

Preparation

The key to success in interviewing is in the preparation. Do you think [*Insert Your Favorite Athlete/Musician Here*] just show up and play with no practice? No way! You should treat an interview the same way.

- **Know the company.** I mean *really* know it. Look at their website and read through the “About Us” section and find your favorite parts. Google them and see what kind of results you get. You might be able to talk about some recent news or changes that will make you stand out.
- **Know yourself.** Sounds dumb because who knows you like you? Have a plan. Know your goals and past experiences and be able to *articulate* them. Think of different situations you’ve been in and how you would tell the story. Does it need more detail? Does it need a better conclusion?
- **Know the position.** You will be asked why you should get the position in some way or another. Be sure to tell them *specifically* why you want the position and why you would be good for it. Not knowing what to say here can/will destroy your chances.

The Interview

Show time. This is it. You prepared and now it’s time to wow your future employers by being the best interviewee they’ve ever met.

- **Show up early.** Give yourself plenty of time. Even if that means pulling into the parking lot 30 minutes early. The worst case scenario should be you sitting in your car mentally preparing for another 15 minutes before going in.
- **Dress to Impress.** Remember: It is always better to be overdressed than underdressed.
- **Shake hands.** Firm, dry, and confident. Smile! Make eye contact.
- **Bring a Padfolio.** And a pen. You will look prepared and professional.
- **Offer your resume.** You should bring extra copies of your resume, cover letter, references, and maybe even some examples of your work (if applicable) just in case someone wants them.
- **STAR** – This is the surefire way to give the interviewer(s) the full, well-constructed answer they are looking for when they ask those behavioral questions that everyone ~~hates~~ loves. Keep this formula in your head to keep yourself on track and not leave anything out. Remember: details make the story.
 - **Situation.** Describe the situation. Where were you? What was your role?
 - **Task.** What did you have to do?
 - **Action.** What did you do? How did you approach the task?
 - **Result.** Don’t forget to tell them how everything turned out
 - *Keep this formula in your head when preparing to make sure everything you are planning to tell them is complete and full of rich details.*
- **Ask questions!** Come prepared with plenty of questions to ask at the end of your interview. It is your chance to show off what you have learned in your research on the company. (Tip: If you can ask the question in more than one interview, it isn’t good/detailed enough!)

After the Interview

It still isn’t over when you ask the last question. You can continue making a positive impact once the questioning stops.

- **Get business cards.** Get them from each person you interview with. It will be easier for you to...
- **Follow up!** Send a thank you email on the *day* of the interview to each person you interviewed with. Send a written thank you *by mail* (yes, with stamps and everything) ASAP. It will usually show up 2 days later so sending it the day of is ideal.