



## [DR. SHIRLEY SAYS...]

By: DR. SHIRLEY A. WHITE  
President  
Success Images

Reprinted from the October 2004 issue of BIC

# Job interviewing tips, Part 1

Congratulations! Your résumé and cover letter have been successful. You've been invited to the interview. Good for you.

You arrive at the interview on time, dressed for success. You look confident and credible. Then, within the next few days you find out you didn't get the job. What happened? Perhaps you, like many applicants, need a little bit of interview coaching.

The employment interview is the single most important event in the job-search process. For many professionals, it's also one of the most unnerving. It doesn't have to be unbearable, however. Keep in mind that the objective of the interview is the exchange of information. The interviewer wants to know if you have the skills and/or experience the company needs and whether you will

and natural, and you will find that your interviews go much better. They will also proceed well if you remember that nearly everything you do or don't do before, during and after the interview affects its outcome. So, let's take a look at some of the basic tips.

Before the interview: Prepare! Prepare! Prepare! The more prepared you are, the less anxious and more able you will be to present yourself in a positive and professional manner.

An old saying in human resource circles is that the hiring decision is often made in the first 30 seconds of the interview, and the balance of the time is used to justify that decision. Dr. Joyce Brothers refers to this as the "30-second hurdle." In other words, you never get a second chance to make a first impression.

So, beginning with the obvious, pay attention to your appearance. Your wardrobe is something over which you have total control. While there is no magic outfit designed for instant hiring success, you should keep in mind that it is always better to err on the conservative side when dressing for an interview.

Your goal is to create a strong, positive, credible first impression. Remember that simplicity and good taste are desirable. Also, keep in mind that what is appropriate is determined by the profession/industry position for which you are applying and the geographical location.

The way you present yourself is the single most powerful nonverbal statement you can make. Even if you personally believe that too much

emphasis is placed on appearance, it's human nature for an employer to be more favorably inclined toward the well-qualified job candidate who also looks the part.

Know the company. Before going on an interview, learn as much as possible about the company. The more you know, the easier it will be for you to carry your half of the interview and relate your skills to the company's needs.

During the course of your research, find out as much as you can about the nature of the job. This will help you prepare your strategy in adapting your background and qualifications to the needs of that position.

If possible, find out a little about the interview procedure. In most small companies, there is one interview, usually with the person for whom you will work. In larger organizations, there may be multiple interviews, beginning with the human resources department and ending with the head of the department in which the vacancy exists. Better to know ahead of time that you may be subject to two or three interviews than to be thrown off guard at interview time.

Keep in mind, interviewing is a skill. That means it can be learned. All it takes is motivation, enthusiasm, confidence in yourself and practice.

Stay tuned for "Job interviewing tips, Part 2" in the next issue. Pointers for rehearsing the interview along with handling yourself during and after the interview will be addressed.

**For more information, please contact Dr. White at (225) 769-2307. □**

*Interviewing is a skill. That means it can be learned.*

be able to work with the staff and fit in with the organizational culture.

On the other hand, you should be interested in the results the new employee would be expected to produce, the attitude or personal qualities you would need to be an asset to the team, and the skills/experience the company is looking for in the person they choose for the job.

The job interview is not a test to be passed or failed. Rather, it should be simply a great conversation. As such, be prepared, truthful, relaxed