


**Work**  **Source**  
CALIFORNIA  
*Building Business and Careers*  
**Northeast San Fernando Valley**  
11623 Glenoaks Boulevard  
Pacoima, CA 91331  
(818) 890-9400

# INTERVIEWING TECHNIQUES

## **Be Prepared**

Research the company

Research the job

Do a self-evaluation

## **What To Expect From The Interview**

Introduction phase

Interviewer presents information about the company

Closing phase

## **Opening The Interview**

Warm greeting

Smile

Firm handshake

Maintain good eye contact

Use names

## **Body Language**

Exhibit good posture

Maintain eye contact

Remain calm

No hand gestures; keep your hands on your lap

## **Presentation Style**

Show enthusiasm

Be a good listener

Be self-confident

Speak clearly

Be yourself

## **Communication Skills**

Expressive	Alive, animated speech
Articulate	Words clearly pronounced
Concise	Not too wordy, rambling
Focused	To the point
Direct	Straightforward, not evasive

## **Create A Good First Impression**

Interviewers are good at sizing people up. They see lots of job applicants and they form **first impressions** by what they see and sense about you. Three basic factors in creating a good first impression are:

### **APPEARANCE**

#### **For Men**

- ❖ A Clean, ironed shirt and conservative tie are a must
- ❖ A business suit or simple jacket
- ❖ Be well groomed (hair, mustache, beard and nails)
- ❖ Be moderate with cologne
- ❖ Shoes should be polished
- ❖ Consider removing visible body piercings

#### **For Women**

- ❖ Wear a skirt (recommended: knee level), and blouse (recommended: no low cut collars or mid drifts), a suit or a dress and pantyhose (plain)
- ❖ Wear simple, polished pumps
- ❖ Be moderate with make-up and perfume
- ❖ Wear simple jewelry
- ❖ Hair and fingernails should be well groomed

### **ATTITUDE**

- ❖ Be enthusiastic and motivated
- ❖ Look bright, alert and alive
- ❖ Look the interviewer straight in the eye
- ❖ Speak clearly; do not use slang; say “yes” not “yeah” or “uhu”
- ❖ Be honest
- ❖ SMILE
- ❖ Don't be afraid to ask questions

## GOOD MANNERS

- ❖ Arrive on time for the interview, at least 15 minutes in advance
- ❖ Be prepared: bring a *Portfolio* with your resume and extra copies, letters of recommendation, reference page, samples of your work, certificates, awards, licenses, a notebook and a black and/or blue pen to take any necessary notes, important employment information and your Social Security card
- ❖ Turn off mobile phones, pagers, etc.
- ❖ Be pleasant and courteous
- ❖ Smile; offer a friendly greeting; extend a firm handshake
- ❖ Address the interviewer as Mr. or Ms. unless they ask to call them by their first name
- ❖ **Wait** to be asked to be seated
- ❖ If the telephone rings, don't listen in; read your resume or go over your questions
- ❖ Never chew gum or eat mints during the interview
- ❖ Avoid nervous habits like touching your face, pulling your hair, twisting your rings, tapping your feet

## INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

The most commonly asked questions:

1. **“Tell me about yourself”**
  - a. Give an overview of four areas: early years, education, work history and recent career experience
  - b. Emphasize your experience
  - c. The interviewer has given you the opportunity to sell yourself, to demonstrate your poise and confidence and to establish your uniqueness
2. **“What do you know about our organization?”**
  - a. Show that you have taken time to research the company
  - b. Be prepared to discuss the organization’s products and services, revenues, reputation, goals, problems, people and other relevant subjects
3. **“Why do you want to work for us?”**
  - a. Speak in terms of the company’s needs and characteristics
4. **“What are your greatest strengths and/or weaknesses?”**
  - a. Be prepared with a number of strengths which you can discuss and illustrate
    - 1) Examples: “I am very good at gathering material from a variety of sources and putting it together in a well integrated training manual and program.” **OR** “I am very good at coaching people and a strong motivator”
  - b. Be prepared to identify one or two weaknesses, but try to make them sound like strengths
    - 1) Examples: “Some people see me as a workaholic who won’t stop until the job is done.” The hidden message is that you are persistent and hard working
5. **“What can you do for us that someone else can’t?” or, “Why should we hire you?”**
  - a. Focus on your special combination of skills, training, experience, values, etc. and how they would enable you to make a valuable contribution to the firm
6. **“What are your ideas on salary?” or “What do you feel this position should pay?”**
  - a. Salary is a delicate topic. It is always better if you can get the company to commit first on the issue. If this question arises early in the interview process, ask to come back to that subject when you know more about the position. As a general rule, you want to avoid having your salary in the new position based on your old salary. Example: “In my experience, similar positions pay a range of \_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_ . How does that compare with the figures that you have estimated for this position?” **OR** ask what the company standard for your qualifications is

## **Questions to ask the Employer**

- 1. If hired, would I be filling a new position or replacing someone?**
- 2. Would you describe a typical work day and the things I would be doing?**
- 3. Which duties are most important for this job?**
- 4. How would I be trained or introduced to the job?**
- 5. What are the department's goals for the year?**
- 6. If hired, how would I get feedback on my job performance?**
- 7. Could you give me a brief tour of the company?**

## **Closing the Interview**

Expression of Interest  
("I would like to work for the company")

Value Statement  
("I can be an asset to the department")

Ask For Feedback  
("May I call you back to find out your decision?")  
("When may I expect to hear back from you?")

"Thank You"

Firm handshake

Smile

Eye contact

## **Tips**

- ❖ Most interviewers expect you to ask well thought out questions. You want to impress them with the fact that you are prepared
- ❖ Questions about salary, vacations, holidays, or sick days: wait for the interviewer to bring them up
- ❖ When the interview is coming to a close, most interviewers will ask if you have any final questions; they will stand up, offer a handshake, and thank you for coming. Regardless of the outcome, be a good sport. Smile; thank the manager for taking the time to meet with you; give a sincere handshake

## **Remember**

- ❖ You are pleased to be there!
- ❖ Somebody already wanted to talk to you – or you wouldn't be there
- ❖ Be a problem solver
- ❖ Don't talk more than you have to
- ❖ Act like a winner
- ❖ Make sure to make all necessary childcare arrangements in advance