**Interviewing 101**

Interviews can be the most intimidating part of securing employment. Always drive yourself towards the job you want. Start thinking about current and past experiences in relation to what the new job duties/company may be like and start developing your answers now. Remember:

* First impressions matter – Most interviewers know if you are a good fit within the first five minutes.
* 55% of the decision is based on nonverbal cues: posture, gestures, facial expressions, crossed arms, etc.
* Stay confident throughout the interview. Interviewers sometimes act in certain ways to judge how you may handle certain behaviors and may test you to verify what you listed on your application or resume.
* Know yourself and your past and learn to sell your previous experiences and skills in relation to the position for which you are applying.
* Familiarize yourself with the industry and company through websites, trade magazines, and employees to ensure you don‘t make an irredeemable mistake in the interview.

**Types of Questions to Expect During a Job Interview**

The company hiring manager will prepare two main types of questions to ask during the interview. The first type of question is a **close ended question** where the answers should be straight-forward and brief. Examples of these questions are:

* Would you describe yourself as goal driven?
* Would it be a problem for you to relocate?
* Are you willing to submit to pre-employment health screenings?
* Are you proficient in using Microsoft Excel?

Another type of question is the **behavioral-based questions** where answers are more detailed and evaluate a person’s experience and behaviors to determine their potential. These questions are generally open-ended and start with “Tell me about a time” or “Describe a situation.” Some examples of these questions are:

* Give me a specific example of a time when you used good judgment and logic in solving a problem.
* Tell me about a time when you had to make an unpopular decision.
* Describe a recent situation in which you had to deal with a very upset customer or coworker. What did you do and why?

Contact your WorkForce West Virginia local office for a larger list of sample interview questions or visit [www.careeronestop.org](http://www.careeronestop.org) or [www.usnlx.com](http://www.usnlx.com) for more information.

**Tips for the Interview**

* Practice as often as possible with as many different people as possible.
* Be properly groomed for the position – clean, appropriate work or interview attire for the job (Clothing should identify you as someone the employer would want to represent them. Be conservative in your personal style choices).
* Bring only essential items with you to the interview such as your ID, Social Security number, a notebook and pen, and a copy of resume and references to the interview. Be prepared to fill out hiring paperwork.
* Go alone to the interview – NEVER bring a friend or family member.
* Be ten to fifteen minutes early. Be polite and friendly to everyone you meet and follow the directions given upon check-in.
* Greet with a firm handshake and a smile. Be aware of your body language – stand up straight, hold your head up, have confidence and exhibit good posture – use a mirror to practice.
* Maintain eye-contact with the interviewer – be open, lean forward and listen.
* Show that you can adapt to change – all new jobs require that you learn new things.
* Explain how you would go about doing a certain task or job, don’t just say you can do it.
* Use evidence, examples, data and anecdotes to illustrate your points.
* Ask questions about the job throughout the interview. Avoid questions about the compensation package, time off, etc. You can ask specific questions AFTER the offer has been made.
* Prove your abilities and be prepared to answer almost any question – practice, practice, practice.
* Take a moment to think about the questions asked – give clear, concise answers. If you get confused or nervous, ask the interviewer to repeat the questions to clarify.
* Put a positive spin on a negative (weakness) area. For example, “Although I do not have much experience with computers, I am eager to learn.”
* Never lie or make derogatory remarks about previous employers.
* Don’t give away too much information about your personal life or ask questions that might screen you out such as “Do I have to work weekends?”
* Have a sense of humor – keep it positive, upbeat, and non-confrontational. Feel free to chuckle at an interviewer’s attempt at humor.
* Never interrupt the interviewer and don’t act too comfortable in the interview setting.
* Take cues from your interviewer – if they seem to be moving on to the next questions and/or wrapping up, don’t prolong the interview – summarize key points and move along.
* If a barrier to hiring you arises during the interview, address it and present solutions to the interviewer. Don’t let it hang out there unanswered.
* Thank the interviewer for their time, shake hands, reiterate your interest in the job and ask if you can follow-up in a specific time frame. Adhere to what the interviewer told you to do.

For additional assistance preparing for an interview, contact your WorkForce West Virginia local office.