

18 PRACTICAL TIPS TO HELP YOU ACE YOUR JOB INTERVIEW

by Ronnie Ann ~ August 3rd, 2007

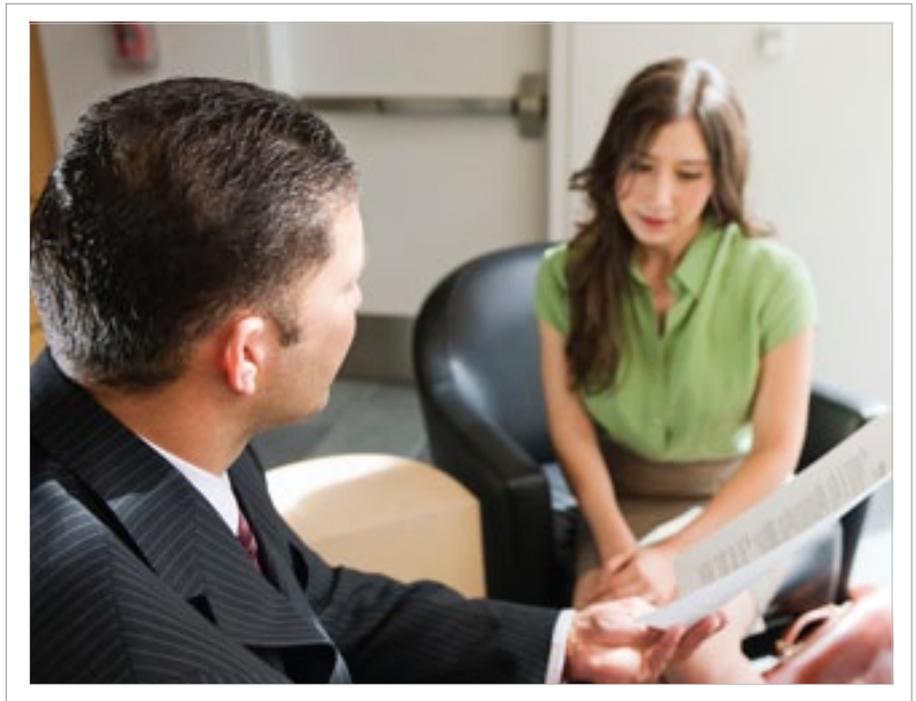
A LOT OF “EXPERTS” WILL LOOK YOU IN THE EYE AND ASSURE YOU THERE ARE GUARANTEED WAYS TO ACE YOUR JOB INTERVIEW BY GIVING THE RIGHT INTERVIEW ANSWER TO JOB INTERVIEW QUESTIONS. Well there are no absolutely guaranteed right answers. But luckily there are some practical job interview tips that can help a lot:

JOB INTERVIEW TIPS – BEFORE THE INTERVIEW:

TAKE TIME TO PREPARE – Find out all you can about the company. You aren’t expected to know everything, but if it’s a public company there is no excuse for at least not knowing their business line(s) and a little about their products.

READ THE JOB DESCRIPTION CAREFULLY - It will help you aim your answers toward things they are actually looking for. Not that you should simply give them back what they asked for, but you can use the description to help guide you.

KNOW YOUR RESUME VERY WELL – This may sound obvious, but I’ve interviewed people who can’t quickly remember a job I referred to that was on their own resume. Review the order of your jobs, the tasks at each job, and the reason(s) you left. Also look through the resume to remind yourself of some stories where you found a problem and solved it, came up with a ways to save the company money, etc. A good story that rings true can make a big difference.



JOB INTERVIEW TIPS – ACING THE INTERVIEW ITSELF

FIRST AND FOREMOST, WALK INTO THE ROOM WITH GOOD ENERGY AND A SMILE PLEASANTLY, making eye contact with the interviewer(s) as you shake their hand firmly – but not painfully!

BE YOURSELF. Even if “yourself” is shy or a little awkward when you speak. Interviewers want to see the real person. They understand that you’re probably nervous, but it will help you be less nervous to know that it’s ok to just show them the nice person that you are.

INTERVIEWERS ARE LOOKING FOR THE RIGHT FIT. So even if you are great in every way, you might not get the job. But you have to trust them to know this. Trying to present the person you think they want rather than who you are won’t help anyone. Again..just be yourself. Emphasize those aspects of you that they are looking for, but don’t lay on the BS.

STAY ALERT AND INTERESTED. Don’t let your mind get lost in what you just said nor what they might ask next. As they say in Zen...be in the moment.

KEEP EYE CONTACT WITH THE PERSON asking the question while they are asking it. If there are others, as you answer, look at the questioner more often, but be sure to catch everyone else’s eyes too.

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LOOK FOR CHANCES TO USE THE STORIES YOU PREPARED that show why you'd be a real asset to the company.

DON'T GO ON TOO LONG – as interesting as you may think you are. But also, don't just give a one or two-word answer. They want to see who you are. Give them a chance to hear your voice, see how you think, and hopefully get to know you a bit.

INTERVIEWERS ARE LOOKING TO SEE WHETHER YOU'D BE PLEASANT TO WORK WITH AND HOW YOU HANDLE SITUATIONS. They want to know you are a hard worker who sees problems as challenges and finds a way to solve them. They also want to know that in a crunch, you roll up your sleeves and pitch in. (Prepare stories about things you've done that show that.)

INTERVIEWERS WANT TO KNOW YOU'LL BE A GOOD TEAM PLAYER...BUT ALSO ABLE TO THINK FOR YOURSELF. You want to make sure they see both parts of you.

MOST OF ALL, THEY WANT TO KNOW IF YOU CAN HANDLE THE JOB. But since only they know exactly what they are looking for and what that means, you should let them guide you in the interview. Don't try to lead them. Listen. Ask questions if you don't understand. And show them you are able to respond to what they asked and not what you wish they asked.

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ONE CONTRADICTION TO MY LAST POINT: If they ask you an interview question and you only have a short uninteresting answer, if you can find a NATURAL way to throw in one of your strongest stories, then go for it. Just don't take them on a long winding trip to nowhere.

IF IT LOOKS LIKE YOU DON'T HAVE THE REQUIRED SKILLS AFTER ALL, TRY TO FIGURE OUT WHICH SKILLS YOU DO HAVE THAT SHOW SIMILAR APTITUDE and then stress these. Make sure you let them know you are a quick learner and would be excited to add these new skills. (Give an example if you have one.) Work needs often change, and many employers know that a person who can easily and willingly change with the times is a real asset.

OF COURSE, IF YOU DON'T HAVE THE SKILLS AND THEY NEED THEM ON DAY ONE, THERE'S NOT MUCH YOU CAN DO. But you are not only interviewing for this job, but for the possibility of a job they don't even have yet or know they need. So continue to show them what you do have to offer and what makes you a person they'd like to have on their team. I recently interviewed someone who didn't have the skills needed, but we liked her so much that the boss is thinking about a way to create a position for her. You never know!

STAY FOCUSED RIGHT TO THE END. Even if you think it's not going well, show them you can hang in and do your best no matter what. It's true that interviewers get an impression within the first few minutes (which is why it's so important to start with good energy), but you never know when you can recover a fumble.

LEAVE WITH THE SAME POSITIVE ENERGY YOU STARTED THE JOB INTERVIEW WITH. And remember after an interview to follow-up your interviews with thank you letters or e-mails. Job interview thank-you letters can't hurt and they may very well help. Oh...keep them short and pleasant – and please check the grammar and spelling!

So in the end, no one can give you the exact words that will help you ace all those job interview questions with the absolutely perfect job interview answers. But I can tell you that a positive attitude, careful listening, resourcefulness, flexibility, willingness to learn, and good positive energy will get you far. Just give your job interview questions and answers your best shot. No one can ask more of you than that. And though not every job is a fit – yes...even if you ace all your interview questions – at the very least, each job interview is terrific practice for eventually nailing the right job.