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## Tips For Success - The Interview

It is important to be on time for an interview. It is best if you arrive about 15 minutes early. This will give you time to relax and fill out an application, if necessary. Dress appropriately, since the first impression is a lasting one.

### Interview Tips:

1. Do some research on the business before the interview.
2. Practice interviewing.
3. Go alone. Do not take children or friends.
4. Greet the employer with a handshake.
5. Make frequent eye contact.
6. Smile, be polite, and try to relax.
7. Listen carefully to the questions asked. Ask the interviewer to restate a question if you are confused.
8. Answer questions as directly as possible.
9. Be upbeat and make positive statements.
10. If you've worked before, talk about what you learned from it.
11. Use examples of how your skills and abilities would fit the job.
12. Bring your "Fact Sheet" with telephone numbers and addresses of your references and former employers, just in case you are asked to complete an application. (See the Saber Hacer Career Resources PDF "Job Application – My Fact Sheet" for details.)

It is important as you prepare for your interview to anticipate what questions the employer might ask. The following questions are examples of the types of questions that you may be asked to answer.

### Questions to Expect (What the Employer May Ask You):

1. Tell me about yourself. (This is often an ice-breaker question. Keep the answer job or skill related.)
2. What do you know about the type of work we do? (This is your chance to tell what you know from the research you completed ahead of time.)
3. What is your weakness? (Always make this a positive answer. For example, "My spelling is not always perfect, so I always use a spell checker.")
4. What are your strengths? (Describe your skills in a way that will show you as a desirable employee for the company.)
5. Why did you leave your last job? (Answer with a positive statement. Try not to say:

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- "I was fired," "terminated," "quit," "had no babysitter," or "couldn't get along with coworkers or supervisor". However, you can say: "new job," "contract ended," "seasonal," "temporary," "career change," "returned to school," to raise a family," or "relocated.")
6. Why have you been unemployed for such a long time? (Tell the truth. Emphasize that you were looking for a good company where you can settle and make a contribution.)
  7. Why should we hire you? (Make a positive statement, such as "I would like the opportunity to work with you and believe that I can do the work.")
  8. Do you have references? (It is most important that you contact your references ahead of time and have their name, current address, and telephone numbers.)

At the end of the formal interview the employer will ask if you have any questions. The following are examples of acceptable questions to ask.

Questions To Ask The Employer:

1. Who would supervise me?
2. When are you going to make a hiring decision?
3. What are the opportunities for advancement?
4. What kind of training is provided or available?
5. Is there a dress code?

**Pitfalls (Reasons Why People Don't Get Hired):**

- Untidy personal appearance
- Inability to express information clearly
- Lack of genuine interest or enthusiasm
- Unwillingness to start at the bottom
- Negative attitude
- Lack of eye contact
- Incomplete or sloppy application
- Being late for the interview

**Closing**

At the end of the interview:

- Thank the interviewers for their time.
- Request a business card.
- Shake hands in closing.

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- Two or three days after the interview send a thank you note addressed to the interviewers.

### **Thank You Notes**

After your interview, be sure to write a thank you note to the employer or interviewer. This is very important because a thank you note gives you one more chance to remind the employer about the special skills that you can bring to the company.

It is a good idea to request the interviewer's business card before leaving the interview. This will help when writing your thank you note to correctly spell the interviewer's name and job title.

Tips for thank you notes:

Neatly hand write or type the note.

1. Address the note to the interviewer or the lead interviewer.
2. Keep it short. (No longer than one page.)
3. First paragraph: Thank the employer for the interview. Also, mention that you are interested in the position.
4. Second paragraph: Briefly state a few of your skills without repeating the information on your resume word for word. Include any important information not mentioned at the interview.
5. Third paragraph: Provide your contact information, telephone number with area code, and an e-mail address, if available.
6. Sign the note with your first and last name.
7. Proofread the note to check for spelling or grammar errors. Ask another person to proofread the note.
8. Mail the note within two to three days after your interview.

### **Additional Resources on the Internet**

Refer to the Internet site in the Resources section on [www.SaberHacer.com](http://www.SaberHacer.com) for additional information and tips.

Information given by WorkSmart  
[www.worksmart.ca.gov](http://www.worksmart.ca.gov)