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## 7 Interviewing Tips for Job Seekers

The job market is coming back to life, but a 7.3% unemployment rate still means there's a tough road ahead. If you're out of a job - or looking to upgrade your current one - you've likely crafted a professional resume, scoured every online resource and personal contact, and flooded the marketplace with applications. Like an athlete in pre-season training, you've done your work and given yourself the best possible chance to perform. Now comes game time. When you're finally **called in for that job interview**, you've got to knock it out of the park. It's your one chance to validate the promise your potential employer saw in your resume, which means you have to be prepared. For some helpful hints on just how to do that, read on.

### 1. **Be Early**

Don't just plan to be on time for your interview - what if your directions are incorrect or there's an accident on the road? Any employer is going to want to see that you're invested in this position, and punctuality is one of the first ways you can exhibit that. Plan to arrive about 15 minutes early, and if you do get there with time to spare, use it for any last-minute preparation, or, if you're feeling confident, simply relax and get in the zone.

### 2. **Start it Off Right**

Invariably, your introduction to the interviewer is going to include a handshake, and it's important to make a good impression. Hiring managers make subtle evaluations throughout the course of meeting and speaking with you, and a handshake is one of the first of these. Make sure yours is firm and strong to display energy and confidence, whether you're short, tall, man, or woman.

### 3. **Do Your Homework Well Beforehand**

Don't wait until the night before to cram for your interview. Take an appropriate amount of time to research the company's website, news articles, and even a business research website like Hoovers, to come up with information that you can form opinions on and reference during your interview. Injecting any such tidbits into your responses can impress the hiring manager and convey that you have a genuine desire to work for the organization.

### 4. **Make Your Achievements Relevant to Company Needs**



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Do your best to match your experience to the specific needs of the company. You may have to highlight to potential employers just how your past achievements make you a strong candidate for the position you're trying to fill. For example, a management position in the restaurant business entails a lot of the same responsibilities as management in the department store industry - both involve dealing with a range of employees and customer service often in a high stress environment. Find parallels in your resume and highlight them.

## 5. **Curtail the Humor**

If the hiring manager makes a joke to lighten the mood, that's one thing. If you do so unilaterally, however, it could lead to disaster. It may not be seen as funny, it could be misunderstood, and may even come off as offensive. There's no need to go out on a limb. Let the interviewer tell a joke, and keep yours to yourself - just be sure to laugh when you hear it.

## 6. **Be Upfront about Resume Red Flags**

Unless you're incredibly lucky, there is bound to be a red flag or two on your resume. It might be a gap in employment or multiple jobs within a short timeframe. Be prepared to address each and every one of them. Effectively telling the story behind your red flags can help diminish their negative effects. If you took time off to care for an elderly parent, that's a lot different from someone who simply wasn't working because of a lack of motivation.

## 7. **End it Well**

Once the interview is complete, you're probably going to be asked if you have any questions. This is where the company research you did can be fully put to use. Ask about expansion plans, more detail about the job opening, and chances for upward mobility. Your questions should be designed to get you a better sense of the company and position and should ideally help you decide if you'd be happy there. Remember, you want a job, but you may not want this job. The interview is your chance to evaluate the company, just as much as it's the hiring manager's job to evaluate you.

## **Final Thoughts**

Before you head out and breathe that sigh of relief, include one last step. Ask the interviewer how you can expect the process to play out going forward. Should you expect to be contacted, should



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you follow up, or are you likely to be referred to another department? Make sure you know all these parameters so you can address any tasks you may need to complete. Shake hands, say thank you, and later that day send a follow-up email or drop a personalized thank-you note in the mail expressing your gratitude for the opportunity. You want to stay on the interviewer's radar, but you don't want to be too aggressive. Keep sending out applications until you hear back, and let the confidence of your interview power you through the job hunt until you finally get that offer.

What interviewing tips do you have for job seekers?

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- [21 Major Interview Mistakes to Avoid at All Costs](#)
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- [How to Talk About Other Interviews in Your Interviews](#)
- [How to Answer the Tell Me About Yourself Interview Question](#)
- [How to Answer the Do You Have Any Questions for Me Interview Question](#)