

THE ULTIMATE INTERVIEW GUIDE



WorkReign

21+ TIPS TO ACING YOUR INTERVIEW!

- 1. JOB INTERVIEWS ARE LESS ABOUT SKILL AND MORE ABOUT PERSONALITY**, behavioral competencies, and how well the organization believes you will relate to the team.
- 2. BE NICE** and thank everyone you encounter in the building from the security guard to the maintenance person to the receptionist. You want to join the family, family members talk to each other and management will hear about you through the grapevine. Be rude to the receptionist if you want but know that the office will hear about it!
- 3. SCOPE OUT THE INTERVIEW LOCATION** 48 hours before the interview date. Take the same train or drive at the same time of day that you would for your interview. Preview the building, security, etc... Find the closest post office box for the mostly pre-written thank you card that you will drop in the mail immediately after your interview.
- 4. CONDUCT AT LEAST BASIC RESEARCH ABOUT THE JOB**, job function and the person who will be interviewing you.
- 5. PRACTICE** your responses to common interview questions:
 - Tell me about yourself
 - Why do you want to work here?
 - Why are you leaving your job?
 - Why are there gaps in your employment?
 - Why should we hire you?
 - Where do you see yourself in 5 years?
 - How do you deal with pressure and stress?
 - Do you have any questions for us?
- 6. ALWAYS** arrive 10 minutes early.
- 7. ALWAYS BRING 2 HARDCOPIES OF YOUR RESUME** to the interview.
- 8. OFFER A FIRM HANDSHAKE** to everyone who extends their hand.
- 9. WRITE THANK YOU CARDS IN ADVANCE.** Emails are fine, but old-fashioned handwritten thank you cards demonstrate thought and that you took extra time to express your gratitude. A handwritten thank you card can also help redeem yourself if you made an interview faux-pas (whether you realize it or not).
- 10. DEVELOP A HABIT** of mailing your thank you cards immediately after your interview so that you don't forget and the recipient receives it as quickly as possible. Remember, after you leave there will be other applicants. Consider your thank you as a continuation of your interview and a reminder that the interviewer should be impressed by you. Get your thank you card in their hands before they make a decision not in your favor. Your card could tip the scales in your favor!
- 11. SPEAK CONFIDENTLY** but not loudly during the interview.
- 12. CALM DOWN.** Breathe. Tell yourself to relax and speak deliberately but not too slowly when responding to questions.
- 13. SMILE.** This sounds so simple, but when we are tense, anxious, or intimidated, we can forget to smile and be pleasant. Smiling opportunities: "Hello, I'm here to interview with..." "Thank you." "It's a pleasure to meet you." "My name is..." "I am interested in this job because..."



14. TURN THE INTERVIEWER'S QUESTION AROUND INTO A STATEMENT. Interviewer: "Can you tell me about yourself?"
You: "I would be glad to tell you about myself..." Mirroring the interviewer, when natural, demonstrates that you are listening and agreeable.

15. DRESS CONSERVATIVELY – NO MATTER THE INDUSTRY. If you are interviewing in the legal, medical or otherwise historically "professional services" industries, this is a no brainer. But a few reminders: Conservative colors. Good fabrics. Good shoes.

16. DITCH THE PERFUME AND THE COLOGNE. People have allergies. The last thing you want is to aggravate someone's constitution or leave the room 10 minutes before your fragrance does.

17. AVOID saying "I don't know" when you do not have the answer. Give yourself extra thinking time with "That's a good question and I have thought about that..." hopefully you can follow up with a reasonable statement. Alternatives to I don't know: "That's a good question and I've thought about that so I'm glad to have the opportunity to let you know that one reason I am particularly interested in this position is because it will give me the chance to contribute my existing skills and also provide opportunities for me to learn and gain experience in areas where I've had less exposure." Keep it general and say something reasonable – but never respond with "I don't know."

18. LISTEN to the interviewer and respond to their mood. You are not a robot, so be human, be yourself, but be smart. If the interviewer is all about your skills and experience and nothing more, match their mood. If the tone is open and personal, take an appropriate opportunity to build off of something the interviewer says.

Listen and observe and build from the tone set by the interviewer. Remember to follow, not lead.

19. PRACTICE 7 to 11 sentence answers to ensure that your responses are full but not too long.

20. IF YOU ARE OFFERED COFFEE OR WATER, ACCEPT IT, even if you do not drink it... A "Yes, thank you" reflects your positive, cooperative tone and can be the starting point of developing a relationship. Otherwise, your "No, thank you," can be interpreted, albeit subconsciously, as a rejection. A positive exchange will help you relax and center yourself.

21. LEAVE ALL OF YOU DEVICES OFF. If your device sounds during your interview, it's over. Period. Tacky!

22. PRACTICE POSITIVE BODY LANGUAGE. Never cross your arms or legs. Stand when another person comes into the room if others do. Keep your hands in your lap during most of the interview but be sure to gesticulate occasionally when appropriate to demonstrate confidence.

23. PRACTICE starting interview responses with an affirmative statement which will leave the interviewer with a consistent feeling that you are agreeable and on their side. For example: Interviewer: "Tell me about yourself." You: "I would be glad to." Interviewer: "Do you have experience doing..." You: "Yes, I have experience..." Interviewer: "Why do you want to work for XXX?" You: "XXX is a great organization and I am interested in working here because (give 3 reasons)..." **BE POSITIVE!**

24. ALWAYS HAVE 2 QUESTIONS PREPARED and wait until invited to ask before you ask them. Here are some failsafe questions to have in your pocket:



- a. May I ask how soon you / your office will make a decision and will all candidates be notified?
- b. May I ask if this vacancy is a new position or if someone left?
- c. (If someone left) May I ask if there was anything in particular that staff member did or did not do so that if I am fortunate enough to be offered the position, I can avoid repeating that action?
- d. Is there anything more that you would like to know about me that will help you decide that I am the best candidate for this position (and smile-this is slightly tongue and cheek, but it is a serious question that shows that you are both aggressive enough, generous and open enough to offer more information, and that you are truly interested in the position)?
- e. How soon are you looking for the new hire to start?
- f. What would you say are the best parts about working for this organization?

Need help with your next interview? Schedule a personalized interview prep session at [WorkReign.com](https://www.workreign.com).

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