

Guidelines for Interviewing

I. Preparing for the Interview:

- **Conduct additional research on the company** so that you are thoroughly aware of its reputation, size, products, history, philosophy and culture. Get the names and titles of the decision-makers you should meet. If at all possible, try to get inside information about the position and the people with whom you would be working. Visit the company's Web site.
- **Based on your research, tailor your accomplishment stories** to the position and organization, and prepare your own questions about the company to ask during the interview.
- **Determine exactly who will be conducting the interview**, include title, division, and line of authority, either before the interview or during the first few moments of meeting.
- **Take your research notes on the company**, previous correspondence, your list of questions and several copies of your resume to the meeting. Take a copy of your reference list as well, in case you are asked for them.

II. Conducting the Interview:

- **Arrive a little early to get a sense of the company culture** (décor, how people dress) and to review any company materials that might be in the reception area.
- **Establish how much time is planned for the interview**, and determine how much time you will have for questions.
- **Uncover as much information as possible about your position** before going into detail about your background.
- **Listen carefully to the questions** and make sure you understand what is being asked. If the question is not clear, ask for clarification.
- **Always respond to the questions with positive answers** and by matching specific accomplishments and qualifications to the job. Keep your answers to no-win questions brief.

- **Tailor and expand on the positioning statement** to the needs of the job. It is the best way to respond to the request:
Tell me about yourself
- **Postpone salary discussions until an offer is made**, if at all possible. If you are pressed to give your salary, try to avoid naming a figure. You might lose your leverage for future negotiations.
- **If you are asked to meet other people in the organization**, determine their relationship to the position as well as their names, titles, division and lines of authority. Do not be afraid to ask a few polite questions when introduced to uncover the information. Ask for a business card.
- **Do not dominate the interview-** or let the interviewer dominate it. Keep it interactive.
- **Before concluding an interview**, make sure all of your questions are answered and ask what the next steps will be.

III. Concluding the Interview:

- **Summarize the meeting with a variation of your positioning statement**, highlighting your interest in and value of to the position and the organization.
- **You may wish to use a trial close**, such as: *what are your thoughts about my candidacy for this position?* This will help you determine if there are any key qualifications you forgot to sell or if it the interviewer has doubts you need to address.
- **Arrange a specific date and time for your next contact with them**, rather than leaving it entirely in their hands. If you do this, you will be in a strong position to follow up. Knowing the timing will also help you manage the rest of your search.
- **If it is not clear what the next step will be, ask the interviewer:** *What will the next step in your hiring process be?* Or: *When may I expect to hear from you again?* These questions indicated an interest and desire on your part to continue the process.
- **Immediately after the interview**, make notes about information you gathered, especially the organization's needs and expectations. And take notes about your own performance to determine what went well and how you might be better prepared to answer questions in the future.

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Send follow-up letters within 24 hours of the interview • Handwritten is recommended |
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