

Keys to a Successful Job Interview

Interviewing for a job is one of the hardest parts of the job search. You may be a bit nervous about it - and that is natural. We can't promise you'll get the job but if you follow these do's and don'ts, you'll certainly be on the road to success. Here are the keys to successful job interviewing:

- ✓ Do take a practice run to the location where you are having the interview. Be sure you know exactly where it is and how long it will take to get there.
- ✓ Do your research and learn as much as possible about the employer, its' business and the open position.
- ✓ Do dress for the job, the employer, the industry- and, if in doubt, err on the side of conservatism.
- ✓ Do plan to arrive about 10 minutes early. If you are running late, do phone the employer.
- ✓ Do greet the receptionist or assistant with courtesy and respect.
- ✓ Do bring extra resumes printed on resume paper.
- ✓ Do greet the interviewer(s) by title (Ms., Mr., and Dr.) and last name. If you're unsure of the pronunciation, do ask the receptionist before going into the interview.
- ✓ Do shake hands firmly.
- ✓ Do wait until you are offered a chair before sitting. And do remember that body language speaks loudly- sit upright and look alert and interested at all times.
- ✓ Do make good eye contact with your interviewer(s).
- ✓ Do avoid using poor language, slang, and pause words (such as "like", "uh", and "um").
- ✓ Do avoid controversial topics.
- ✓ Do stress your achievements and don't offer any negative information about yourself.
- ✓ Do work in the research you have done on the employer and industry when responding to questions.
- ✓ Do immediately take down notes after the interview concludes so you don't forget crucial details.
- ✓ Do write thank you letters within 24 hours to each person who interviewed you. And do make sure you use the correct spelling of their names.
- ⊗ Don't chew gum or anything else.
- ⊗ Don't act as though you would take any job or are desperate for employment.
- ⊗ Don't say anything negative about former colleagues, supervisors, or employers.
- ⊗ Don't ever lie. Answer questions frankly and succinctly. And don't over answer questions.
- ⊗ Don't bring up or discuss personal issues or family problems.
- ⊗ Don't ever not ask any questions- it may be taken as a lack of interest.

Do contact Workforce Services at Heartland Community College if you'd like more information or assistance with fine-tuning your interview skills. You'll find us in WDC 2500, or contact us by phone or e-mail at (309) 268-8034 or workforce.services@heartland.edu.