

# THE INTERVIEWING PROCESS

This is a 3-part process:

- 1. Before the Interview**
- 2. The Interview**
- 3. After the Interview**

## 1. Before the Interview

- **Know what the employer seeks in a candidate and what you have to offer.** The job description tells you what they are seeking. Education, hard and soft skills, experience, leadership.
- Prepare yourself by thinking about questions that you may be asked. It will help to write down your answers and practice saying them. Telling **STAR** stories with concrete examples is a good way to answer behavioral interview questions.
- **Research the company.** The interviewer will expect you to know about them. Know their products, services, and competitors. Their web site is the best place to learn about the company.
- **Prepare questions** that are based on your research, which you will ask the interviewer.
- **Plan what you will wear.** It is best to be overdressed vs underdressed. You can always ask before the interview what the appropriate dress is.
- **Online Interviewing:** What technology or tool are they using for a remote interview? Do you have it downloaded in advance so that you are ready?
- **Phone interviews:** These are done by HR. They want to know if you fit, in order to pass you on for the next interview. Prepare for this just as if it were a face-to-face interview.
- **For face-to-face interviews be sure that you know where you are going.** Do a trial run. Arriving late for an interview is disastrous. Arriving 15 minutes early allows you to go to the restroom to check your appearance.
- **Know who is doing the interview.** Is it a human resources person or the actual person that you will be responsible to?
- **Bring extra copies of your resume and references** and put them in a nice folder that you will bring to the interview. This is also a good place to carry the questions that you will ask.
- Turn your cell phone off before you go into the interview.

## 2. The Interview

- The interview begins as soon as you arrive at the company.
- Office staff observes you and may be asked about your behavior.
- Your handshake is important. Use a firm grip and look the interviewer confidently in the eye. Smile too!

- Don't sit until you are invited to do so.
- The beginning of the interview is generally small talk. A good interviewer will seek to put you at ease.
- The middle part of the interview is where you **sell yourself**. The interviewer wants to know if you are a **fit** for the company. The interviewer will ask you a variety of questions about your skills (hard and soft), your education and experience.
- Answer questions concisely, use examples or **STAR** stories.
- Do not talk negatively about a current or past employer.
- **Ask questions too**. Interviews are a dialog not a monolog. Ask the questions that you prepared.
- If you don't know the answer to a question, don't babble on hoping that you will eventually say something intelligent. You can ask the interviewer to rephrase or repeat the question or you can simply say that you don't have an answer and would like more time to think about your answer.
- Be aware that the interviewer may ask an unusual question or their "favorite" question.
- Let them bring up the salary but do your research before the interview so that you know what the pay range for the position is.
- The interview may end with the interviewer asking you if you have any more questions or anything else you want to say. This is your chance to express your interest in the position and to reiterate why/ how you want or fit the position. You need to let them know what you can do for the company.
- You may be asked to take a test or assessment: drugs, personality, skills.
- They may do a background or credit check.
- If the interviewer does not give you a time frame for when the company will decide about hiring someone for the position this is the time that you should ask something like, "When can I expect to hear from you?" Do not leave this up in the air.
- You may be asked back for additional interviews.
- Do not leave the interview without getting the business card of the person(s) that interviewed you.

### 3. **After the Interview**

- Reflect on how you did and make notes about what you did well or would do differently in your next interview.
- Send a thank-you note within 2 days. Handwritten notes are more personal, but you can type it or e-mail it too.
- Complete any follow-up instructions the interviewer gave to you.