

5 Things You MUST Do Before a Job Interview

So you just found out that you have a job interview tomorrow and unfortunately procrastination is a weakness you haven't yet conquered. Here are the down and dirty tips to pull it together at the last minute.

1. Look at the job posting you are applying for, and develop sound bites that address the needs of the employer. Think of examples where you demonstrated the skills that appear in the job posting and develop answers that clearly show an employer that you are the perfect candidate for this position. All sound bites should be 2-3 minutes in length.
2. Use the TODAY acronym to develop additional sound bites of your experiences. TODAY stands for Teamwork, Overcoming Obstacles, Duties of your past positions, Achievements, Your strengths and weaknesses. Remember to clearly describe exactly what you did in each situation. The employer is hiring you, not the other people in your story.
3. Research the company. Search the internet for any recent press releases and check out the company's website. Know what they do, and develop some idea as to how the position you are hiring for fits within the company.
4. Think of questions to ask an interviewer. Look at the job posting and your research about the company and think of 3-5 questions you can ask during the interview. What are you curious about? Do they manufacture a product you are familiar with, or never even knew existed before you started to research the company? Where does this department fit in the grand scheme of the company? What projects is the department currently working on?
5. Lastly, prepare answers to the following questions: Tell me about yourself, Why did you leave your last position, or why are you looking for a new job, Why should I hire you, and The Salary Question. You know that these questions will be asked in one form or another, so there is no excuse to not have prepared an answer.

And that's it. Interviewing is just that simple when it's broken into it's simplest components. Focus on preparing answers to all of the scenarios above, and you will be ahead of the game. Remember to clearly articulate in each and every sound bite exactly what you did. Practice with a tape recorder to critique yourself, or with a friend to repeat back to you exactly what you did in a situation to make sure you're preparing correctly.