

# Interview Checklist

## Before the Interview

- Identify your strengths, weaknesses, career and personal goals, skills, etc before the interview. Being familiar with common questions like these will allow you to be better prepared.
- Research the company thoroughly.
- Rehearse what you plan to say in a mirror or with someone else. Practicing what you will actually say will help you to critique your answers.
- Prepare questions to ask the employer such as information about the company you were not able to find in your research or specific information about your job description in case it is not fully explained in interview.

## During the Interview

- Dress appropriately for the job you are seeking. Err on the side of being conservative if in doubt.
- Make sure you arrive 10 minutes early to the interview. This will give you time to find parking and to freshen up before it begins.
- Be aware of nonverbal communication throughout the interview. When the meeting begins, offer a firm handshake, sit-up straight, look alert, speak clearly and forcefully but stay relaxed. Make good eye contact, avoid nervous mannerisms like squirming in the seat, tapping your foot or bouncing your leg, and be a good listener.
- Smile!
- Follow the interviewer's lead, but try to get the interviewer to describe the position and duties to you fairly early in the interview so that you can then relate your background and skills in context.
- Be specific, concrete, and detailed in your answers. Explaining examples is an excellent way for the employer to see how you work in different situations. The more information you volunteer, the better the employer gets to know you.
- Stay positive about past employers and jobs you've held.
- Answer questions as truthfully and as frankly as you can while as concisely as possible.

## **Closing the Interview**

- Don't be discouraged if no definite offer is made or if no specific salary is discussed.
- If you get the impression that the interview is not going well and that you have already been rejected, do not let your discouragement show. Once in a while an interviewer who is genuinely interested may seem to discourage you to test your reaction.
- A typical interviewer comment toward the close of an interview is to ask if you have any questions. Use those that you've prepared.
- At the conclusion of your interview, ask when a hiring decision will be made. Then thank your interviewer for his or her time and express your interest in the position once again.
- Make sure you have the employer's contact information. You may even ask for a business card to ensure you have all the information you need.

## **After the Interview**

- Take notes on what you feel you could improve upon for your next interview as soon as you can after it is over and you leave.
- Write a brief thank-you letter to the interviewer indicating your interest within 24 hours of your interview.
- If offered the position, one to two weeks is a reasonable amount of time to make a decision. All employment offers deserve a written reply whether or not you accept them.