

HELP Wanted

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employment
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the Astorian

Tips for interview confidence

Even if you've been on numerous job interviews, the experience never seems to get any easier. The prospect of putting ourselves out there to be judged by others is not a comfortable one.

But let's look at the positives these experiences can bring. With each job interview, you are meeting new people, learning more about yourself and earning more confidence in your presentation skills.

While every interview may not necessarily lead to you landing the job, you should have the goal of feeling better about how to sell yourself in a professional, polished way.

Just a little preparation time can go a long way when it comes to the interview process. The more time you spend getting ready, the more comfortable you'll feel during the actual experience.

Don't stress yourself out when it comes to preparing. Simply research the company, understand the role for which they are hiring and practice discussing your relevant experience, projects and achievements.

Read on for more tips that will help you knock your next interview out of the park.

Study your resume

So often, we slap a resume or LinkedIn profile together and then never refer back to it – this is a big mistake. You should know your resume like the back of your hand. Read over your resume a handful of times before each interview and look for ways to tie your experience to the job announcement.

If your prospective company is looking for specific project experience, be ready to drill down on relatable details in your job-search materials. For example, if interviewing for a management position, it's important to share how you have in the past either saved or made money for your company.

Leave the generalities for the resume – the interview is all about specifics and facts.

Think offense, not defense

When interviewing for a job, it's OK to guide parts of the conversation. Think of how politicians debate. Do they actually ever answer a question head-on? Most great debaters and interviewers look for windows to steer conversations back to a few key points they are hoping to communicate.

Strike a good balance of answering and asking questions. Your goal should be to facilitate a two-way conversation with your interviewer.

Learn as much as you can about your interviewer, including their name, title and background. (Hint: You can likely learn about their experience by finding them on LinkedIn.) This will help break down the walls of awkwardness heading into your interview.

Prepare in advance

Don't wait until the last minute to pick out an interview outfit and print extra copies of your resume. This should all be done well in advance to lessen your stress on interview day.

In fact, have one good interview outfit ready even before you have interviews lined up so you can take a meeting on short notice without stressing out about what to wear.

Know what shoes you'll wear and how much time you'll need to leave yourself if driving to an in-person interview. Bring an organized portfolio with extra copies of your resume to give to your interviewer, and bring a pen and paper for note-taking.

If you're interviewing virtually, have all your meeting technology set and ready in advance. Do a trial run to be certain everything is working properly and make sure you have a neat, clean and organized background for your meeting.

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