

FOUR THINGS YOU MUST TAKE TO
EVERY INTERVIEW –

ONE – A PERFECTLY COMPLETED APPLICATION
(DONE BY HAND IN BLACK INK)

TWO – EXTRA COPIES OF YOUR RÉSUMÉ
(ON 24# BOND PAPER WITH WATERMARK IN IVORY OR CREAM)

THREE – YOUR PAGE OF REFERENCES
(USE YOUR LETTERHEAD!)

**FOUR – DIRECTIONS TO THE OFFICE; PARKING + \$
NEEDED; NAME/PHONE/OFFICE NUMBER OF
INTERVIEWER**

EMPLOYMENT PACKETS

PACKETS & CONTENTS

INITIAL EMPLOYMENT SKILLS –

- Sample Employment Application – White
- Seven Secrets to a Great Cover Letter – Yellow
- Cover Letter Format – Yellow
- Résumé Information – Yellow
- Example of Employer-Friendly 60-Second Résumé - Yellow

FROM RESEARCH TO ‘WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?’ SKILLS – Yellow

- URL Research Page – Lunar Blue
- Research Questions – Lunar Blue
- References – What? Who? When? - Purple
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- Actions Speak Louder Than Words 2 - Green
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- Office Politics – A Thankless Game – Fireball Fuchsia

URLs for Job Searches and Information

<http://careers.msn.com/> -- CareerBuilder Home Page ***BEST OF ALL!!***

<http://msn.careerbuilder.com/custom/msn/careeradvice/index.htm> -- Articles and Advice ***Top 5***

http://msn.careerbuilder.com/Custom/MSN/FindJobs.aspx?sc_extcmp=JS%5FMSN%5FFindJob ***Top 5***

<http://www.jobs.com/> -- good advice on a wide variety of subjects relating to employment! ***Top 5***

<http://www.jobweb.com/> - seems to be geared toward the college student/recent graduate... ***Top 5***

<http://www.monster.com/> - Monster.com is a major job search URL - do not put resume here until they have a privacy provision

<http://www.hotjobs.com/> - well, they think so...

<http://www.thingamajob.com/> -- serves a certain set of companies

<http://www.ajb.dni.us/> - 'America's Job Bank' – some services are free, others are not...

<http://www.federaljobsearch.com/default.asp?fjsrid=11246&fjsdid=13136> -- the government

<http://www.internetjobsearch2002.com/?source=overture21> - it's an ebook - heading samples:

.....Keywords.....Broadcast Sites.....Electronic Scanners.....

.....Plain Text Resumes.....Resume Security 2K2.....

.....Web Resumes.....Search Agents..... Gateway Job Sites.....Company Profiles.....Online Career Training.....

.....Boolean Operators.....Interviewing.....Networking.....

<http://www.employsearch.com/> - Industrial Resource Group

<http://www.EcoEmploy.com/> or ejobs.org - all sorts of positions for environmental jobs!

<http://www.eop.com/> - includes links to employment possibilities

<http://www.careers.org/> - seems to have something for everyone!

<http://www.thejobresource.com/> - set up by college students for students/graduates

<http://www.bestjobsusa.com/index-jsk-ie.asp> - looks like it might be interesting

TOP 5 ARE MARKED...

RESEARCHING COMPANIES – IMPORTANT QUESTIONS TO ANSWER BEFORE THE INTERVIEW

How old is the company? How long has it been in business?

Why? “Obviously, a stable business will have weathered tough economic times in the past.”

Is it a historically profitable business? Does the firm take in revenue or is it financed with venture capital funds while trying to make the “next big thing”?

Why? “With the opportunity for new development comes the risk of product failure. Weigh what’s important to you before deciding on a new start-up with high-income potential or an established firm with job stability. It’s also possible to achieve both.”

Is the accounting department stable?

Why? “A lot of turnover may suggest problems in the department and with revenue.” Remember that accountants handle the company money! Check the archived Classified Ads at your local library for ‘Accountants,’ Accounts Receivable, and/or Accounts Payable Clerks...

Do employees enjoy their work experience?

Why? “Check with people who work for the company to see what the daily environment is like. Is an effective work/life policy in place? Is the workday balanced and fair, or are most employees working 10 to 12 hour days on “hot” projects throughout the year? How can I accomplish this without seeming ‘nosy’? Ask a custodian...

Does the company serve more than one industry?

Why? “A large corporation likely has many products and divisions, meaning more potential for advancement. Still, be aware of the possibility of a company spreading its financial resources too thin. Also, “Several companies remain in business by serving one client. That’s an obvious red flag, considering what could happen if the client’s business model or leadership changed.”

**Lexington Herald-Leader, Career Builder front page, 8/18/02
KA McCleery, Coordinator of Student Employment, BCTC**

References... What? Who? When?

'Strategy for Job Seekers' Tom Coates, Maryland Careers and KA McCleery, BCTC

What is a good reference? A person who can give an 'enthusiastic, informed' portrayal of your work and work habits makes an excellent reference!

Who should be your references? One recent immediate supervisor; one well-informed second-level supervisor; one or two co-workers; one professor; one character reference such as your minister, a local official, etc. "Supervisors who have helped advance your career" are the best. No relatives!

When should you offer your references to a potential employer? "Protect them. Don't submit their names until you're asked. The fewer calls they have to take on your behalf, the more enthusiastic they'll sound."

Important Points to Remember...

- "Get permission." You need to ask if they are willing and able to give you an excellent reference.
- "Rehearse them." Be tactful, but be sure that you both have the accurate facts about the achievement stories you'll be using in your interviews.
- "Notify them again just before you submit their names." Always tell them which company will be calling so they will be ready.
- "Keep track of them." You need to know current phone numbers, addresses, and emails so that your references will be accurate. Submit your references on a separate sheet. Bring copies in your portfolio to every interview.
- "Coach the employer" without letting them know, of course. Add a line beneath each reference telling with what part of your work this reference is familiar.
- Reference letters. If offered, accept graciously; however, ask if they would be willing to accept a phone call as well. Since reference letters are usually written in general terms, they are not as effective as a conversation specifically about you and your qualifications.

Your Name (18 pt bold – Palatino Linotype – Top Margin is 0.4”)

10 pt. BI – Tab once Street address

phone number

email address

(When using the letterhead, you use the bottom of the letterhead as the top of the page for centering top and bottom.)

References (16 pt bold)

Name (12 pt bold) – Must be specific name...

Title (14pt plain)

Name of Business

Street Address

City, State (two upper case letters, no comma following) zip code

Phone:

Email:

Comment telling how this person knows you...

Name – 12 B

Title

Name of Business

Street Address

City, State (two upper case letters, no comma following) zip code

Phone:

Email:

Comment telling how this person knows you...

Name – 12B

Title

Name of Business

Street Address

City, State (two upper case letters, no comma following) zip code

Phone:

Email:

Comment telling how this person knows you...

Name - 12 pt bold

Title (14pt plain)

Name of Business

Street Address

City, State (two upper case letters, no comma following) zip code

Phone:

Email:

Comment telling how this person knows you...

THE INTERVIEW

What do you first think of once you know you have an interview coming up? What you will wear? Should you buy new shoes? Get your hair done at that 'hot' new salon everyone is raving about? Eye-catching tie? Humorous? Perhaps...

Here's the bottom line:

If your hair, teeth, nails, body, and clothing are not clean and neat, the new suit, shoes, hair style, and tie will mean nothing.

Before the interview --

Day before - drive by - know what the parking situation is/how much money you'll need. Get to the interview 15 - 20 minutes early so you're calm and collected. Go to the restroom 8 - 10 minutes before the interview begins... check your teeth (no food showing, please), your stockings (ladies) or tie (gentlemen) for runs/stains, breath (always carry breath mints/spray... coffee breath is the worst!), get rid of the gum, get rid of the slang. TURN OFF YOUR CELL PHONE!!! Be sure you are mentally/physically ready.

If your smile is not genuine and your handshake is not firm, you will *not* make a positive first impression.

There! You've just made it through the first minute of your interview!

VIPoints During the Interview...

Prepare yourself but do not memorize -- you do not want to sound like a parrot! Think of questions you are likely to be asked. Here are four of the most popular. Always use work-related stories.

- 1. Tell us about your strengths and weaknesses... show objectivity!**
- 2. Tell us about a problem you encountered at work and how you resolved it... show your professionalism... no whining allowed.**
- 3. Tell us where you see yourself in 3 - 5 years.**
- 4. (Usually the very last question of the interview) Tell us in one minute or less why we should give you this job.**

Have questions for the interviewer (not about salary or benefits! Let the interviewer bring up money matters!!) Use the research you did on the company to ask intelligent questions and to show your interest in the company and its success --

Mental preparation -- Go over the questions listed above/think about how your experience fits the job requirements/think about the positive character traits you will bring to the job/visualize your body language while in the interview - poised/sitting up straight - do NOT SLOUCH!/head up/shoulders back/make eye contact with the interviewer!/hands either folded in your lap or gesturing to make a point/women - legs together, crossed at the

ankle/men - feet flat on the floor or legs crossed with ankle resting on other knee. Have a friend check your facial expression as you answer the questions listed above. You need to look pleasant, but serious.

Closing the interview -- Thank the interviewer. Express your appreciation for his/her time and your enthusiasm for the job - but only if it's true!! Assure him/her that you will be available if they have any further questions. Ask if it would be possible for you to call/email and ask any other questions that may come to you.

Follow-up! (YES! You need to send a 'thank you' note!) --

Taken from Interviewing to Take Home the Gold by Chandra Fox

FOR BOTH MEN AND WOMEN - NO VISIBLE PIERCINGS OR SKIN ART!!

CASUAL PROFESSIONAL DRESS FOR THE INTERVIEW

Women:

Dress with jacket or pants suit or separates with coordinating jacket - no mini-skirts/leave the fluff and ruffles at home/ conservative/close-toed shoes/no 4" heels/conservative jewelry. Yes, you have to wear stockings even in the summer! The potential employer wants to know that you know how to dress professionally, especially if you will be working with clients.

Men:

The Kentucky Casual Professional Dress Code is easy! From the floor up - dark leather loafers or wing-tips/dark dress socks/pressed khaki slacks/brown or black belt/white or blue oxford cloth shirt/tie - clean & conservative/navy blue or charcoal gray blazer.

Both Women and Men: When interviewing with banks/law offices, etc., dress code should be 'power suits' in dark colors/minimal jewelry

If you have any questions before the interview, please call or email me. I will be happy to help you in any possible way.

Final Thought... Insecurity can manifest itself in either aggressive or passive behavior... neither is healthy in an interview. Tell them what they ask for and not your life history. Do not ever, ever speak negatively about a former employer or your co-workers. Have confidence in yourself and others will also!!

***Body Language...
Unspoken but Extremely Important!!***

Actions Speak Louder Than Words....

Dos and Don'ts of Interview Body Language CareerBuilder Website

In an interview, it's not always just what you say that is important, but also how you say it and how you look when you are saying it. Despite answering all questions thrown at you with precision and confidence, if your body language is weak, your overall image may be perceived in this way, too. In order to make sure your physical actions and gestures are conveying the right message, here are a few dos and don'ts to keep in mind. While they alone won't win you the big job, they can certainly help or hurt your chances in a pinch.

DO enter the room confidently. When you meet your interviewer for the first time, hold your head up, put on a smile, and be sure you look like you are enthusiastic about the opportunity. Interviews are not fun, but if you go into it anticipating torture, your body language will reflect this attitude.

DON'T shake hands like a dead fish. In any professional environment, a handshake can say a lot about a person. Make sure your handshake is firm, not timid and limp. In the same respect, don't overdo it. You certainly don't want to be remembered as someone who broke the interviewer's fingers!

DO try to mirror your interviewer. Mirroring the body position of the person you are talking to is a natural tendency, and this strategy often results in a more relaxed atmosphere. Pay attention to your interviewer and try to mirror his or her attitude and actions in a subtle way. If your interviewer is extremely upbeat and enthusiastic, try to pick up on that emotion. In the same respect, if he or she is more subdued, it is best to follow the same rule. This doesn't mean, however, doing everything your interviewer does. You want the environment to be comfortable - not creepy.

DON'T swing your legs, tap your feet, twirl your hair, wring your hands, or bite your fingernails. All of these actions demonstrate lack of confidence and fear and can be extremely distracting. You want to make sure your interviewer concentrates on your great answers, not your fidgety behavior.

DO pay attention to your posture. It sounds elementary, but sitting up straight and having good posture will tell your interviewer that you are confident and have a strong personality, while slouching will paint you as lazy and weak. As uncomfortable as you might be in that business suit, sit up straight and keep your head up.

DON'T cross your arms in front of your body. Sitting with your arms crossed in front of you indicates defensiveness, resistance, aggressiveness or a closed mind. Use your hands to be expressive when you are talking. When the interviewer is speaking, keep your hands folded in your lap, rested on the arms of your chair, or in another position that is lower than your elbows.

DO make and keep eye contact. Failing to make eye contact with your interviewer will keep you from truly connecting with him or her, and might make you seem shy or even evasive. Yes, making eye contact can be uncomfortable, but it is an important tactic. Similarly, try to utilize other body expressions that demonstrate interest, such as nodding, tilting your head, or raising your eyebrows when the other person is making a point.

DON'T change positions often. It's hard to say whether having your legs crossed or feet flat on the floor is better. The key thing to remember is to find a position for your legs that is comfortable and try to stick with it. Constant shifting is distracting and can make a candidate seem untrustworthy. If you do opt to cross your legs, make sure they are crossed all the way. Resting your ankle on your knee will come across as too casual and even overconfident.

DO pay attention to your tone of voice. Just like your physical motions, your tone of voice says a lot about you. Be sure to answer questions in a strong, consistent tone. Avoid wavering or talking too softly, mumbling or speaking too quickly. A good thing to remember before answering a question is to take a deep breath, think for a second, and then begin to answer. This will help you calm your nerves and will give you the opportunity to "look before you leap" when it comes to your important answers.

Follow Up Your Interview With a Thank You Note

Now that you've interviewed for the job, you know exactly what the company is looking for and how your skills and experience match. A thank you note should carefully highlight how they fit together. Career counselors advise that a thank you note is also a great way to add anything that may have been forgotten in the interview and re-emphasize how your skills and experience relate to the job.

A thank you note demonstrates your ability to follow through. Michelle Scott, a human resources representative at a major bank in Chicago says, "From the mailroom to the boardroom, the ability to follow through is crucial. Regardless of the position, I'm always looking for candidates who actually do what they say they will do. Anyone who takes five minutes to write me a quick note is usually someone I can count on to see things through to the end."

Another key attribute of a good candidate is enthusiasm. I believe that a candidate who takes the time to write a thank you note to reiterate his or her interest in a position is enthusiastic," adds Scott. Many hiring managers also say that they usually look for candidates with good communication skills to fill their open positions. What better way to showcase this talent than with a written note recapping your skills?

So how do you write a thank you letter to a prospective employer? An effective thank you letter is a brief, well-written reminder that you are the best candidate for the position. Use the note to market yourself and remind the interviewer of your qualifications. Be sure to thank the interviewer for their time and reiterate your interest in the job. If the hiring manager expressed any concerns related to the job, write the specific ways you can address them if you had the job. The more you can demonstrate how your qualifications match the open position, the more personally it will affect the interviewer.

It is also helpful to mention something specific that was discussed during the interview. For example, one candidate interviewed for a job at a company that was heading off to a major industry trade show the next day. He used the last paragraph of his letter to reiterate his hope that the company was successful in gathering good leads and making new customer contacts at the event. This showed that he was attentive to the company's activities and was familiar with the sales prospecting process at trade shows. Your ability to tailor the note to your specific interview and the relationship you established with the interviewer is what really counts.

Thank you letters should be concise, well-written and free from typos. Experts agree that a thank you note can be a personal hand written note or a formal business letter depending on the company's culture. How should it be delivered? If you think the company is going to extend an offer before a traditional letter will have time to arrive in the mail, send your thanks via fax or email and follow up with a hard copy in the mail. Regardless of how it is delivered, send a meaningful thank you note that will remind the interviewer of your qualifications and leave a lasting impression.

Career Builder Website - msn.careerbuilder.com/

Office Politics - The Game Nobody Wants to Play