

## Interview preparation for candidates

Interviewing makes people anxious. It's like meeting your fiancé's parents for the first time. You don't know what to expect. You don't know what's expected of you. The only thing you know for certain is that you're being evaluated-not tested, evaluated. People are tested for facts and viruses. Tests determine whether they have those things or not; it's that simple. Evaluations seem less straightforward, as if they weren't directed at anything in particular.

The fact is interviewers aren't evaluating you on any one thing in particular. That's why interviews cannot be duplicated in multiple-choice format: Your technical knowledge of the field, for example, is not the only thing employers are interested in. Employers use interviews to learn about you, with the end of answering the following questions:

- Are you able to do the job?
- Are you willing to put in the effort to make the job a success?
- Are you manageable?

Every aspect of the interview is geared toward answering one of these questions, with the thousand-dollar question being this: "Do you show promise as a potential employee?" When a prospective employer asks you about your skills and particular instances where you used them, he or she wants to get a feeling for your abilities as a worker. Your dependability and overall interest in the job are what the second question queries: Do you care enough to put in the hours? The third question looks at your demeanor in general and whether you will complement the company's management style.

Regardless of the type of interview being conducted, you should always prepare before attending an interview.

The following are some tips on interview preparation:

- Think of, select and write down 15-20 stories illustrating your assets.
- Practice telling your stories until they are brief and concise, one to three minutes long.
- With each job you've held, write down how you made an impact, i.e., you had the highest sales, you created a new process, you saved money for the company. In fact, these accomplishments should already be on your resume. Let others help you out - use examples of quotes from bosses or customers, i.e., "My boss gave me a good performance review, she/he liked the way I stepped in to get the job done without being told to."
- A good story can also combine work experience with a non-work experience (shows you can use the skill in a variety of settings).
- A good story can also combine a distant experience with a recent experience demonstrating the same skill (shows you've had the skill a long time).
- Research the company you are interviewing with.
- Visit the website, read company documents including annual reports, earning reports and brochures.
- Formulate a list of questions you would like to ask the company.