Interviews

Phone Interview

A phone interview may seem less important than an in-person interview, but you should prepare for it just like you would an in-person interview. If you don't impress the interviewer over the phone, you'll never get a chance to do so in person.

Prepare with these tips for a successful phone interview:

- Treat a phone interview like a regular in-person interview. Think about why you're interested in the position and what strengths you can bring to it. Get ready to talk about your experiences and skills.
- If the time is inconvenient or you're in a loud and distracting place, ask if you can talk another time and suggest a few times when you'll be available. Remember, it's important to make a good impression over the phone. You don't want to be distracted or interrupted.
- If you get a message from an interviewer asking you when you'll be available, make sure to call the interviewer back that day to let him/her know when you can be reached.
 A prompt response lets the interviewer know that you're very interested in the position.
- Practice interviewing. Practice talking to your mentors, families and friends about why you're a great candidate for the position.

In-Person Interview

Congratulations! If you have been invited to an interview, you have probably completed an application and have submitted a great resume. Now it is time to advance to the next step, the in-person interview. To help you prepare, review the tips below and keep them in mind before, during and after your interview.

Do Your Research – Learning about the Employer

It is important to know something about the organization you hope to be working for. A quick internet search can provide valuable information about the organization's mission or services. Ask yourself how your skills would benefit their work.

First Impressions Matter – Dressing for the Interview'

When considering what to wear to your interview, you must dress professionally and in a business-like manner. This may not mean wearing a suit but here are some suggestions for you to think about when planning your outfit:

- Do keep things simple
- Do wear clean clothes
- Do wear outfits that fit but aren't too tight or too loose
- Do appear well-groomed
- Don't wear jeans
- Don't have exposed midriffs or low cut tops
- Don't wear ripped or distressed clothing with holes
- Don't wear your hair in a "wild" style
- Don't wear multiple layers of clothing or anything that might be considered as extreme
- Don't wear lots of accessories, perfume/cologne or make-up
- Don't carry cell phones or electronic devices such as iPods, MP3 players, etc. with you to the interview. If you must carry your cell phone, be sure to have it put away and powered off throughout the entire interview.

Arrive Early – Plan your Travel Time

One of the worst impressions you can make on a potential employer is to be late to your interview. Research how far you'll have to travel to get there and how long it should take, then add fifteen to twenty minutes of travel time to that in case of heavy traffic or difficulties with public transportation. It is always best to arrive early for your interview.

www.afterschoolmatters.org/teens/post-secondary/interview-tips

Be Prepared – Succeed in the Interview

Use formal titles such as Mr., Ms., Doctor, etc.

Show enthusiasm. You don't need to be happy all the time, but a positive attitude and excitement about a job will go a long way.

Remember names. It is always polite to repeat someone's name as you are introduced. If you don't catch someone's name, ask them to repeat it.

Do not chew gum.

Sit up straight. Your body language says a lot.

Shake hands firmly. Your handshake says a lot about you. Don't squeeze too hard, but don't have a limp hand either. If your palms are sweaty, dry them on a tissue.

Speak clearly. Make eye contact as you talk.

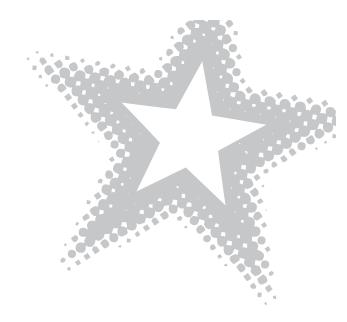
Smile! Relax and try to have fun.

Ask questions. Asking questions demonstrates that you want to know more about your potential job. Here are a few things you might want to ask.

- How would you describe a typical day on the job?
- What is the most important thing I need to know about this job?
- What opportunities are there for me to learn new skills here?
- Is there anything else you need to know about me?
- Will I be trained by you or by someone else once on the job?

Say thank you at least twice during the interview: at the beginning, thank the employer for meeting with you, and at the end, thank them again for the opportunity.





Follow up your interview with a thank-you note, either handwritten or via email. In your thank-you note, you should include the following:

- Thank you for meeting with me.
- I am interested in working for your company.
- Add something specific that interested you or impressed you that you learned about during the interview.
- I look forward to hearing from you.

Here are some questions you might hear at an interview. Think of answers to each of them before your interview date.

- Tell me about yourself.
- How would your teachers or friends describe you?
- What do you like best about school?
- Tell me about any extracurricular activities that you participate in.
- Have you had another job previously?
- What did you like or dislike about that job?
- Tell me about a problem you encountered and how you resolved it.
- What is your most important achievement or accomplishment?
- Why should I consider hiring you instead of the other applicants?

For more suggestions about what kind of questions you may be asked and how best to answer them, go to: www. groovejob.com/resources/interview/questions/

Remember, you should always try to answer questions in an honest and positive manner.