

Successful Interviewing Techniques



Lynda Jones
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Successful Interviewing Techniques

Presented by
Facilitator: Lynda Jones
Career Coach

- ### Workshop Objectives
- Learn how to prepare for an interview
 - Learn how to answer difficult questions
 - Learn interview "do's and don'ts"

- ### Interview Preparation
- Know Thyself--Sell your product (YOU)
 - Strengths/Skills
 - Values
 - Interests
 - Goals
 - Know the Employer/Industry and the Position-to determine match
 - Rehearse answers to questions

STRENGTHS-Qualifications

- Can you do the work?
- Transferable/functional skills-not specific to one job (gained from work and life experiences)
- Knowledge skills-from education and training
- Attributes- (e.g., dependability)
- Be prepared to give examples

INTERESTS-Motivation

- Will you do the work?
- Why do you want to work for this employer in this position at this stage of your career and life?
- Interest in working with information, people, or things

VALUES-Motivation/Fit

- Will you do the work and fit in with the employer's mission/culture?
- Do you agree with the company's philosophies?
- Critical elements of your work in order for you to be fulfilled

YOUR 2-Minute COMMERCIAL

- Integration of your skills, values, interests and goals into a 2-minute commercial
- What you want the employer to remember about you
- Avoid personal info such as age, birthplace

ME

- I am (either name, title, or functional area of expertise). I have experience in _____ and my strengths include (name specific skills and accomplishments) . . .
- My training and experience are directly related to (company's name) and (operation/product/mission), and I am confident that I would be able to make an effective contribution to your team.

KNOW EMPLOYER/INDUSTRY

- History and stability
- Source of revenue/funding
- Mission & Product
- Working conditions/atmosphere
- Competition
- Headquarters or field office
- Name of CEO/President & other execs.

KNOW POSITION

- **PAY** for similar positions; references: Occupational Outlook Handbook; salary surveys from professional associations; informational interviews; employment agencies
- Get job description ahead of time

Prepare Your Responses

- Practice answering questions to commonly asked questions:
 - In writing
 - Out loud with a friend, in front of mirror, on video or audio
- Bring extra resumes; reference list; work samples

Breaking the Ice

- Dress appropriately and professionally
- Be on time! 10-15 minutes early
- Greet with firm handshake
- Maintain eye contact
- Demonstrate confidence
- Let employer take the lead
- Kindly refuse offers for drinks or food

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Interviewer's Questions

- **General Guidelines**
 - Lead with your strengths
 - Relate answers to employers needs/position
 - Demonstrate what you can do for them, not what you want from them
 - Back up statements with examples

General Guidelines (Cont.)

- Be positive about self and former employers
- Demonstrate your knowledge of company & position
- Take your time
- Be enthusiastic about position and employer
- Be aware of your body language
- Ask for clarification of question, if necessary

Questioning Frameworks

- **Behavioral**
 - Recent behavior indicates future behavior
 - "What did you do when . . .?" "Give me an example of how you . . ."
- **Situational**
 - Presented with situation and asked how you would respond.
 - "What would you do if . . .?"

Common Questions

- Tell me about yourself-30 second commercial.
- Why should we hire you? I am a hard worker.
- Why are you looking for a new position?

Answering Difficult Questions

- Weaknesses
 - Rephrase as an area in which you are improving and describe steps you are taking for improvement
 - Describe weaknesses unrelated to job
 - Avoid canned responses ("I am a perfectionist")
 - Attitude about what you learn from the weaknesses is more important than the weakness itself.

Questions for Interviewer

- About company
- About the job
- Make sure you leave with an accurate view of the company
- About the next steps
- Don't ask about salary and benefits in initial interview

Closing

- Follow interviewer's lead
- Close on upbeat statement of your interest in the position (if true)
- Reiterate your strengths and why they should hire you
- Get cards of everyone you meet for sending thank you letters

Debriefing and Thank You

- Spend 10-15 minutes reviewing the interview
- Write down notes about positives and negatives
- Send thank you letter within 48 hours
- Include any additional information you feel is important

Practice!!!

- "Tell me about yourself."
- "What are your strengths?"
- "Tell me about your weaknesses."
- "Why should I hire you?"
