

JOB INTERVIEWING TIPS

STRATEGIES

Stay focused on why you should be chosen for the job. Know why you are a good candidate for the job. Identify skills (be prepared to offer examples of where you developed your specific skills and personality strengths).

Build a personal inventory. Make three lists. On one, put adjectives that describe you, and for each adjective identify experiences where you used them to your advantage. On another, put past experiences and pinpoint the skills, knowledge, and personal qualities you showed or acquired in them. On the third, put knowledge and skills you possess and identify situations which illustrate you have the expertise you claim.

Note key words in the job announcement that correspond to the skills on your inventory. Pick three or four important points and develop how you will present them if asked to tell about yourself.

Be prepared to tell an anecdote about yourself. (Some interviewers believe this will help predict future behavior.) Have one handy that demonstrates any strengths you want to project, but make it short (1 – 2 minutes). Remember STAR: Relate the **Situation** you were in, the **Task** facing you, the **Action** you took, and the positive **Results**.

TYPES OF QUESTIONS

Open-ended – These are designed to get you talking. Be careful about letting out any information you don't want known, because if you do mention it, the interviewer may ask more about it. Example: How would you compare yourself now, as a junior, to what you were like as a freshman?

Descriptive – These are intended to search for behavioral indicators of particular traits that may be important to the interviewer. Example: I see you were a member of the French Club; how did you contribute to the group?

Scenarios – The interviewer describes a situation to you and asks what you would do. There's not much you can do to prepare for this one, but just recognizing what is occurring will make you feel more relaxed in your answer. The interviewer may want to see how you analyze the situation, what you pick out as the important variables, and how you approach a solution.

Exploration of knowledge or Expertise – Think about how you want to present what you know on your resume. Also, should you be asked something you don't know during the interview, try to anticipate where to find such information.

Symbolic or Nonsense – Try going with the flow when asked a purely nonsensical question. The interviewer must think it elicits important symbolic information, so go along with the humor and playfulness in it. Example: If you were a brick in the wall, which would you be and why?

POSITIVE IMPRESSIONS

Pay attention to your personal grooming, attire, eye contact and non-verbal behavior. While what you say and how you say it should contribute to an overall positive impression, don't go overboard. Avoid insincere flattery, bravado, cockiness, or attempts to ingratiate.