



REEKRUTER

A WOMAN OWNED SEARCH FIRM

INTERVIEW PREPARATION

Helping you communicate who **YOU**
are and what **YOU** have to offer!

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Research the Company & the Role

Whether a seasoned pro or a first timer- interviews can be daunting. However, this is the perfect time to learn about the company, the role, and to see if this IS the company you truly want to work for. Additionally, this is the time to see if you will be able to contribute to their organization and for the company to see if you are a team fit. This is just part of the match making process and both sides need to feel great about the match.

Every interview is unique, and we compiled some information to help make your interview as successful as possible. These may seem like obvious pieces of information to know but a refresher can be beneficial, nonetheless.

Do Your Homework - on The Company

Visit their website! Take a look around and see what information you can learn.

1. What does the company do, make, or sell?
2. Have 3-5 questions prepared about the company and the role.
3. Familiarize with key players' names and positions in the company-they will be your future bosses. Know who the CEO is.
4. Check out the hiring manager on LinkedIn and know a bit about his/her background.
5. Know a little history of the organization-how did it grow to the company it is today?
6. Find something interesting about the company and bring it up during the interview. An example would be discussing something seen on their website or a news article and asking, "How has this concept or change been beneficial to the company?" This shows you did your homework.

Do Your Homework - On the Position

You have to know the position you are applying for including the main responsibilities and requested qualifications. Be prepared to ask some good questions:

1. What traits will make someone successful in this role?
2. What needs to be accomplished in the first 6 months? What about in the

first year?

3. What does an average day in the life look like for this position?
4. Who has failed and why?

Do Your Homework – On Yourself

1. Review your career history thoroughly-you will be asked.
2. Be prepared to talk about anything on your resume, LinkedIn profile, GitHub, professional portfolio, etc.
3. Ensure dates on your resume are correct. If you have a LinkedIn profile or any other public display of your career history, ensure that all of your dates, employers, and information are consistent and match. That is one of the first things many employers will look at and if there is a discrepancy, it raises a red flag.
4. Know the information on your resume including dates, positions, duties/responsibilities, and accomplishments in your career.
5. Be prepared to share your strengths and weaknesses and how you exhibited those in past positions and scenarios. Try to turn a weakness into a strength. For example, being extremely detailed oriented can sometimes cause a slow down in completing tasks, but you know the completed project will be thorough and correct. Focus on your most recent positions, but don't neglect your early career especially if very applicable.

Basics Of Interviewing

Appearance

1. If this is an in-person or video interview, your appearance is crucial. It is ALWAYS better to dress up than down.
2. No one likes the “rolled out of bed” look-iron out the wrinkles! Make sure your clothes are pressed and clean.
3. A firm handshake and eye contact present confidence and will make a much stronger impression.
4. Although scent is the strongest sense connected to memory-do NOT overdo it on the fragrance.
5. Be organized-have your resume ready and even a pen and paper in case there is any information you would like to write down. This can sound old school, but there are a LOT of people/companies who still place value on notetaking.
6. Confidence is KEY! Look and act professional. We are always told to “not judge a book by its cover,” but those first minutes can make or break a first impression.

Be Prepared

1. Research the location ahead of time and give yourself plenty of time to get there. Better to be 30 minutes early than 5 minutes late.
2. If you are running late for any reason whether getting lost, unusual traffic, etc. CALL YOUR RECRUITER OR THE HIRING MANAGER IMMEDIATELY. Always apologize multiple times when you reach the company and sit for the interview.
3. See the sample questions below and think about how you would answer some of them.
4. Prepare a 1–2-minute blurb about yourself and rehearse it. Most likely someone will say, “Tell me about yourself.” Make it no more than 2 minutes.

5. Know who you are interviewing with and check out their LinkedIn profile and be sure to know who the CEO is.
6. Have 3-5 questions prepared-it shows you gave this some thought.
7. Behavioral style questions are popular in interviews. These are the questions that ask for examples of how you would handle a scenario which gives insight into how you would perform at work.
 - a. Restating the question back for clarity is absolutely acceptable. Having clarification will help you to better answer the question and provide the types of responses the interviewer is looking for.
 - b. You may have a great story come to mind but be sure to stay focused and succinct in your answers. You can always ask if they would like you to go into more depth or elaborate on your response.
 - c. A simple "Yes" or "No" answer is very rarely acceptable-you must clarify or give an example along with your reply.
8. Be aware of your facial expressions. Sometimes the way you "react" sends a message to the interviewer.
9. Don't let negatives stand alone. In other words, if the interviewer asks about your weaknesses or any challenges you have-always turn these responses around so you end with something positive.
 - a. Example: I know I can be overly focused at times, but my attention to detail saves us time in corrections in the long run.
10. **Send a thank you note to the interviewer/team within a couple hours of your interview. Another old school tip, but a lot of companies/managers still value a thank you. Better to be safe than sorry.**

Feedback

1. Asking for feedback after the interview is absolutely acceptable-just be sure to not ask questions that could put the interviewer on the spot or make them uncomfortable or pressured. Try these...
 - a) "Can I provide any additional information about myself or my answers to help give a greater view of my experience or capabilities?"
 - b) "I realized I left out some pertinent information in one of my answers. Can I clarify what I meant by..."
 - c) "Based on this interview am I a candidate that you could see fulfilling this job?" If the answer is 'no' you can follow up with "would you be open to sharing where you could see me fitting?" This could help reveal any areas that you could clarify past and current skills to show a stronger fit for the position.
 - d) "Do you have all the information you need from me in order to make your decision?"
2. Be sure the interviewer knows you are very interested in the position and working for their company!
 - a) "I so appreciate the opportunity to interview with you at (company). I am looking forward to the next step in the interview process and was wondering how well you think I'd fit in this role and with the organization and company culture?" Always be selling yourself!

Handling \$\$ Questions

The question of compensation can be very sensitive and often requires extended negotiations to reach a figure that is fair and acceptable to both the company and the individual.

If a company asks you what you want to earn, try not to give them a dollar amount. This could limit your earning potential (this is truer for permanent full time role rather than contract opportunities). Saying something too high may take you out of the running and something too low may convey to the client that you think you're not that qualified.

Here are some points to remember:

1. Is it about the money? The position and opportunity is the single most important element of your decision. No amount of money will make a bad job good. A quality position, working with quality people in a dynamic work environment offers rewards that money cannot buy... so money should not always be the deciding factor.
2. Be flexible. Compensation packages are a combination of salary, reviews, titles, and perks. These elements can be arranged and rearranged- sometimes quite creatively-to fulfill both the individual and the company.
3. Keep your recruiter involved. Part of our job is to handle sensitive negotiations and move both parties to a fair and acceptable compensation package. We do this for a living and can often offer alternatives that will satisfy both parties. (We are also a good buffer and can keep sensitive negotiations on a cool, professional level.)
4. Avoid it at all costs – let us deal on this for you (besides we know what you want to earn and what the client is willing to pay or negotiate on). IF you get backed into a corner, and the company wants you to give an answer, provide a range. You may even let them know what you were making at your last job. This will get around giving an exact amount.

Recap - Quick Tips That Make a Difference

1. Always be 5-10 minutes early to an interview.
2. Bring at least 2 copies of your resume- for the interviewer(s) and for yourself.
3. Dress your best.
4. Have a firm and appropriate handshake.
5. Have questions prepared that are specific to the role and/or the company.
6. Familiarize yourself with the company's website and have the information present.
7. Always be selling yourself, your character, attitude, etc.
8. You can share your accomplishments but remain humble. That will go a long way.
9. Be professional & respectful.
10. Refrain from asking questions about hours, benefits. We will get that information for you.
11. Make sure your cellphone is turned OFF!
12. Prepare questions for the interviewer that are insightful and specific to their website.
13. Ask for feedback at the end of the interview.
14. "Yes" and "No" answers will not fly. Be sure to go into some detail to provide a larger scope answer to the interviewer's question.
15. Be specific and succinct in your answers-do not ramble on.
16. Do NOT make negative remarks about previous or current employers.
17. Always be truthful/honest in the information you provide and answers you give.

Appendix A

20 Ways Candidates Strike Out

1. Have a lazy handshake
2. Be dressed inappropriately and not to dress code
3. Display a lack of manners or courtesy
4. Be late to the interview
5. Criticize past employers
6. Show lack of interest and enthusiasm
7. Show lack of confidence
8. Show a negative reaction of facial expressions
9. Be aggressive, scattered, or conceited
10. Be dishonest/lie
11. Have a lack of career goals or aspirations
12. Give longwinded answers to questions
13. Don't express appreciation for the opportunity to interview or the interviewer's time.
14. Show too much emphasis on money
15. Don't make eye contact/engage with the interviewer
16. Have no questions about the job or company
17. Show an inability to express oneself clearly/communicate
18. Be indecisive
19. Waste the company's time by not showing a genuine interest in the position
20. Be unable to take criticism or admit to having weaknesses

Appendix B

Sample Questions You May Be Asked

Being prepared with answers to some common questions will help boost your confidence in feeling prepared for the interview. Having multiple responses ready will provide a toolkit to answer any questions that may be thrown your way.

There will be questions that you have never been asked before or questions you may not have a great answer for. Sometimes these questions are to see if you can think on your toes.

Below are some questions that can be stressful and require some forethought:

1. What are your short and long-term objectives?
2. What do you look for in a job?
3. What do you know about us?
4. Why are you leaving your current position/company?
5. Why did you select my company to interview with?
6. What can you do for us that someone else cannot?
7. Why should we hire you?
8. Tell me about yourself (keep under 2 minutes)
9. Can you work under pressure, deadlines, etc.?
10. What is your philosophy on management?
11. How are you best managed?
12. How has your early career or background influenced your progression and current management style?
13. What are your 5 biggest accomplishments in your present job? What about in your career?
14. What is your biggest strength? Weakness?
15. What qualifications do you possess that make you think you would be successful in this business?
16. In what ways do you think you can make a contribution to our firm?
17. If you could start again what would you do differently?
18. How do you rate yourself as a professional? As an executive?

19. What qualities have you liked or disliked in your boss?
20. What was the most difficult ethical decision you've had to make? What was the result?
21. What features of your previous jobs have you disliked?
22. Would you describe a few situations in which your work was criticized?
23. Do you generally speak to people before they speak to you?
24. How would you describe success?
25. What is the worst situation you have faced in your professional life? How did you deal with it? What happened?
26. What interests you most about the position we have? The least?
27. Are you a leader? A good manager? Analytical? Give an example we can verify.
28. How do you build a team under you?
29. How would you describe your own personality?
30. What do your subordinates think of you?
31. Have you fired people? When and why?
32. Have you helped increase sales and profits? Reduced costs?

There are no right or perfect answers to these questions as they will vary greatly based on candidate experience and the position being filled. However, there are keys to answering any question which include being direct, honest, positive, and succinct.

Appendix C

Sample Questions to Ask the Company

1. In the recent history of the company, what has been the biggest advance and what has been the largest setback?
2. What is your highest priority in the next 6 months and how could someone like me help?
3. Tell me about a typical day.
4. Tell me about your training program.
5. What are the characteristics of your top people?
6. What are 3 main qualities you are looking for in a candidate?
7. How do you see me fitting in with your company?
8. If I were to ask your top person what he/she likes most/least about the company, what types of responses would I get?
9. How do I compare to other qualified candidates?
10. Do you have any hesitations about me being successful with your company?
11. What does your full interview process entail?
12. What are your personal satisfactions and disappointments since you have been with the firm?
13. Also consider asking to meet or speak with a few current employees.

Appendix D

The Resignation & Counteroffer

While resigning from your current position can be emotional and sometimes stressful, there are several things you can do to make the process go smoothly and quickly.

1. Put it in writing. Handing your boss a resignation letter is the most effective way to handle an uncomfortable situation. It is formal and will become a part of your permanent record protecting you.
2. We **strongly** suggest that you do not talk about counter offers- it is the single worst thing you can do during the resignation process. The mistake people make when resigning is thinking it is polite to listen to what the company has to say or will try to do – unless you want to accept a counteroffer, it is not polite. It is far worse than saying “thank you – I appreciate that, but this is a decision that has been made – I did not make it lightly and I have signed with another company – I don’t go back on my word”. If you do not intend to take a counteroffer, DO NOT get into discussions. Research counter offers on Google for more information or talk to your recruiter.
3. The sooner you can get out and move on, the better. Always be sure to give a fair notice but ask to be relieved as soon as possible. The company will get by without you, don’t forget that. Going forward, you owe your energies and loyalty to yourself and to your new opportunity. You can always offer to be available by phone for questions after your notice period.
4. Give some thought as to the reason you plan to give your employer for your departure. You need a valid, a polite reason – don’t say anything they may take personally or take offence to. Don’t say headhunted if you weren’t, don’t say money, and don’t say better work. Come up with something true that won’t offend. Location, specific project / technology you want to work on, industry of the company you are joining, etc. Something they can’t argue with and aren’t offended by.

5. We suggest that you do not tell anyone else in the company before you tell your boss. And your boss might ask you not to tell the team until they have an opportunity to announce it – respect that.
6. Imagine: if your employer lost a project, ran out of funds, or had any problem which resulted in them needing to do layoffs...do you think they wouldn't? It is a business relationship i.e., employment contract. If they had to let you go – they might feel terrible, but they would do it. Both sides take care of their own interests – don't forget that. Do not burn bridges. You never know what the future holds.
7. Talk to your recruiter to get advice on how to resign in a way that is less stressful and does not burn bridges-keep us up to date. We can help keep this as smooth and painless as possible.

Reasons For Not Accepting a Counteroffer

Statistics show that if you accept a counteroffer, the probability of voluntarily leaving or being let go within six months to one year is extremely high. 85% of people who accept counteroffers are gone in six months, and 90% of people who accept counteroffers are gone in twelve months. Either because the initial reasons you started job hunting are still there or because your relationship with your employer has been damaged.

1. What type of company do you work for if you have to threaten to resign before they give you what you are worth?
2. Where is the money for the counteroffer coming from? Is it your next raise early? All companies have strict wage and salary guidelines which must be followed.
3. Your company might start looking for a new person at a cheaper price. In many cases, you could be training your replacement.
4. You now have made your employer aware that you are unhappy. If you decide to stay, from this day on your loyalty will always be in question.
5. When promotion time comes around, your employer will remember who was loyal and who was not.
6. When times get rough, your employer might begin the cutback... with you.
7. The same circumstances that now cause you to consider a change will repeat themselves in the future even if you accept a counteroffer. Things about your position and company rarely change.

8. Once the word gets out, the relationship that you now enjoy with your co-workers will never be the same. You risk losing the personal satisfaction of peer group acceptance.

Appendix E

Phone or video interviews are often a first step in the interview process. Often times these calls are with HR. DO NOT make the mistake of thinking you don't have to prepare! HR holds a critical part of the interview process so **please prepare accordingly.**

For The Video Interview

1. MOST IMPORTANT- Sign in 5-10 minutes early. Be sure your internet is working! Test your camera and your microphone. Download the software ahead of time.
2. Reminder-it's always better to dress up than down. If you are unsure about how to dress, ask your recruiter OR dress as if you were going to an office. Make sure your clothing is pressed and clean-NO WRINKLES. Dress conservatively and professionally.
3. Be sure that you are in a quiet place with a neat and clean background. You can always use a blank wall or the video background blur option with Teams, Meets, or Zoom. For example, avoid taking the call in your bedroom where the interviewer can see a slept in bed with clothes tossed all over the place.
4. Keep eye contact with the interviewer. Turn your phone off and don't let anything distract you if possible.
5. Don't smoke, don't vape, don't look at your phone-STAY FOCUSED.
6. Look organized. Have your resume, your prepared questions, and a pad of paper to take notes laid out in front of you.
7. Appear CONFIDENT.

REMEMBER - You only get one chance to make a first impression.

For The Phone Interview

1. Please ensure you are somewhere quiet with very little to no background noise. If you are using a cell, headset or similar, test it with a friend prior to the call to ensure your call is clear and you don't have reception issues. It is very difficult to have a successful discussion if you can't hear each other clearly.

Be sure to answer your phone as you would a business line, i.e. "Hello, this is Kerrie speaking".

2. It is a lot easier to have rooster hair and wear your fuzzy slippers during a phone interview. However, we always tell candidates that it is important to dress well even when no one can see you. Studies show that what you wear really does have an impact on your overall motivation and attitude. And as they say, "A smile can be heard through the phone."

REMEMBER - You only get one chance to make a first impression.

And the final tip...be sure to touch base with your recruiter afterward your interview. It helps to get feedback to you and the company quicker. GOOD LUCK!!