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PREPARATION FOR INTERVIEW

Know the exact place and time of the interview, the interviewer's full name, the correct pronunciation and their title.

Also, if you are driving to your interview be aware of where you will be able to park. If you are relying on public transport, ensure you know which bus/train to catch and how close the stop is at your destination be sure to allow enough travelling time. All of this information can be quickly obtained from the company's Receptionist, if you are unsure.

Find out specific facts about the company.

The location of its plants, offices or stores; what its products and services are; what its growth has been; and what its growth potential is for the future. There are a number of research publications providing this kind of information available in your local public library, on the internet etc.

Consider what to wear and prepare it advance.

Dress in smart business attire (not sports clothes). First impressions are most important.

Prepare the questions you will ask during the interview.

Remember that an interview is two-way. The employer will try to determine through questioning if you have the commitment and qualifications necessary to do the job. You must determine through questioning, whether the company will give you the opportunities for the growth and development you seek.

Questions you might ask could include:

- A detailed description of the position?
- Reason the position is available?
- Anticipated induction training program?
- Advanced training programs available?
- Long term opportunities with the company?
- Company's plans for growth?



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INTERVIEW "DO'S"

Arrive on time or a few minutes early. Late arrival for a job interview is never excusable. Also, don't arrive more than ten minutes early as your early arrival may conflict with other appointments the interviewer has set for the day.

If presented with an application form, fill it out neatly. If you have a resume with you or if this has already been provided to the interviewer advise the receptionist on arrival, you may not be required to repeat all the detail on their form.

Shake hands firmly.

Wait until you are offered a chair before sitting.

Look alert and interested at all times. Listen to what is being said. Look your interviewer in the eye at the interview.

Follow the interviewer's leads; however, try to get the interviewer to describe the position and the duties to you early in the interview so that you can relate your background and skills to the position.

Make sure that your good points get across to the interviewer in a factual, sincere manner. Keep in mind that you alone can sell yourself to an interviewer. Make them realise the skills you have would be of great benefit to their organisation.

Avoid making malicious or spiteful remarks about present or former employers.

Always conduct yourself in a positive professional manner. Never close the door on any opportunity. It is far better to be in a position to choose from a couple of offers rather than only one.



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INTERVIEW "DON'TS"

Don't smoke before the interview. No amount of breath fresheners or perfume will eradicate the evidence! Even if the interviewer smokes it can be very off putting in an interview. Also, never eat or chew gum during an interview.

Don't answer questions with a simple "yes" or "no". Explain whenever possible. Tell those things about yourself which relate to the position. However, don't "over answer" questions, be sure you feel you've answered all questions completely.

Don't be tempted to over inflate the truth.

Don't enquire about salary, holidays, bonuses, retirement, etc in the initial interview. These matters will be covered at the appropriate time. If the interviewer asks what salary you want, name a fair figure. However, if challenge and opportunity are of greater importance to you then tell them so.

INTERVIEW CLOSE

If you are interested in the position, say so! Establish what the next step is, e.g. second interviews or meeting other senior staff.

If you're offered the position and you want to accept on the spot, do so! If you need time to think it over be courteous in asking for time, however set a definite time when you can provide an answer.

If you sense the interview is not progressing well or you are clear the position is not for you - say so.

Thank the interviewer for their time. Again, if you are interested reiterate it, if not, then the interviewer has clarified the questions you needed answered.



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CONSIDERING A COUNTER OFFER

You've landed a new position and handed in your notice. However, before you succumb to a tempting counter offer, consider these universal truths:

No matter what the company says when making its counter offer, you will always be considered a fidelity risk. Having once demonstrated your lack of loyalty (for whatever reason) you will lose your status as a "team player" and the place in the inner circle.

Counter offers are usually nothing more than a stalling device to give your employer time to replace you. Your reasons for wanting to leave still exist. Conditions are just made a bit more tolerable in the short term because of a raise, promotion or promise to keep you.

Counter offers are only made in response to a threat to quit. Will you have to solicit an offer and threaten to quit every time you deserve better working conditions?

Decent and well-managed companies don't make counter offers ... ever! Their policies are fair and equitable. They will not be subjected to "counter offer coercion" or what they perceive as blackmail.