

Instructor's Guide
for
You're Hired!
Employers Give Tips for Successful Interviewing

Overview

Most experts agree—the job interview is where hiring decisions are really made. Though resumes and cover letters are important to the screening process, it is often what you say and how you present yourself in the interview that lands you the job.

This video offers interview tips straight from the source: from the managers and human resource directors responsible for making hiring decisions. They will tell you everything you need to know about the interview process, from how they determine who to interview to the value of a thank-you note afterward. By paying attention to the strategies they offer and adapting them to your own experience and situation, you will have a much better chance of hearing those magic words: “Congratulations, you’re hired.”

Presentation Suggestions

First ask students to imagine they are owners of a small company looking to hire additional employees. What qualities would they look for? What expectations would they have about the people who apply for the job? Now have them think about the interview process. What questions would they ask of potential candidates? What would they expect in terms of appearance and personality? What kinds of answers or behaviors would cause them, as employers, to dismiss an individual as not being right for the job?

Suggest that one of the best ways to prepare for an interview is to put yourself in the employer’s position, to learn as much about them and their company as possible, and to try and discover what they are looking for in the ideal employee.

When you feel students have begun to reflect on these issues, give them the **Anticipation Quiz** to complete prior to watching the video. If you wish, allow the students to state their answers and discuss them.

Show the video. Encourage students to take notes or to make changes to the answers they put down for the Anticipation Quiz while watching the video. If you wish, allow students an opportunity to do so section by section whenever the video suggests a pause.

At the conclusion of the video, ask students to discuss any changes they made to their answers on the Anticipation Quiz as a result of information they learned. Follow up this discussion with the **Activities**.

Give the **Quick Quiz** at the conclusion of class and correct the quizzes as a group.

Assign the **Homework Option**, if desired.

Anticipation Quiz

Directions: Answer these questions as completely as possible. You will revise your answers as you watch the video.

1. What's the best way to open a job interview?
2. Should you bring up the subject of money and benefits right away?
3. What generally do employers look for in an interview?
4. How many interviews can you expect before getting a job offer?
5. What do employers look for at the end of the job interview and beyond?

Answer Key

1. Follow the lead of the person interviewing you. Smile and use body language that suggests confidence and poise. Be relaxed and come prepared by knowing something about the organization.
2. No. Often employers aren't ready to talk about money in a first interview. Wait until a second or even third interview to bring it up.
3. The character of the applicant, their competence (skills, abilities, and education), and the chemistry they generate in the interview and with other employees.
4. Seldom does just one interview result in an offer. It often takes two or three.
5. They check for the applicant's confidence level in leaving. Also follow-up letters or thank you notes can help set you apart from 90% of the competition.

Activities

Activity #1

Title: Prove It

Format: Individual

Time: 20-25 minutes

Materials: Paper and pen

Procedure:

1. When asked how people should approach job interviews, the experts suggested that they should be honest, sell themselves, and above all prove what they can do.
2. Have each student divide a sheet of paper into two columns. Have them label one side, **What I'm Good At**, and the other side, **How Do I Know**.
3. In the first column have them list all of their skills and abilities, focused on but not limited to those that relate directly to the job(s) that interests them.
4. In the second column, for each of the skills or abilities listed in the first, have students think of past examples and experiences that would prove to an employer that the student does indeed have these skills. Students should not limit this strictly to examples drawn from past work experience, but should draw on their entire life history. The goal is to find specific instances when that skill or ability was demonstrated and to show the positive results.
5. When they've finished finding examples to support each skill and ability, have them circle what they feel are their three best, and suggest that these should be emphasized whenever possible in an interview.

Activity #2**Title:** Follow the Leader**Format:** Role-playing**Time:** 20-40 minutes**Materials:** Pen, paper, index cards, a desk with two chairs**Procedure:**

1. Hiring experts suggest you should follow the lead of the person interviewing you, i.e. if they seem formal or relaxed you should respond in kind. On 3x5 index cards write the following moods or approaches: *formal but friendly, professional and reserved, relaxed and joking, enthusiastic and energetic*. Feel free to use each one more than once or make up moods of your own.
2. Have students split into pairs. Assign one student in each pair to be the interviewer and the other to be the applicant. Give the interviewer a card indicating the kind of mood he or she should create in the interview and then have that person write down three questions to ask. Do not let the applicant know what mood the interviewer was given.

3. When the interviewer is ready, have the applicant walk in from outside the door to begin the mock interview. Limit each practice interview to three to five minutes. At the end ask the rest of the class to share their observations. How did the applicant respond to the mood of the interviewer? What strategies did they see that were effective? What could have been improved on? What happens in those first three minutes that dictates the course of the rest of the interview?

Quick Quiz

Note: You may read these questions out loud, allowing time for students to respond, or you can copy and hand this out as a written exercise. If you read the quiz, write the responses on the board/overhead.

Directions: Indicate whether each statement is true or false according to the video.

1. Employers do not check for grammar on resumes before making decisions on whom to interview.
2. The most useful thing new graduates or people with no work experience can do is research the company they are interviewing with.
3. Calling a company job line or going to a job fair has no effect on whether or not you will get an interview.
4. It's a good idea to have one set approach to opening an interview and stick with it.
5. It's important to discuss money at the outset so as not to waste yours or the interviewer's time.
6. From an employer's point of view, competence—the skills and abilities you possess—are *much* more important than your character or the chemistry you might have with the people in the company.
7. You need to be prepared to prove what you can do, not just say it, in an interview.
8. It usually only takes one interview for an employer to make a hiring decision.
9. Employers would actually prefer you take some time to consider a job offer before accepting.
10. Benefits are not nearly as important as salary and should not be a focus of compensation negotiations.

Answer Key

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|----------|-----------|
| 1. False | 6. False |
| 2. True | 7. True |
| 3. False | 8. False |
| 4. False | 9. True |
| 5. False | 10. False |

Homework Option

One way to approach an interview is to think of yourself as a product—something that employers will pay for to help them solve their problems and meet their needs. In other words, you have to learn to sell yourself. Write a television or radio commercial in which the thing being advertised is *you*. Emphasize your skills and abilities, your past experience, and most importantly, what you can do for whoever hires you. It might sound cheesy, but it is exactly the kind of practice you need for convincing employers to hire you during an interview.