Jobs

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**JOBS**  
**Acing the Interview**

- NABILA KHOURI

It’s probably one of the most important facets to your job or graduate school application. A good interview can seal the deal or make them forget why they liked your resume in the first place. Although there are many types of interviews, all aim to do the same thing: gain knowledge, and a sense of character about the prospective employee.

“Interviewing is a skill which is often underestimated,” Beth Chancy, assistant director of Career Services, said. “Even the most seasoned interviewer needs practice talking about their qualifications and interest in a position or organization.”

After speaking with several members of Career Services, Forum has created a foolproof list of tips for acing the interview. If these still don’t have you feeling confident, schedule a mock interview with Career Services.

1. **DRESS THE PART**

The minute you walk through the interviewer’s door, you are being judged. It’s important that the first impression is a strong and positive one. Depending on the job, dress appropriately for the interview. Business casual to full business attire is suggested, no matter who is interviewing you. Men should be freshly shaved and women should have minimal makeup and accessories on. You want the person interviewing you to remember what was said and discussed, not what you were wearing. The little things count too, like too many rings or mismatched socks. Avoid wearing cologne or perfume, it can be a distraction if overdone.

2. **RESEARCH, RESEARCH**

This one seems like a given, but don’t just research the organization’s main goals and missions. Find out as much as you can. Google is your best friend. Search news and media databases to find out if there are any articles or stories written about the organization or individual who is interviewing you. An interviewer will appreciate enthusiasm and knowledge of the organization, and it will help you ask smart questions.

3. **PLAN AHEAD**

If you’re five minutes early, you’re late. Aim to arrive 10 to 15 minutes before your scheduled interview. If you’re in a city or town that you’ve never been to before, give yourself enough time to get lost, get a flat tire or break a heel walking on the street.

4. **MIND YOUR MANNERS**

Another seemingly obvious tip, but some companies or organizations might host dinner or lunch interviews to test the social skills of a job candidate. Don’t eat until everyone is served, and always be kind to the wait staff. Be aware of your body language and your table manners. Observe and be aware of the setting of your interview.

5. **BITE YOUR TONGUE**

We really mean it, but in the literal sense. If public speaking isn’t your strong suit, and during your interview you experience dry mouth and throat, try biting your tongue gently. By biting your tongue, you’ll salivate, alleviating any dry mouth you might experience.

6. **BE PREPARED**

Make sure to have extra copies of your resume, cover letter and business card. A writing pad or planner and pen would also be good to have on hand. Make sure you know the content of your resume and be prepared to talk about each facet of it if the interviewer prompts you to do so.

7. **NEVER LIE**

It’s perhaps one of the biggest pieces of advice you are given when writing a resume, but it’s just as important during an interview. If you don’t know much about a certain subject or language, don’t try to play up your knowledge of it. If you don’t speak French, don’t say you do; it would be hard to save yourself if your interviewer decided to continue the interview in French.

8. **ASK QUESTIONS**

Asking questions means you are showing interest and enthusiasm. It also helps keep the conversation going. Make a list of possible questions before your interview. If the questions can’t be answered from the organization or interviewer’s website, then be sure to ask your interviewer. The questions you ask reflect on how well you have prepared and can help you stand out amongst other potential candidates.

9. **AVOID “YES” & “NO”**

Answering a question with only a ‘yes’ or ‘no’ can make you seem dry, uninterested and boring. If you’re uninterested and bored, don’t work there.

10. **BE AN INDIVIDUAL**

You are at the interview stage; be confident in what has gotten you this far. Show your potential employers why you would be best suited for the job. Don’t try to fit a cookie cutter mold. Be your own person and allow your interviewer to see that. Blending in never made anyone stand out.