

The Interview

The interview is the employers chance to size you up. They are looking for the right person to fit in the organization and someone who can excel at the job. They are also concerned with your reliability and motivation, so now is not the time to become shy and demure.

If you really want this job: **show it!** Let your enthusiasm and motivation show through in your demeanor and attitude. Remember that positions in customer service rely more on communication skills than on technical skills.

Preparation

Before the day of the interview, make sure you know how to get to the interview location. Make sure you have a telephone number to the interview location, just in case something happens. Check your route at the time of day you will be driving it so you know how long it takes in traffic. Check your clothes for tears or stains and take them to a dry cleaner if necessary. Make sure your brief case or portfolio is clean and tidy, and carry only the necessities inside. Also, make sure you get plenty of sleep the night before the interview and wake up a little early to give yourself extra time. Also, don't forget to bring an umbrella-just in case. Be there 15 minutes early.

In your briefcase or portfolio, carry...

- Several extra resumes and a list of references
- An industry magazine or company literature
- Paper and pen
- Business cards (optional)
- Breath mints



Hints to Remember.....

- Be polite to the office staff, their impression of you is important
- Be willing to make small talk if they initiate it
- Don't smoke prior to the interview
- Use good posture
- Do not chew gum
- Shake hands firmly

Dress

For good or for bad, your appearance makes a strong statement about the kind of person you are and where you are going. In the job interview your dress conveys success, trustworthiness, intelligence and suitability. Therefore, it is extremely important to dress well for your audience. Remember that as soon as you walk onto the organization's parking lot, you are in the spotlight and how you look and act is a critical part of the audition.

For starters don't neglect to:

- Bathe, shave and style hair neatly - avoid a lot of hairspray
- Have beards and mustaches neatly trimmed
- Have nails trimmed and free of bright polish
- Go light on perfumes and aftershave
- Carry breath mints - especially if you smoke or drink coffee
- Avoid flashy or excessive jewelry
- Avoid heavy makeup
- Make sure shoes are polished and heels less than 2 inches
- Make sure you clean your glasses

It is important to choose your outfit carefully, leaning toward the conservative when in doubt. Try to buy wool or wool blend fabrics, avoid loud colors and prints and be sure that the outfit is cleaned and pressed. It also never hurts to carry a spare shirt, tie or pair of pantyhose just in case.

Clothing Tips - Men

- Conservative suit, navy blue or medium to dark gray, but always be clear on what the company thinks is appropriate
- Long sleeved shirt, button down collar, solid blue or white
- Silk tie matching or complimenting in color or style
- Black dress shoes and over the calf dress socks
- Don't have a pack of cigarettes in your shirt pocket

Clothing Tips - Women

- Skirted suit or pants suit - gray, navy or tan
- Silk blouse - light and solid in color
- Mid heeled pumps - black, gray or navy
- Non textured, natural colored hosiery

Voice and Body Language

Your voice, enunciation and mannerisms are all waiting to betray you. If you want to succeed in the interview you must present a polished image and that includes the unconscious, as well as conscious, details:

Voice

- Attempt to speak in a low tone - it makes you appear calm and self-assured
- Control the pace of your speech, not too slow or fast
- Try to achieve a good volume - not too soft
- Tone: try to sound confident and knowledgeable
- Practice good, clear enunciation
- Keep the "creepers" out - y'know, like, really, uh, things like that, um, err...
- When not talking, close your mouth

Body Language - Do These

- Make frequent eye contact
- Smile
- Take notes
- Smile
- Nod frequently
- Smile
- Keep your hands out of your pocket



Body Language - Don't Do These

- Slouch
- Cross your arms or feet
- Play with your hair
- Tap your feet
- Clear your throat repeatedly
- Bite your lips or nails

Sell Yourself

In the interview, be prepared to tell the interviewer why you are the perfect candidate for the job. Be prepared to back these statements up with facts and instances from past performance. Show confidence in your self and your abilities, but if there is something about which you are unsure, say so. Express your uncertainty but focus on your willingness to learn and uncover the answer. Be able to project the image that the company is looking for by being professional, honest and sincere. Be sure to take notice of your surroundings so that you may make relevant small talk with the receptionist or interviewer.

Remember- the interviewer is interested in three things... **Can Do? Will Do? and Fit?**