Tips for Interviewing

Things To Do Before the Interview:

- Research the organization you are interviewing with. You should know published goals, successes, and challenges of the organization, as well as have an opinion on them.

- If interviewing for graduate school, know something about the university, department, faculty members, and program expectations. Be able to relate yourself and your skills to the school or job that you are applying for.

- Practice! When you practice, try to simulate the interview as much as possible. If you know it will be a phone interview, practice with a friend over the phone.

- Make sure to bring a legal pad and writing utensil. You may need to take notes during the interview.

- Arrive 5-7 minutes early. If you arrive before that, you may be inconveniencing the office staff.

- Remember, the interview begins the moment you begin communicating with the school, corporation, or representatives. This includes how you interact with the office manager as you walk in the door!

- Dress professionally. People unconsciously judge us based partly on what we look like. Do not chew gum or smell of smoke.

- Be quite sure of the directions to the location prior to the interview to ensure that you are not lost on the way, causing a time delay.

- Carry the phone number of the interviewer with you on the way to interview in case of an emergency or unanticipated tardiness.
During the Interview:

- Start with a firm handshake. State your name fully and clearly (this will clarify any pronunciation issues and reinforce you in the interviewers’ memory).

- Be conscious of the time. In an interview there is a fine balance between being too short on your responses and being too longwinded. It really depends on the length of the interview and the interviewer and interviewees.

- Know the kind of questions that may be asked of you and practice your responses. Think about organizing your responses before you begin. Think about ways to use examples to support your answers. It is much more effective to have a concrete example in mind when addressing a question.

- Be confident in your responses to the interviewer’s questions. Make yourself stand out. Try to avoid commonplace answers to questions.

- In order to avoid commonplace answers, use specific examples that will highlight the talents you have. Rather than simply stating that you are organized, recount a short story of a time when you displayed your organizational skills.

- Before answering a question, be sure that you understand the question. If you do not understand a question, ask for clarification. Doing so may prevent an embarrassing situation.

- Maintain good posture. Use your body language to show interest. Don’t slouch, and avoid nervous hand gestures and maintain eye contact.

- Be sure to have prepared several questions that inquire directly about the company, work environment, and expectations.

- Avoid asking the interviewer questions about salary or benefits, and also, avoid asking questions that can easily be found on the company website.