

## **Leadership & Personal Development for Beginners**

### **Interview Tips for Beginners by Alex Kheyson**

Interviews can be a very scary activity for many people, especially if this is your first interview experience. For some people interview fright usually goes away after they have completed 2-3 interview sessions with a potential employer. However, for many other people this frightening feeling before and during the interview does not go away for much longer, if at all. But I'll tell you what, even if you are extremely afraid of interview experience or if this is your very first interview, perhaps after completing school, you can do a good job and present yourself with the most confidence and knowledge. Below I will share some interview tips for beginners which you may use and practice implementing in your own interview process, and overcome that frightening feeling when you are sitting in front of one or several interviewers.

**Tip #1:** Before going to the interview, make sure that you have researched and know everything about the company that you intend to interview with. You should know and understand their history, accomplishments in business, community involvement, organizational structure (if available), and products/services offered. Knowing this information will help you to sound knowledgeable about the company and show potential employer that you have done your research. Additionally, this will help you to sound more confident when answering interview questions, which is one of the first steps to overcoming interview fear.

**Tip#2:** Make sure that you are appropriately dressed for the interview. Usually you can ask your recruiter when setting up an interview regarding the expected dress code. If that is not an option in your situation, or you simply forgot to ask, business professional is always a good choice, the other option is business casual. Don't come to the interview wearing shorts and t-shirt or jeans.

**Tip#3:** Make sure you plan ahead, know where you need to go, how long it is going to take you to get from point A to point B, including any potential traffic on the way. Arrive to the interview at least 15-20 minutes early.

**Tip#4:** Don't be nervous. Relax, be yourself, and simply answer questions that are being asked. Your interviewer can always tell when you are nervous. Usually your voice will be shaky, your hands won't stay still, your throat may get dry, which makes it hard to talk, your face may turn red, and your palms may get sweaty. So, once again, do not be nervous.

**Tip#5:** Be yourself and don't pretend to be who you are not. Each person is unique and has their unique personality traits. Therefore, relax and simply be you, answer questions how you would answer them versus memorizing specific interview responses, which your interviewer may have heard many times before.

**Tip#6:** Sit up straight in your chair facing interviewer(s) and maintain the line of eyesight with the person(s) in front of you. If you are being interviewed by a panel of interviewers, then you would want

to maintain brief eyesight with each person. However, when a specific person is asking you a question, your attention should be focused on them.

Tip#7: Come prepared. Bring enough copies of your resume to ensure that each interviewer receives a copy. Usually, you would know if it is a one on one interview or a panel interview with several interviewers before the actual session.

Tip#8: Print your resume on a special resume paper, as it looks much more professional than if it's printed on a regular copy paper

Tip#9: Be sure you are ready to speak to any item that is mentioned on your resume, every employer, achievement, skill, or other information that you have listed. If needed, be prepared to provide examples

Tip#10: Don't repeat your answer several times, unless you are asked to repeat your answer by interviewer. Usually, if you are asked to repeat something, that may mean that either your answer was not clear enough or possibly incomplete.

Tip#11: Don't over talk or over explain. By doing so, you will find yourself running in circles, confusing yourself and others. Interviewer may ask follow up question(s) when additional clarity or content is desired. This does not mean that you answers should not be complete, just don't over explain.

Tip#12: If you didn't understand the question that you are being asked, politely ask for clarification to ensure your complete understanding before responding.

Tip#13: If you need to think about the answer, take just a few seconds, gather your thoughts and then respond. Time to think should be very brief, 5-10 seconds max, anything longer turns into dead silence, which is very uncomfortable for all parties.

Tip#14: At the end of the interview make sure you are prepared to ask 1-2 good questions for the interviewer(s). You can determine which questions to ask when you are conducting your pre-interview research about the company. These should be questions that genuinely interest you and you want to learn more about

Tip#15: Remember to shake interviewer(s) hand(s) before departing the interview room, while giving direct eye contact during hand shake.