skills with friends and family. Ask them to pose sample interview questions to you.

If you really want to get serious about preparing for an interview, set up a video camera and record yourself during a practice interview.

While it can be painful to watch oneself on camera, the benefits are well worth it. Watch for areas where you might not be smiling enough; or perhaps are smiling too much. Check out your posture, gestures and overall demeanor. Are you **presenting** an image that say's you're confident and capable of doing the job?

Preparation Interview Tip No 4

Sit down and make a list of what you consider to be your strengths and weaknesses.

The form of the question may vary, but employers generally get around to asking what you consider your strengths and weaknesses to be.

Even if they don't ask, it's a good idea to have this information **readily available** in your mind so you can drop it into the conversation wherever it feels natural.

Preparation Interview Tip No 5

No one wants to think about their **past mistakes**, but it is necessary if you want to improve and move forward positively.

Are there some areas of your past you might not be particularly proud of? If there are, and it could affect your ability to be hired for a job; it's really worth the time and effort to think about how you can explain the situation if asked about it during an interview.

Remember, you need to be able to discuss the situation calmly, rationally and without placing the blame on someone else.

Preparation Interview Tip No 6

If you have targeted one or more companies as prospective employers, one of the best things you can do to increase your chances of being hired is to **research the company** before you are called in for an interview.

Taking the time to find out critical facts about the organization you hope to work in shows initiative and can put you ahead of the competition.

Many employers are now making it a practice to ask candidates what they know about the company.

Being able to confidently and intelligently discuss the products and services offered by the employer will help your **confidence level** as well as demonstrate to the interviewer that you have what it takes to succeed.

Finally, remember that in today's highly competitive job market, skills, education and experience are sometimes not enough to get the job you want.

You need to be the best prepared most confident candidate out there and you need to be able to express your ability to do the job well to the employer.