

# Having a Successful Interview



**Scored an interview? Awesome! Now what do you do? How do you prepare? See the tips below for how to make it go as successfully as possible.**

## Preparation

**Research the company and position:** What is the company's mission statement? What are their values? What are the duties and responsibilities of the position?

**Practice interviewing:** Review commonly asked questions and prepare your answer. Possibly have a mock interview with someone.

**Prepare and print out any documents needed:** This could include a copy of your application, resume, personal statement, transcripts, portfolios, etc. Put these in a nice folder so that they will not get torn or wrinkled, and to keep them orderly. Know exactly where things are so you don't have to search for them.

**Be flexible with scheduling:** Make sure you allot plenty of time for the interview. If this requires that you take time off from your current job, make sure arrangements are made ahead of time. If an emergency or illness occurs and you are forced to reschedule, contact the company immediately to schedule a new time.

**Plan your time wisely:** Prepare to arrive early. Allot extra time for traffic, finding the location, and getting through any security protocols or check-in procedures. If something is absolutely going to prevent you from getting there on time (i.e. an accident causing a complete gridlock on the highway), contact the company immediately to notify them.

**Dress professionally:** You may wish to have your clothing laid out and ironed the night before in order to save you time. Make sure your clothing is neat and wrinkle-free. Do not wear anything that is stained or torn; that doesn't fit well; that is uncomfortable; that is revealing; or that has a distracting message or logo on it. Keep hairdo simple and preferably out of your face. Keep make up professional. Avoid bold and distracting jewelry. Cover up tattoos as much as possible. Avoid wearing heavy cologne or perfume as this may cause an allergic reaction to the interviewer.

- **Suggested clothing for men:** Dress pants; button-down shirt and tie; closed-toed shoes that are neat and clean. For a very formal environment, a suit is suggested. For a casual environment, a polo shirt may be okay.
- **Suggested clothing for women:** Skirts or dresses that are knee-length, or dress slacks; a blouse or button-down shirt; cardigan, dress jacket (not a hoodie), or blazer if needed; dress flats or high heels that are neat and clean.

## During

**Bring a notebook and pen to write with, and a nice bag to store these and any documents in.**

**Silence or turn off your phone.**

**Listen carefully to each question:** Give your full attention to the interviewer. Be sure to answer each question directly and honestly. Do not hesitate the interviewer to repeat the question or provide clarification if needed.

**Be positive:** Do not speak poorly about your past or current employer. Be aware of your body language and tone; if you act mad or bored, you will not make a good impression.

**Ask questions:** If you have any final questions about the company or position, ask them towards the end. Also ask about the “next steps” in the hiring process. Are further interviews expected? Is there a timeline in which you will hear a decision?

**Thank them for their time.** Again emphasize your enthusiasm for the potential position.

## After

**Follow up:** Provide any additional information they request as soon as possible. Also return any phone calls or emails as soon as possible.

**Be patient:** The hiring process can take awhile. If you have not heard anything within the established timeframe, follow up with your person of contact. But do not barrage them with daily phone calls and emails.