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INTERVIEW QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Things to Remember before/during an interview:

Arrive 15 minutes early for the interview. Be calm.

Make eye contact.

You are there to tell them **WHY** they should hire you. What sets you apart from everyone else they are interviewing (and it really cannot be experience because everyone else they are interviewing has the same experience if not more). If you were hiring someone for your position, what would be most important to you other than experience? You need to know that BEFORE you walk into an interview. Companies are looking for “go getters”/“forward thinkers” ...not ‘complacent’ employees.

No perfume/cologne, no smoking before an interview, dress professional...business pant suit is acceptable for women, suit for men (depending on the position), **smile**, clean breath, leave cell phone in the car, little jewelry, conservative.....**smile!**

People hire people they like. Try and get on a personal level/connection

Somehow but do not get off track too much. Lighten the mood. **Smile.**

Answer all questions with confidence. Example: Can you work overtime? Shouldn't be a problem or absolutely. Obviously there is no doubt with “absolutely”. Confident answers...if you don't believe in you, they won't either.

Stick to the interview. If you are asked about what you did/do at your current/last job, it should be things that pertain to the job you are interviewing for. It is not necessary to bring up items that do not pertain to what they need.

Do NOT talk bad about your old company, your old boss, or the way things are/were ran. Do not complain about stress, overtime, anything. Positive comments at all times.

If you see the questions are closed-ended questions, elaborate. Example: I see you have a degree....yes. Are you working now: no.....you must show your personality.

Sell yourself! This is the time you can brag about yourself.

At the end of the interview.....tell the interviewer that you are EXCITED about the position and say something along the lines..."thank you for taking the time to meet with me today. I am very excited about this opportunity. I can assure you that I will not be a great employee, I will be a FANTASTIC employee." Something that will be a "zinger". *Why will the interviewer remember you when you walk out the door?*

ALWAYS follow up with a thank you note. If you don't have time to mail one, then email it or hand write it and fax it. SOMETHING is better than nothing.

***Regardless if you want the job or not, you want the company to want you. They could "create" a position for you if they like you.

Tell me about yourself – I have lived in Memphis all my life, I am a team player, dependable, and organized. (keep it short and to the point about personal and name 2 or 3 things of what you bring to the table).

Why are you looking to leave your current position? (Position was re-organized, laid-off, quit, etc.). Keep it straight to the point and do not ramble. IF you were fired, use the word "let go" and keep the explanation SHORT. Example: I was let go due to reorganization. Be honest about the situation.....just keep it short.

Do you have experience in _____? If the answer is "no", then take an example from a previous/current job and show how you didn't have experience to begin with but learned it quickly. Example: I do not have experience with Great Plains software but at my last position I did not have experience with Oracle but within 3 weeks (or whatever the time period) I knew it like the back of my hand. **NEVER say "I am a quick learner"**. Companies are interested in experienced candidates NOT quick learners.

What is your greatest strength and your greatest weakness? Your strength should be preferably something that relates to the position. Your weakness should be able to be made into a positive. (I am too detail-oriented. This can be considered a positive and a negative...mostly a positive). It is important to be honest at all times....but do not give more information than needed. (Your weakness should NEVER be "I am late all of the time" or "I can't get along with others" or "I can't handle stress").

Where do you see yourself in 5 years? This should be answered something like this.."I see myself working for a good company and doing the best job I can. Wherever that leads me". Do not talk about being promoted. You are interviewing for the position you are there for....not a promotion before you start.

What are your salary requirements? To be honest, I am more interested in getting with a good company than I am the money. (Only say this if it is true). (If pressured about the money, you can state in the \$30's or \$40's, etc. Never give a range or an exact figure).

When would you be able to start? If immediately, then immediately. Companies are anxious to get employees in. If not, in two weeks or soonest possible time. **If you have a vacation scheduled or time off scheduled, always ask before you accept a position. MOST companies have no problem if you let them know in advance.

Do you have any questions? You should have some questions...some acceptable questions are:

1. What challenges do you think this position has had in the past or would have?
2. **What type of people tend to really thrive, and what type don't do as well?**
3. **Are there any reservations you have about my fit for the position that I could try to address?**
4. What do you most enjoy about your work with this company?

Do not ask questions that are clearly answered on the employer's website and/or in any literature provided by the employer to you in advance.

This would simply reveal that you did not prepare for the interview, and you are wasting the employer's time by asking these questions.

NEVER ask about benefits, money, vacation, sick days, etc. You are there to tell them what YOU can do for them not what THEY can do for you.

If you are in management, be prepared to answer "management questions". How did you handle employees that did not work to their potential? Employees that cannot get along? What is your management style?