

# 10 Essential Interview Tips

from [WisconsinJobs.com](http://WisconsinJobs.com)

## 1. Come Prepared

Be sure to bring enough copies of your resume for each person you will be interviewing with. Put them in a portfolio with a pad of paper and a pen for taking notes. You should also have prepared a schedule of availability for yourself throughout the next couple of weeks. This way, if you are asked to schedule a second interview, you will be able to do so without having to go home and check your calendar first.

## 2. Make a Good First Impression

It is often said that interviewers form an opinion of candidates within the first 30 seconds of their meeting. Whether fact or not, 30 seconds hardly affords one enough time for a second chance. That's why it's extremely important to look the way in which you want to be perceived. So, be sure to dress for success. Job candidates must take the time and care to be sure that their suit is crisply ironed, their hair is neatly combed and their shoes are brilliantly shined. Furthermore, body language is key in portraying a professional, confident air. Practice a sturdy handshake and walk with your shoulders back and eyes straight ahead.

## 3. Listen Actively

Throughout the entire interview it is important to maintain good eye contact. Not only does doing this tell interviewers that you're interested in what they have to say, it gives them a picture of how you'll interact with clients and coworkers. It is also very important to give positive nonverbal feedback when listening. A simple head nod tells interviewers that you understand everything and are giving them 100 percent of your attention.



#### **4. Follow Their Lead**

Let the interviewer set the tone of the interview. If the person interviewing you is laid back and semi-casual, allow yourself to relax a little and show off a bit more of your personality. Whatever the tone, don't allow yourself to fall into any unprofessional discourse. Always maintain a certain level of professionalism, but don't be afraid to smile and laugh at their jokes!

#### **5. Prepare your Answers**

Before you get to the interview, outline the personal qualities and experiences of yours that relate specifically to the position. Then, think of situations in which these qualities and experiences would aid you in the position you're interviewing for. Practice what you want to say, but not how you'll say it. That way, you'll sound clear and concise, but not rehearsed.

#### **6. Be Confident in Your Answers**

Stick to your Answers! One common technique that interviewers use is staring at a candidate after he or she has finished answering a question. They do this to determine whether or not a candidate is confident in his or her answer. If confident, the candidate will stop talking and maintain eye contact. If not, he or she usually rambles on and on. So to be sure that you don't talk yourself right out of a job, be confident in your answers.

#### **7. Take your Time to Answer Thoughtfully**

If an interviewer throws a tough question at you, don't feel as though you must answer immediately. It's far better to take your time and give a concise answer than to blurt out the first thing that pops into your head. Take a second to breathe, collect your thoughts and be sure that you fully understand the question. If you need to ask a question before answering, feel free.



## **8. Ask Questions**

Almost indefinitely, the person interviewing you will ask, "Do you have any questions?" The worst and surprisingly most common answer to this question is, "No." Asking questions makes you look interested and thoughtful. The best questions come from expanding upon what was asked during the interview, but prepare some general questions ahead of time, just in case.

## **9. Follow Up**

The follow up is often the most important, yet overlooked step in the interview process. Before you leave the interview, be sure to ask, "When should I follow up with you?" Then, as soon as you get home, send your interviewer a thank you note via mail or e-mail. Next, call the day they advised you to and follow up to see where the decision making process is at. It's important not to be pushy, but it is even more important to appear interested and responsible.

## **10. Be Yourself**

Take a deep breath, relax and be yourself. Remember, employers are not only looking to match your skills with the position, but also your personality with the corporate culture. If you've prepared well enough, you will be a lot calmer and your true personality will show through much more.

