



### How to Ace Your Job Interview

**Y**ou filled out and submitted a job application. Then out of the blue, you receive a call from the manager inviting you in for an interview. Now, what are you going to do? Easy, you are going to prepare yourself to ace your interview!

Interviewing is a skill, and like all other skills, you will need to practice and prepare yourself for making a positive impression. You already made it through one hurdle by being invited in for an interview.

Managers typically receive a lot of applications for a job opening, but something about your job application made you stand out. At the interview, you get yet another opportunity to make a positive impression. Make the most of that opportunity.

#### Important Documents

- ❖ You will need to gather the following documents and have them ready prior to arriving at your interview. If you are offered the job, you will need to provide these documents to your employer in order to get a work permit (if you're under 18):
  - Birth Certificate
  - Social Security Card
- ❖ For more information about work permits, go to: [http://dwd.wisconsin.gov/er/labor\\_standards\\_bureau/publication\\_erd\\_4758\\_pweb.htm#4%20Work](http://dwd.wisconsin.gov/er/labor_standards_bureau/publication_erd_4758_pweb.htm#4%20Work)

#### Dress for Success & Dress to Impress

- ❖ You will want to present yourself in a positive and professional manner. Blue jeans and a t-shirt may be how you dress around your friends, but khakis, a nice dress shirt, and dress shoes (no sneakers) will go along way toward making a positive impression.
- ❖ Remember, you want to stand out among all the job applicants for all the right reasons.

#### Arrive Early

- ❖ You never want to show up late for a job interview. Plan on arriving early; 10 to 15 minutes before the start of the interview.
- ❖ Make sure you have transportation to the interview arranged at least the day before.

- ❖ If you run into transportation issues, call the interviewer and inform him or her of your circumstances.
- ❖ It is also a good idea to travel to the job site a few days before the interview. This way, you will know where to go and plan out how long it will take you to arrive at the job site. Preparation is the key.

#### Be Positive and be Prepared

- ❖ Don't ever say any negative things about yourself, a former job, a supervisor, etc. This is your chance to make a positive impression by promoting your positive qualities to your potential new boss.
- ❖ Practice, practice, practice. Ask your parents or a friend who has job experience to help you prepare for your interview. Be open to their feedback and seek out advice from them on how to improve your interview skills.

#### Be Polite

- ❖ Again, first impressions can make all the difference even before the interview starts. Often times, you will be checking in with a receptionist or another employee. Make sure to treat that person with as much respect as you will the interviewer.
- ❖ Shake the interviewer's hand and introduce yourself by your first and last name. Make sure you don't use too strong or too weak of a handshake. A nice firm handshake and good eye contact will make for a positive impression.
- ❖ An interview is not the place to use slang. You will want to practice talking in a respectful and courteous manner ahead of time. Little things like saying, "Yes" instead of "Yeah." Or "Could you repeat the question?" instead of "What did you say?" can make a big difference when it comes time for the manager to make a decision on who they would like to hire.

## Acing Your Job Interview , continued

### Always ask At Least One Question

- ❖ There is always an opportunity for you to ask a question and this usually occurs at the end of the interview.
- ❖ When you are asked if you have any questions; be prepared to ask one or two questions. This shows that you are interested in the position and the company and that you are interested in finding out more information about the responsibilities associated with the job.
- ❖ These are some good questions to ask:
  - What are the job responsibilities of this position?
  - How soon are you looking to fill this position?
  - Why do you like working here?
  - Can you describe an ideal employee?
  - Can I have your business card?

### At the End of the Interview

- ❖ Always shake the hand of the interviewer at the beginning and the end of the interview.
- ❖ You should also express your appreciation for being invited to the interview.
  - “Thank you for the taking the time to interview me, Mr. Jackson, I look forward to hearing from you in the near future.”
  - “Thank you for your time and consideration, Ms. Jones. I am definitely interested in working here, and I will look forward to hearing from you soon.”

### After the Interview is Over

- ❖ Take a deep breath! You are done...well, almost!
- ❖ Reflect back on how you did. Are there things you could have handled differently?
- ❖ Remember, each interview is a learning experience and a chance to develop your skills. You can learn something positive from every interview experience!

- ❖ Write a thank you letter to the person or persons who interviewed you. Send your thank you letter out within two days of your interview. Sending out a thank you letter will make you stand out. This alone may not get you a job, but you will definitely make a positive impression

If you do not get offered the job, do not get discouraged. Keep on applying and keep on interviewing. Remember, you are competing with many others for the job and therefore, many people are also not going to be offered the position, either.

The more times you interview, the more interviewing skills you will acquire. While interviewing is often stressful, try to look at it as meeting someone new and try to enjoy the process. Stay confident in your abilities and ace the interview!



### Resources

For addition resources on job skills, visit the following websites which are designed for youth in care and provide a number of independent skill resources:

- Bust'n Out!: [http://www.fosteryouth.net/Home\\_Page/Home\\_Page.asp](http://www.fosteryouth.net/Home_Page/Home_Page.asp)
- Independence for Foster Youth: <http://www.independence.wa.gov/default.asp>
- FYI3.com: <http://www.fyi3.com/fyi3/index.cfm>
- For more information about work permits, go to: [http://dwd.wisconsin.gov/er/labor\\_standards\\_bureau/publication\\_erd\\_4758\\_pweb.htm#4%20Work](http://dwd.wisconsin.gov/er/labor_standards_bureau/publication_erd_4758_pweb.htm#4%20Work)

### Resources from our website:

- Do You Have What It Takes? A Comprehensive Guide to Success After Foster Care (book) <http://www.wifostercareandadoption.org/plugins/library/viewmaterial.asp?aid=5377>
- It's My Life: Employment (Casey Family Programs) <http://www.wifostercareandadoption.org/plugins/library/viewmaterial.asp?aid=5063>