Interview Preparation

Tips for preparing for a successful interview. Interviews can be tough, even for seasoned professionals, but they are your best opportunity to learn about the position, your potential supervisor, and the company - and to show how your experience and talent can contribute to its growth. No tricks or gimmicks here, just solid guidance to help you prepare and win the job.

Do your homework

Three areas to research before you walk in the door.

1 On the company

Find out as much as you can about the company: its history, its current situation, and where it is headed. Good sources include your Murray Resources recruiter, the company's website and social media, press coverage, trade publications, and annual reports, as well as friends and business contacts (keep the position confidential). Be ready to ask informed questions about the company and its direction.

2 On the position

Have a thorough understanding of the role, its duties, and what is expected. Be prepared to ask good questions: Who has been successful in it, and why? Who has struggled, and why? Who does it report to, and who does it supervise? What needs to be done in the first six months and the first year? Your Murray Resources recruiter can provide insight in these areas before the interview. For sample questions, see our "Responding to 'Do You Have Any Questions?'" resource.

3 On yourself

Review your career history thoroughly: dates, positions, duties, and accomplishments. Know your strengths and weaknesses, and be ready to cite specific examples of achievements and how your experience can help the company solve its problems. Concentrate on your most recent positions, but do not neglect your early career.

Your #1 priority: get the job offer

You may decide not to accept the offer, but you always want to be the one making that decision. It is far better to receive an offer and turn it down than to miss the opportunity. You get the offer by showing the interviewer what makes you right for the role, asking good questions, and demonstrating enthusiasm for the position.

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INTERVIEWING TO SECURE YOUR SUCCESS

11 TIPS

1. Arrive five to ten minutes early.
2. Be gracious to the receptionist and everyone you meet. It is the right thing to do, and you never know whose opinion will be asked for in the hiring process.
3. Greet the interviewer by name with a smile and a firm handshake.
4. Bring at least two clean copies of your resume.
5. Do not answer questions with a simple "yes" or "no". Sell yourself with specific examples.
6. Stress your achievements and accomplishments. When you can, frame your response as the problem you encountered, the action you took, and the results you achieved.
7. Answer every question to the point. Do not ramble.
8. Never make derogatory remarks about previous or current employers.
9. Do not bring up salary, commission, bonuses, or vacation in the initial interview.
10. Tell the employer what you are going to do for them, not what they can do for you.
11. Always represent yourself honestly.

After the interview

Send a brief thank-you email within 24 hours, restating your interest and one reason you are a strong fit. Then call your recruiter to debrief while the conversation is still fresh.

Work with your recruiter

One of the benefits of working with a recruiter is walking into the interview with detailed information about the position, the interviewers, and the company. Ask your Murray Resources recruiter about the interview styles of the people you will meet, and about the areas of your background that may interest them most.

QUESTIONS? ASK YOUR RECRUITER

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