

Before your Interview

- Research the company website including pages on news or press releases, "about the company", culture or values, and management profiles.
- Take at least 3 items of interest you discover in your research to your interview and be prepared to discuss them.
- Review the position description (duties and requirements) and be able to relay at least 5 reasons you are the BEST fit for this position and the Company.
- Consider how your top 5 strengths would be used in this position and be prepared to discuss how you've used those strengths in your career.
- Incorporate this information during the interview and the interviewer will recognize how prepared and serious you are about this opportunity.

Interview AttireFor everyone:

- Business professional attire is appropriate.
- Plan your attire the day before your interview
- Fragrances are not recommended.
- Jewelry should be simple and conservative.
- Clean hands, trimmed nails, and a professional hair style are a must.
- Do not remove your suit jacket unless the interviewer offers.

For women:

- Tailored suits (navy, gray, or black) should be worn with either a knee-length skirt or may be worn with tailored pants.
- Blouses should be pressed, basic, and should have a collar if possible. Modesty is recommended.
- Shoes should be closed-toe, with a conservative heel.
- Makeup and nail polish should be conservative.

For men:

- Non-novelty ties should be worn with suits (navy, black, or gray).
- Shirts should be pressed and basic (point collar, white/blue/simple stripe).
- Shoes should be shined, conservative (brown or black), and of an oxford or wingtip style.

Take:

- A folder or portfolio with copies of your résumé and references and a good pen.
- The position description
- 3-5 questions you will ask the interviewer (see provided samples).
- My phone number for questions.

Leave:

- Cell phones, tobacco products, and chewing gum in your car
- Other distractions

Behavioral Tips

- Greet your interviewer with a firm handshake and an enthusiastic, sincere smile.
- Greet the interviewer by last name (if you are unsure of the pronunciation, please give me a call beforehand).
- Wait until you are offered a chair before taking a seat.
- Sit upright, look alert and interested at all times. This includes making eye contact and nodding to let the interviewer know you are listening to them.
- Be assertive and proud of your accomplishments but don't be over-confident; however, conduct yourself as if you are determined to get the job you are discussing.
- Show enthusiasm. If you are interested in the opportunity, enthusiastic feedback can enhance your chances of further consideration. If you are not interested, your responsiveness demonstrates your professionalism.
- Be confident throughout the interview, even if you sense the interview is not going well. Some interviewers may try to discourage you to test your reaction.

Avoid

- Answering questions with a “yes” or “no” response. Explain your answer clearly but don’t over-answer a question to the point of appearing chatty or unfocused.
- Exaggerating your answers. Answers should be truthful, direct, and succinct.
- Sharing personal stories or information about yourself (or others) unrelated to the position or your qualifications for the job. *Interviewers may ask open-ended questions such as “Tell me about yourself” which may otherwise encourage you to share information irrelevant to your qualifications.*
- Making derogatory remarks about previous employers, supervisors, or co-workers. When explaining your reasons for leaving, limit comments to those necessary to adequately communicate your rationale.
- Asking questions about compensation, time off, and other benefits. These are important issues and ITAC is available to answer those questions for you. Use your interview to gain the interviewer’s confidence that you are the BEST candidate for the position rather than misleading them into thinking you are only concerned about “What’s in it for you”. *If the interviewer asks about your salary requirements, indicate your earnings but emphasize your interest in opportunity with their company.*

Sample Questions You May be Asked

Rehearse your answers to these questions before your interview.

- Tell me about yourself, your background, and accomplishments.
- What are your strengths? Weaknesses?
- Describe your ideal job.
- Why are you the BEST candidate for this position?
- How do you define success? Failure?
- Tell me about a work assignment you did not complete successfully.
- What motivates you most in a job?
- List your top 3 achievements.
- What do you know about our company?
- Why did you want to interview with our company?
- Tell me about your career goals.
- Tell me about a work situation you handled poorly. What did you learn?
- What do you do to stay professionally current?
- What other opportunities are you considering in addition to ours?

Sample Questions to Ask the Interviewer

A lack of questions could be mistaken as disinterest on your part by the interviewer.

- What are the greatest challenges in this position?
- What might I expect during the first 6 months on the job?
- What would I be expected to accomplish in this position?
- What made the last person in this position successful?
- What characteristics or traits do successful people in this company share?
- What are the company’s plans for growth?
- What is the biggest challenge facing this department/company right now?
- How often is formal feedback (performance reviews) given? Informal?
- In what ways is a career with your company better than one with your competitor?
- Do you have any concerns about my qualifications that I can address for you?

CLOSING AND FOLLOWING THE INTERVIEW

- If you are interested in the position, **let the interviewer know**. You can say something like “I’m very impressed with your company, its products, and the people I’ve met. I know I would do an excellent job in the position we discussed”. You can also ask about “next steps” in their decision-making process.
- Don’t be discouraged if no immediate commitment is made. Often the interviewer will need to communicate with others in the company or may need to interview more candidates.
- Thank the interviewer for their time and consideration.
- Quickly follow-up with a brief, handwritten note thanking the interviewer for the opportunity to meet with them and reiterate your interest in the position along with 2-3 quick points about how your qualifications relate to the position.
- Please call me and let’s discuss your meeting.