

Seven Tips to a Job-Winning Interview

These days, interviews don't come easily. When you get The Call, make the most of your time -- and go for it!

1. Investigate the company's culture, markets, and finances. But resist the temptation to show off what you've researched: "I just read that you're about to embark on a new product line") unless you have a question directly related to your career.
2. Look like you belong. Learn the company's dress code and err on the side of conservatism. When you're seeking a senior position based on industry experience, you'll be expected to know the rules without being told.
3. Take charge of the interview! The most successful interviews feel like friendly conversations. When your interviewer has an agenda (such as the infamous "stress interview") stay relaxed. Think of playing a game.
4. Assume everyone you meet will provide feedback to the decision-maker. Some companies hand out comment forms to receptionists, security guards and potential peers who take you to lunch.
5. Communicate interest and enthusiasm, even if you're not sure you're ready to commit. You'll rarely have all the facts until you're looking at an offer.
6. Bring extra copies of your correspondence from this company as well as your resume, references, writing samples, portfolio and current business cards. Interviewers lose documents and conversations move in unexpected directions.
7. Create a relaxed, positive attitude by devising a realistic game plan. When your career isn't riding on a single interview, you'll have fun and make a confident, relaxed impression.
8. Write a thank you letter within forty-eight hours. Create a low-key sales letter, emphasizing how your qualifications match the company's needs. Present yourself as a resource, not a supplicant.
9. After you write the letter, forget about the interview. Email or phone only if you've received a competing offer with a deadline. Occasionally you may make points with follow-up mailings. A sports team public relations applicant sent puzzles, games and press releases -- and she got the job. Use your intuition.
10. Keep notes of what you learned from the process. What worked? What would you do differently?

As soon as you begin your new job, develop a career plan and a safety net before you need one.

Cathy Goodwin, Ph.D., wrote *Making the Big Move* (New Harbinger 1999). She works with professionals who have seen the light and are ready to ditch their current career and start a second one.

Website: <http://www.cathygoodwin.com>

Your Next Move Ezine:

<http://www.cathygoodwin.com/subscribe.html> or

cathy@cathygoodwin.com with "YNM" in subject line.

Contact: cathy@cathygoodwin.com 505-534-4294