

Saturday, July 30th, 2011

OVERVIEW

The interview is an opportunity to assess your fit for a particular position and organization, and to sell your qualifications to an employer. The interview can be an intimidating experience, but if you prepare well it can be a very rewarding experience. Below are some tips to help you make a positive impact during and after your interview.

PURPOSE OF AN INTERVIEW

To pitch your qualifications to a prospective employer, and to gauge your fit with the same employer.

TYPES OF INTERVIEWS

- One-On-One (in-person) – traditional
- Phone – often used as an initial screening
- Panel – with 2 or more interviewers
- Group – with other candidates
- Case – test of problem solving skills
- Stress – test of ability to deal with pressure
- Behavioral – focus on actions in past situations

IMPACTFUL INTERVIEWING: WHAT TO DO

- Assess what you have to offer an employer (e.g. skills, traits, education, experiences, values) – your brand
- Do your research (e.g. company, industry, position)
 - To identify opportunities that are a fit for you
 - To set yourself up to answer interview questions well
- Dress appropriately
- Bring copies of your resume to the interview
- Be prepared to answer questions based on your resume
- Share examples/anecdotes to support your answers
- Maintain consistent eye contact with the interviewer
- Have questions to ask the interviewer
- Send a thank you email/note after the interview



IMPACTFUL INTERVIEWING: WHAT NOT TO DO

- Arrive to the interview late
- Be poorly groomed
- Exhibit negative body language
 - Weak or casual handshake, slouching, fidgeting, frowning
- Lie about your qualifications
- Ramble (on and on and on)
- Answer questions with canned, rehearsed responses
- Use profanity or make inappropriate remarks

TRADITIONAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Below are some typical questions that are asked during interviews. Be prepared to answer them.

- Can you tell me a little about yourself?
- Why do you want to work for us?
- Why should we hire you?
- What are your strengths?
- Where do you see yourself in 5 years?
- Can you share with me a weakness or area of improvement?

BEHAVIORIAL INTERVIEWING

What Is It?

- Based on the premise that past behavior predicts future behavior
- Behavioral interview questions ask for specific examples

Sample Questions

- What is one of the biggest mistakes you have ever made?
- Can you tell me about a time when you had to motivate someone?
- Can you give me an example of a time when you had to work under a lot of pressure?
- What is one of your greatest accomplishments?
- Can you talk about the last problem you solved in a creative manner?
- Can you describe a situation when you did not get along with someone?

Sample Answer Format

- S – Situation – what was the situation?
- T – Task – what needed to be done?
- A – Action – what steps did you take?
- R – Result – what was the outcome based on your actions?

FINAL BIT OF INTERVIEWING ADVICE

- Be yourself, and be your BEST self
 - Interviewers want to know the real you, and employers want to hire the best you
- Practice! Practice! Practice!
 - Practice answering questions in front of the mirror
 - Practice answering questions with your friends
 - Participate in mock interviews

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SOME RESOURCES FOR EMPLOYER/INDUSTRY RESEARCH

- Hoovers: <http://www.hoovers.com/>
- Mapping Your Future: <http://mappingyourfuture.org/>
- Occupational Outlook Handbook: <http://www.bls.gov/oco/>
- ONET: <http://online.onetcenter.org>
- Vault: <http://www.vault.com/wps/portal/usa>

Ron Roberts, Jr.
Career & College Success Specialist



Bradford Spencer, Ph.D.
Partner
Spencer, Shenk, Capers & Associates, Inc