

Acing the Interview

30 seconds. Studies show that's the amount of time you have to make an excellent first impression with your interviewer. Why not make the most of that time by being mentally prepared before you walk through the door?

Make a Strong Start

Be sure to arrive 10 minutes early, and park in a location that won't limit your interview time. Turn off your cell phone. Treat everyone you meet with respect, starting with the receptionist and others you encounter. Have positive body language and good posture. Maintain eye contact.

It's GO time

Greet your interviewer with a warm smile and a firm handshake. This is your opportunity to market yourself, so focus on your strengths and attributes without sounding boastful or arrogant. Be confident and clear that you want the job, and the reasons why you are a strong fit for the position and the company. Show your interest in the company by asking questions about the position, the culture and management style. The homework you do ahead of time should help direct the questions you ask. Be positive, even if you discover that the role is different than your expectations. Continue with the interview, and re-evaluate when it is over.

Conquer the Close

You've asked all the right questions, and provided strong answers. Now it's time to conclude the interview like a professional:

- Reiterate your interest in the position and the company
- Summarize your strengths and competencies in relation to the job requirements
- Ask for the job, or for the next step depending on what seems appropriate
- Ask for your interviewer's business card.
- Thank the interviewer for his or her time and consideration. Be sure to smile and give a firm handshake.

After the interview is over, dive right into your follow up, which presents additional opportunities to market yourself and secure that job.

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