



## Top 10 Interviewing Tips

### Ground work before applying

Conduct your research— Request the full job description (not just the job advertisement), review this very closely and imagine the type of work they might do and the people they may interact with. See what is written about the program or office on-line. Informally talk with people who might know something about the position and the office/department it supports. GOAL – Determine the essence of the job – what are those key deliverables and responsibilities—what really makes the position tick.

### Cover letters – don't apply without one!

Applicant pools are large and competitive. Those who take the time to customize a cover letter for each position to which they are applying, are more likely to have their resume reviewed. Use your research and knowledge of the job to highlight connections between your experience and the qualifications and responsibilities of the position. This is also the place to include relevant information that is not captured on your resume.

Typos are a deal breaker and suggest a lack of attention to detail.

### Resume styles – your professional autobiography

There are several resume styles to choose from – find the one that best represents and highlights your experience and skills (see resources on the back of this sheet.) Use key words from the ad language when listing your accomplishments. Be sure to include work dates (month and year) for each position. In general, it is not necessary to include jobs from more than 15 years ago.

### Telephone interviews

Most candidates fail to realize that the phone interview is the real thing and should be treated the same as a physical meeting. Dress as if you were meeting face to face, avoid distractions and be professional. Taking the telephone interview seriously can be a critical step in the recruitment process.

### Conversation skills

During the telephone interview you should avoid jargon, the use of slang, and inappropriate/unpolished communications. Do not eat, drink or chew gum during the call. Don't speak too quickly and be succinct in your responses, telephone interviews are usually 30 minutes in length and you're wasting your own time if you stray off the subject.

### Onsite interviewing

The interview starts when you arrive at the business location and doesn't end until you are off the property and out of sight. Other staff will notice what you say and how you conduct yourself in their presence, and receptionists are often asked to evaluate candidates. Treat everyone you encounter with courtesy.

Come prepared to the interview and be professional. Arrive on time wearing attire appropriate to the position, use business etiquette, appropriately greet interviewers, offer a firm handshake, maintain good eye contact and good body posture. Listen carefully to each question, feel free to pause and gather your thoughts before answering. And remember to turn off your cell phone.

## **Traditional networking**

Identify your advocates by starting the process with people you are comfortable with, and remember to engage in authentic conversation, not a sales pitch. Additionally remember that listening is more important than anything you can say, and no matter how many connections you make, they mean very little if you don't follow-up and stay in touch.

## **Social networking**

Be careful of what you post online: The internet saves all its input and there's no telling where something could re- surface at a most inopportune time. If that occurs while you're in job search mode, the results could be disastrous. Think twice before posting. Also, set limits on how much time you spend online. You still need the one- on-one in person conversations; social networking does not take the place of human interaction.