


Before the Interview

To maximize your success in an interview, it is important to spend time preparing. Here are some things to think about as you prepare for an interview.


 **Know Yourself:** The best preparation is to know yourself: your skills and abilities, your talents and your values.

Begin by taking the time to assess yourself.

- Think of 5-7 skills or qualities that you possess that you would use to describe yourself. More importantly, begin to identify examples of how you have used those skills.
- Take some time to think about your past. How did you develop the skills you have. What did you do in high school or in college that made you who you are today? Did you learn leadership or teamwork from participating in sports or extracurricular activities? Did you learn communication or initiative from a student organization? Did you learn problem solving or initiative through an internship or part-time job you held?
- Look at the job description and the requirements of the job. What skills do you have that directly match the position? If they are looking for someone with teamwork or leadership skills and you have developed those skills, then you will want to emphasize that in the interview.
- Finally, look over your resume and see if it adequately includes words and descriptions that will convey your skills to an employer. Write outlines for your answers to anticipated questions, then rehearse them out loud for practice. This can increase your confidence.

 **Know the Company (Company Research):** Before each interview, take time to research the company.

- Know the company well. You can gather information from the company's website, Google news, business publications, or conversations you have had with employees of that company.
- Take time to look how the company has performed financially.
- Know what service or product the company provides.
- Know the values of the company, their mission statement, and their guiding principles.
- Research the company and be prepared to explain how the company fits your criteria for your ideal employer. If you are extremely interested in the company, take time to also do research on the industry.
- What are the key issues in the industry? For example, if you are interviewing with a pharmaceutical company, know what is happening in the health care industry.
- How are current events impacting the industry?
- How is the industry addressing environmental issues? Is this company embracing the changes taking place? How?

 **Preparation Tips:** Spend some time getting yourself ready and organized before your interview.

- Dress in conservative business attire. For most companies, you will want to wear a suit. Make sure your interview outfit is clean and pressed the night before your interview.
- Take a pad and pen along with you for any notes you wish to make after the interview [do not take notes during the interview]. You should also bring multiple copies of your resume.
- Think of 3-5 questions to ask the interviewer and write them down on a pad. You may reference these during the interview so that you remember them, however do not take notes on the response of the interviewer. Instead, listen carefully and respond to their answer with how you feel you can fit with the company based on their response or ask a continuation question.
- Know the precise time and place of the interview and how long it will take you to get to the interview so you will be early and have a few minutes to compose yourself before the interview. You should arrive between 10-15 minutes early.