

SET A POSITIVE TONE

Think of your interview as an achievement! You have attracted the attention of your target. The resume you submitted and the networking techniques you used were successful. Use this opportunity to showcase your relevant strengths and skills. Focus on learning from the experience and moving closer to securing the job you really want.

Interviews should be one of the most enjoyable parts of an effective job search strategy. There is no need to feel pressured by a meeting you have earned. The best way to prepare for an interview is to plan to smile. A smile will make you feel and appear more enthusiastic, confident, and relaxed. Smile as you are preparing for the interview. Smile on your way to the interview. Smile during your interview. Try it. Do you feel more relaxed? Can you feel the tension leaving your shoulder and neck area? The purpose of an interview is to gather information. Organizations gather information to help them select the right candidate. The interviewer knows, or has a general idea, of the specific qualities that they are looking for in an ideal candidate. When you have an opportunity to ask a question before the interview begins, try to establish their specific requirements by asking: "What kind of qualities and characteristics are you looking for in the person you select for this position?"

If the interviewer provides an answer, keep this information in mind as you answer questions during the interview. Try to match as many of your relevant strengths to the key qualities they used to characterize their ideal candidate throughout your interview. At the end of your meeting, the interviewer should know why you are the right person for this position. The interviewer should be able to identify at least three relevant skills that you have highlighted during the interview.

Prepare to provide direct and positive information. Even if you are interviewing within your own organization, the time you spend preparing for interviews or job evaluations will directly impact the advancement of your career. Draft a closing that highlights your three most relevant skills. Preparing a closing summary in advance will help you feel relaxed during the interview.

Always plan your closing statement, but if you determine during the interview that the organization is looking for information that was not provided in your resume focus on these points in your closing. You should also highlight these points in the thank you letter that you send to the interviewer/s after your meeting.

Plan to send a thank you letter within 24 hours of the interview. Send a thank you letter or note even when you determine a position is not right for you. The interviewer/s may become a networking contact in the future, or they may consider you for a more appropriate position with their company. As soon as possible after the meeting, write your feelings and interpretations in a notebook for future reference, including a reminder to add or remove information from your resume. Respond to any requests made by the interviewer, for example, providing a copy of a certificate that they may require before making their final selection.

Candidates use interviews to gather first-hand information about the job and organization. This information will help you determine if this is the right opportunity at the right time. If you determine during the interview that this is not the position for you, advise the interviewer in your closing comment. They will appreciate your honesty and will be more likely to consider you for future positions. If you are interested in the position, thank the interviewer/s and express your appreciation. End on a positive and confident note by asking the key question: "What is the next step in your selection process?"