

Interview Dos and Don'ts to Help You Land a Great Job

There's no doubt that interviews are anxiety inducing. On the other hand, if you have landed an interview, that means you are one step closer to getting a job. This is always a good thing. Of course, what happens next depends on how well things go in the interview. Check out these dos and don'ts to help insure that your next interview goes well.

Do: Dress in a way that exceeds the dress code for the position that you are seeking. Before you go to a job interview, think about what you would wear to work every day if you got the job. Then, dress just a little nicer than that for your interview. For example, if you would be wearing khakis and a golf shirt every day, show up for the interview in dress slacks and a tie. You won't be overdressed, but you will look like you put in some extra effort.

Don't: Confuse dressing for an interview with dressing to go out.

There are many people, especially recent graduates, who don't have appropriate interview attire. Instead, they have casual daily clothes, and then they have the clothes that they wear when going out in the evenings. If this sounds like your current wardrobe, invest in a conservative outfit or two that are appropriate for interviews.

Do: Prepare answers for some common interview questions.

Before you go to your next interview, spend a little bit of time preparing answers to the following questions:

- Why did you leave your last position?
- What are your strengths and weaknesses?
- Why should we hire you?
- What will your current employer say about you if we check your references?

If you know what you are going to say, chances are better that you won't trip over your words in the interview.

Don't: Overthink and rehearse every possible interview scenario.

There is definitely such a thing as too much preparation. Don't overthink your upcoming interview, or you will just cause yourself anxiety.

Do: Prepare a list of questions about the work you would be doing.

Questions about your daily duties, job description, and upcoming projects are always welcome. They show the interviewer that you are truly interested, and gives them the opportunity to delve into the important details of the position.

Don't: Bring up compensation or benefits

Wait until you receive a job offer to ask about compensation or benefits. This is especially true if you are working with a recruiter. What you don't want to do is give up any information in the interview that will weaken the ability of your headhunter to negotiate a good salary on your behalf.

Do: Research the company by checking out their website and looking into any news stories about them.

Before you walk into the interview, you should know something about the organization. For example, you should know who the CEO is, what services or products that they offer, a little bit about the history of the company, any recent news about the company, and where they are headquartered.

Don't: Ask the interviewer, what the company does.

Your failure to do any research about the company will be an utter turn off to the hiring manager. If you don't fully understand what the company does, it is fine to ask an intelligent question that indicates that you did some research. It is bad form, however to indicate that you know absolutely nothing.

Do: Provide an honest but diplomatic explanation of why you are leaving your current position.

Avoid the temptation to bad-mouth your former employer. Even if, they are widely known for being abusive to their employees, you are better off taking the higher road by citing a disagreement. "It wasn't a good fit for me" is always an acceptable phrase to use.

Don't: Engage in negative talk about a former boss or co-workers.

The person conducting your interview may push you for gossip about your current employers and co-workers. If they do, keep things upbeat and positive.

Do: Arrive early.

This will give you plenty of time to freshen up, use the restroom, and find the office that you are looking for.

Don't: Forget to check traffic reports before leaving for your interview

You may think you have left yourself plenty of time, but a traffic jam can quickly change that. Check your local traffic reports and adjust your route accordingly.