

Illinois workNet Power Employment Workshop on Interviewing – text only

Interviews and Follow Up Process

Expectations - At the end of this presentation, you will be able to:

- Prepare yourself prior to an interview
- Use verbal and nonverbal communication that projects confidence and effectiveness during an interview
- Respond to behavioral questions using well prepared examples of accomplishments
- Ask appropriate questions during an interview
- End the interview with a firm handshake, good eye contact and each interviewer's contact information
- Follow up by evaluating the interview and thanking each interviewer

What is an Interview? - An Interview is the most important step in your job search.

An interview is a conversation between an applicant and the potential employer.

- The employer hopes to determine whether or not the applicant is suitable for the job.
- The applicant tries to learn more about the position while also impressing the employer.

Types of Interviews

- Phone Interview - (Usually HR Manager or a Recruiter) Typically used to screen and narrow the pool of candidates
- Preliminary Interview - (HR Manager or Panel) Typically 30 to 60 minute face-to-face interview
- Second Interview - (HR Manager + Hiring Manager) Typically a more detailed interview
- The higher the level of the position, the more additional interviews there may be to complete the process

Phone Interview Techniques

- Ask to set an appointment for the phone interview
- Find a quiet place to take the call
- Do research and have all materials handy (pen, paper, portfolio, résumé, planner, notes about the company)
- Have examples of your accomplishments ready to share
- Speak clearly and smile

Phone Interview Techniques (cont.)

- Dress for the part – it carries over in your voice
- Follow up with a thank you note
- Make sure to get the name and contact information of the interviewer
- Ask about the next step in the process

Before the Interview

- Research the company – visit the company website, read the annual report or use search engines
- Confirm the location and arrive 10 to 15 minutes early
- Learn about the interviewer
- Prepare answers to open-ended questions and practice your interview with another person
- Review your accomplishments and be prepared to present it in the PARS format – Problem, Action, Result, Skills
- Prepare for tests that may be required for the position
- Alert your references
- Dress for success - make a good initial impression
- Be prepared to negotiate salary and benefits

While you wait...

- Greet the receptionist
- Be friendly and pleasant, but not overbearing
- If you need to wait, sit quietly and turn your cell phone off
- Review your accomplishments and résumé
- Shake hands with the interviewer – your handshake should be firm with good eye contact

What to Bring to an Interview

- Portfolio or notepad and pen
- Copies of your résumé and a list of references
- List of past jobs and contact information
- Work samples (if relevant)
- Prepared list of accomplishments
- Driver's license or Picture ID
- Social Security Card or Passport
- Breath mint and handkerchief or tissues

What *NOT* to Bring to an Interview

- Cell phone or iPod
- Gum, candy, or food
- Soda, coffee or other beverage
- Cigarettes
- Negative attitude
- Scuffed shoes, messy or not-so neat clothes
- Children, friends or pets

Your First Impression Counts!

There is never a second chance to make a first impression.

Presentation and Non Verbal Communication

According to some studies, a hiring decision is based on the manager “liking” you and:

- 55% Body language – dress for success, good posture and eye contact, keep hands quiet
- 38% Intonation – Speak clearly with an even tone, pay attention, don’t interrupt
- 7% Verbal content of your answers

Common questions you may be asked

- Tell me about yourself (99.9% of the time)
- What are your strengths?
- What are your weaknesses?
- Where do you see yourself in 5 years?
- Why should I hire you?
- Have you read the job description?
- What are your accomplishments?

Work Related Questions

- Tell me about your last job
- What were your expectations for the job?
- What were your responsibilities?
- What were your levels of compensation?
- What major challenges did you face?
- Why are you leaving or why did you leave?
- What have you done since your last job?

Behavior Related Questions

It has become more common to be asked behavioral questions during the interview process

Use the Internet, libraries and Illinois workNet Resource Center as a source of sample questions

The interviewer wants to hear how you will provide solutions to problems that will...

- Increase company revenue
- Decrease company expenses or,
- Improve efficiency and processes

How to Answer Behavioral Questions

Use PARS to answer behavioral interview questions

Be prepared to share examples of your accomplishments using the PARS format

P = Problem – give an example of a problem you have encountered

A = Action – tell what action you took to resolve the problem

R = Result – What was the positive result of the action you took

S = Skills – What skills did you use to achieve the result

Examples of Behavioral Questions

- How do you get along with older (younger) co-workers?
- A co-worker wasn't doing his/her fair share of the work. What did you do to address this issue?
- Tell me about a time you handled an angry customer. What was the outcome?
- You didn't work well with your supervisor. How did you handle the problem? Would you have liked to change the outcome?
- Can you give me an example of how your actions improved revenue for a company?

Questions for You to Ask

- How would you describe the responsibilities of the position?
- What is a typical week or day in this position?
- Is this a new position? If not, why is this position open?
- What is the company's management style?
- Can you explain the culture of the company?
- Who does this position report to? When can I meet him or her?

Questions for You to Ask (cont.)

- What are the prospects for growth and advancement? Can you give me an example?
- What do you like about working here?
- What else can I tell you about my qualifications?
- Have I addressed all of your concerns?
- Are there any other questions I can answer for you?

What NOT to Ask

- What does this company do? (Do your research ahead of time!)
- If I get the job, when can I take time off for vacation? (Wait until you get the offer to mention prior commitments.)
- Can I change my schedule if I get the job? (If you need to figure out the logistics of getting to work, don't mention it now.)

Skill and Performance Tests

- You may be required to take a skills test, assessment, or perform a task during the application process to demonstrate your ability to do the job.
- Some job application processes may require you to submit a portfolio or sample of your work during the interview process.
Examples: Data entry, truck driver, chef, welder, skilled tradesman, web designer, mechanic, software programmer, administrative assistant, graphic designer

Ending the Interview

- Don't end the interview without getting the interviewer's name, title and contact information.
- Determine the follow up process.
- If you're interested in the position, let the interviewer know by stating it at the end of the interview.
"I am very interested in this position. Is there anything preventing you from offering me this position right now?"

References – Business or Personal

- List only professional references (personal only by request)
- Should be immediate supervisors or co-workers
- Always obtain permission
- Send a copy of your résumé and the job description to every person you have listed
- Have someone "test" what kind of "reference" you are being given

Top Ten Interview Blunders

- Not being prepared for the interview – practice before your interview
- Dressing inappropriately – dress for success
- Poor body language – posture, eye contact and gestures
- Poor verbal skills – poor language and intonation
- Poor communication skills - not listening enough
- Too much communication – talking too much
- Not talking enough – incomplete or vague answers
- Wrong answers or inaccurate facts
- Bad mouthing previous employers or co-workers
- Forgetting to follow up after the interview

Follow Up After the Interview

- Take detailed notes about the interview content
- Evaluate what went well and what didn't go well
- List information you neglected to share
- Deliver any requested information and a thank you note within 24 hours, even if you E-mail a thank you note
- Use your thank you note as an opportunity to point out how your skills align with the needs of the employer
- Don't wait for the interviewer to call you

Be Organized in Your Follow Up

- Keep accurate records of your job search applications and interview activities
- Maintain contact with the interviewers and show enthusiasm for a position with their company
- Maintain a positive attitude in all of your contacts
- Keep your network contacts and references aware of the status of your job search
- Continue communication without seeming like a “stalker” if you are interested in the position

Final Advice – Don't Forget

In a majority of interviews a positive decision is based on the interviewer **LIKING YOU...** And not necessarily on the skills and experiences you have. Skills can be learned and developed. A good attitude is very important.

Conclusion

Illinois workNet and its dedicated team of volunteers hope that these workshop presentations have been helpful to you and will bring you the rewarding outcome you desire.

In addition to offering employment workshops throughout the month, our team offers follow up sessions at the Schaumburg library from 2 pm to 4 pm on the 2nd, 3rd and 4th Monday of each month.

Any Questions?

Please forward your comments and suggestions to
mfaheem@worknetncc.com

Mohammed Faheem
723 W Algonquin Road
Arlington Heights, IL 60005
(847) 437-9425