INTERVIEW BRUSH UP

Making a Big Impression on the Big Day
Applicants’ Mistakes

- Interview: 32%
- Resume: 21%
- Cover Letter: 9%
- Reference Checks: 9%
- Interview Follow-up: 9%
- Screening Call: 7%
- Other: 6%
- Do Not Know: 2%

Total: 14%
Interviewing Mistakes

- Little/No Knowledge of Company: 49%
- Unprepared to Discuss Career Plans: 25%
- Limited Enthusiasm: 18%
- No Eye Contact: 5%
- Unprepared to Discuss Skills/Experience: 3%
Q: Hold on here! A lot of this interview stuff is based on research or some stupid social protocols that Miss Manners dreamed up. . . . what if the people interviewing me aren’t familiar with all this business – is it still important?

A: Hmmmmmmmmmm. . . .
General Hints

- Personal Appearance: “When you’re properly dressed and groomed, you demonstrate respect and consideration for your surroundings and for those with whom you interact.”

- Don’t be late – suggests poor time management skills and insinuates the other person’s time is not important.
General Hints

- Relax & have self confidence (not arrogance)
- Do mock interviews
- Personal hygiene (hair, teeth, no facial hair, no gum, mints, fingernails, antiperspirant)
- Ladies & makeup
- Prepare two questions for interviewer
- Emphasize strengths – be prepared to talk about weaknesses as well
General Hints

- Avoid distractions (bottled water, gum, cell phones, lotion, etc).
- Bring a folder with a few clean copies of your résumé printed on high-quality paper, a pad of paper to write on, a pen, and possibly a leather portfolio.
- Be pleasant to everyone & be positive.
- Maintain positive eye contact and body language. Nodding your head in agreement shows you’re engaged; slouching shows you’re bored.
- Play it humbly! Everything about you should say you’re grateful to be given the opportunity to interview.
- Correctly pronounce the interviewer’s name – know his or her title whenever possible.
General Hints

- Handshakes/greetings. . .
  - Use a firm grip (no fish or milking)
  - Shake hands once or twice & look people in the eye
  - Introduce yourself
  - Rise when others enter the room
- Use caution with “me-isms”
- Know about the school before you arrive
General Hints

- Inconsiderate behavior. Do they... 
  - Keep you waiting?
  - Answer the phone?
  - Fail to make eye contact?
  - Fail to pay attention to you?

- No matter! Don’t ever allow someone’s inconsiderate behavior to mar your performance.
Unmentionables: What *not* to share during an interview

- Feelings you have which could be considered sexist or racist
- Politics
- Religion
- Favorite sports team/sports figure
- Bad weather or traffic complaints
Dealing with Questions

- Interviewers are looking for candidates who are creative thinkers focused on finding solutions.

- **Tip**: Think about problems in the past you’ve identified and managed to solve. Show readiness to tackle tough issues.

- **Ex**: “Tell us about a time when you were participating in a group project, and one of your teammates was clearly not pulling his or her weight.”
Dealing with Questions

- Keep it positive and don’t whine.
- Interviewers are looking for team players who will bring positive energy and initiative to work.
- **Tip:** Be ready with examples of positive suggestions about problems or issues that you took initiative on in order to demonstrate your skills. Steer clear of criticism of others even if invited to offer it.
Unmentionables: What *not* to share during an interview.

- Don’t be a name dropper
- Anything that pops into your head to fill the silence — think before you speak
- Pointless chatter — once you’ve answered a question stop
- Lavish praise for the person conducting the interview
- Negative body language
- Swearing — even if they do
Closing & Follow Up

- Firm handshake + big smile
- Thank them for their time
- Always write a thank-you note following the interview...
  - Write it immediately
  - Handwritten on professional-looking stationery
  - Remember title and spelling
  - Each interviewer gets a note
  - No e-mail messages!