

# First Impressions

*You've heard the phrase, "first impressions are everything." It's true. You can rarely recover from a negative first impression. The following are some interview tips that should improve your chances of earning that second interview or landing the perfect job*

## Make certain you have answered the following question before interviewing:

Have you researched the company well enough that you are confident that this is an employer you would see yourself going to work for, if the following are acceptable?

- Opportunity is the right career enhancing position?
- Boss is someone you could work with and for?
- Compensation and benefits align with your needs?

Remember, employers are seeking to hire employees that are prepared, confident, and qualified to do the job. If you can't answer the previous questions with a YES you are probably NOT ready to interview for the position.

## Dress for Success

Experts say that no matter what the corporate culture - whether khakis and polo shirts or three piece suits - you should still dress professionally for that first interview. Always ask the question before the interview "What is the proper interview attire?"

## Be Prepared

It is imperative that you do your research prior to the interview. Use your resources, internet, industry contacts, magazine articles, etc. Be sure you are well-versed in as many of the firm's products or services as possible. Find out what

you can about the hiring manager. it is a good idea to bring something to take notes on in an interview.

## Sell Yourself

Make it a goal to understand the culture of the company, the work the company needs done, and how they would want the job done. This sounds like a lot of work, and it is. Any position worth having will be a lot of hard work. Why should your preparation for the interview be any different? Use your past experience to support your position, but the key is to be able to convey what you can do for this company going forward. If you have done your research, the rest is easy. This hiring manager wants you to tell them why you want the job, and why they should hire you. Sell yourself just like you would sell a product or service (the key is all in being prepared for the interview).

## Discussing Compensation

This is a serious no-no for a first interview, unless the company brings up the topic. Undervaluing or over-valuing your worth can cost you a 2nd interview. Remember, the 1st interview typically is a company's way of disqualifying candidates, thus narrowing the list. If asked, give them a broad range and let them know that you would like to be compensated in a manner that is competitive given the required responsibilities of the position.

## Keep Your Responses to the Point

Remember, companies like people that can

think on their feet and solve problems. Some candidates are so eager to impress the interviewer that they rarely allow questions to be asked.

## Avoid Acting Desperate

Even if you've been on the job market for some time, the last thing most hiring managers want is someone who looks too eager. At the end of the interview, thank them for taking the time to meet with you. Let them know that you are interested in the position and hope to hear back from them soon.

## Always Follow-Up with a Thank You

Regardless of how the interview went, good or bad, always follow up with a thank you.. Although a handwritten thank you note is a nice personal touch, you should consider what kind of time line you are working with. If the hiring manager is going to be moving quickly to fill the position, an email thank you is much quicker and will work just great. The key here is follow-up after the interview!