



Human.
Resources.
Consulting.

Career Guidance

How to Stand Out (and Be Outstanding) in a Job Interview

- **Determine:** Consider how you are a good fit for the company and position. Reread the job description and highlight the key needs of the position.
- **Brainstorm:** Write down a bulleted list of how you can address those needs and related success stories (with specific examples) from your prior jobs.
- **Reread this list just before you go into the interview:** Work these points into your responses to their questions. Practice delivering the story of how your job history progressed.
- **Be prepared:** You may be asked to explain any employment gaps or layoffs; focus on how you used the time to build your skills.
- **Prepare to answer:** Why you are interested in this role and this specific company?
- **Prepare questions:** Make sure to ask your interviewer questions. Avoid asking about salary or anything that could be found on the company website or with a simple internet search.
- **Be prepared to share:** Decide your salary expectation, but do not share your salary history.
- **Research:** Spend time researching the people you will be interviewed by, so you understand their background and role at the company. This can also be a good question to ask during your interview, especially if you couldn't find information online.
- **During the Interview:** Greet everyone you meet by name. Smile, give a friendly wave or firm handshake (if appropriate), and make good eye contact. Maintain good posture and speak clearly. Keep your responses focused on work. When asked open ended questions such as, "Tell me about yourself," focus on your work history and accomplishments, rather than a personal response. Tailor your answer to the job and company you are applying to.
- **Connect the dots:** In your responses, connect your work experience to the current role that you're applying for.
- **Keep your responses concise:** Don't talk for more than two minutes at a time. Ensure you answered the question asked.
- **Always be honest:** This includes answering questions about your work experience, skills, and if you don't know the answer to a question, responses such as, "I'm not sure off hand, but I would look for the information online" or "I haven't worked with that before and am excited to learn more about it" are good to keep in mind.
- **Stay professional and positive:** Don't make negative comments about previous employers or coworkers. It reflects poorly on you, and you may find out the world is smaller than you thought! This is especially important if you were laid off.
- **Follow up:** Ask each person you interview with for their business card in case you have follow up questions later. These cards will also come in handy for the thank you notes that you'll send after the interview.