

15 INTERVIEW TIPS FOR SERIOUS TWENTYSOMETHINGS



Summary: *The younger generation can get a bad rap for being lazy and unprofessional so debunk those assumptions during your interview.*

You are a recent college graduate ready to enter the working world among the other hundreds of qualified applicants. Finding a way to stand out but remain professional and memorable is a thin line to balance for some. Get an extra boost to propel you through the interview by following these 15 tips.

1. Try to find a connection with someone who works for the company you are interviewing with. Once you find one, even if they are friends of a friend, ask them all you can about the interviewing process, dress code, etc.
2. Bring extra copies of your one-page resume to the interview so that every person who attends or interviews you will have a copy. It will also be a good reference for you when discussing specific details like dates of previous jobs.
3. Be early, not just on-time. Give yourself ample time to calmly get to the interview and prepare. There is nothing worse than running around like a chicken with its head cut off as you race to get to the interview.
4. Don't be excessively early. If the interview is at the office, showing up 30 or more minutes early does not look good. If you arrive that early, find a place outside to kill a few minutes or sit in your car. If you arrive too early, you spend unnecessary time sitting nervously in the waiting room and may make your interviewer feel rushed to get ready.
5. Make sure your phone is charged and that you know where you are going. If the interview is being held someplace other than the office, have a practice run so you can time how long it takes to get there and will know how to get beforehand.
6. The interviewer is not your buddy. Some companies hold pretty informal interviews but that does not mean you should treat it as a time when you can fully relax and let go. Keep your conversation and body language professional.
7. Use your technology skills and research the company and interviewer like crazy. When you walk into the interview, you should know everything there is to know about the company and who is interviewing you, when possible. Don't go so far as to add the interviewer as a friend or to your LinkedIn network just yet.
8. Start following the company on social platforms, especially Twitter. They will know if you are invested in the company and its happenings based on comments you make that reference things on their social media pages.
9. Ask them as many questions back as you can but make sure the questions are quality ones. Don't just be asking things that they have already talked about or can be found on one of their online pages.
10. Be overly enthusiastic. You don't want there to be any question in the interviewer's mind that you want to be there, working for that company. Let your eagerness drip from your ears.
11. Treat the interview like an opportunity to have a brainstorming meeting two coworkers would have. Talk about ways the company could improve in ways that the interviewer is looking for. The goal here is to show what ideas you can bring to the company and the value you have as a member of the team.
12. Keep your answers concise and to the point. If you are asked an open-ended question, such as the typical "Tell me about yourself..." don't ramble on.
13. Don't lie, exaggerate, or beat around the bush. They are looking for honest answers. When the interviewer asks "What's your biggest weakness?" or "How have you dealt with problems with a co-worker?" they want to hear real answers not a cop-out of "I don't have weaknesses" or "I've never had a problem with a co-worker." You have weaknesses, perhaps vanity is your weakness since you think you don't have one. Everyone has had a problem with a co-worker at some point, even if it was something minor like they ate lunch at their desk every day and would have smelly food.
14. Watch your body language. Some people do things when they are nervous without even realizing. Women tend to mess with their hair, jewelry, or clothing. Men commonly play with their facial hair, fidget with a watch, or wiggle their leg. Be aware of what your nervous tick is so you can make an effort to avoid the action.
15. Send a thank email to everyone you met during the interview the same day or next day. Send a thank you note in the mail the same day so it arrives a few days later to those you met as well.

Do you think it is okay to be more casual during interviews at casual companies like start-ups? Share your thoughts with us in the comments below.

To learn more about how to write a follow-up thank you note, read these articles:

- [Thank You Letters—How to Do Them Right](#)
- [Top Mistakes on Thank You Notes](#)
- [5 Rules When Writing an Interview Thank You Note](#)

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