Interview Check List: Be Prepared

Here’s a check list of what to do to prepare for your interview. Be sure to look this over before the day of the interview so you are sure to put your best foot forward during an interview.

**Tools You Will Need**
- Wear a conservative 2 piece suit for men; for women, shirt/blouse with skirt or pants
- Try on your interview outfit 2 days in advance to make sure it fits and you are comfortable
- Clean shoes (practice walking in them before the interview!)
- Empty pockets
- For men: dark shoes and socks; conservative tie; neat hair; minimal cologne
- For women: suit/skirt and blouse; shoes with conservative heels; one set of earrings; minimal makeup and perfume
- Limited jewelry
- No visible piercings, tattoos
- No sunglasses or gum
- No water bottles or cell phones at interview

**Before the Interview**
- Prepare company research (see tips in guide)
- Prepare questions for interviewer (see tips in guide)
- Confirm your directions
- Drive/travel to interview location before interview day
- Eat a good meal ahead of time
- If you smoke, do NOT do so before the interview
- Give yourself extra time to get there to avoid unexpected delays
- Arrive 15 minutes early to the building; use the restroom if needed
- Bring extra copies of your resume in your portfolio
- Bring a Reference Sheet with you in your portfolio
- Bring a pen for jotting down your thoughts after the interview

**Arrival and Check In**
- Don’t walk in feeling late and rushed
- Turn OFF your cell phone, not even on vibrate (you can still hear this)
- Walk in confidently, greet everyone politely
- Be upbeat and friendly with everyone you encounter (in the elevator, parking lot, rest room)
- It’s important to make a good impression with the receptionist or administrative assistant meeting – not an interview
- Tell him/her that you have an appointment or meeting – not an interview

**Greet interviewer**
- Wait for the interviewer to come and get you
- Firm handshake! This is where you make your first impression. Firm but not crushing!
- Don’t hover at his/her office door
- Take seat that he/she indicates
- Smile! This is your opportunity to connect with the interviewer
- Maintain eye contact
- Greet interviewer by name

**Small Talk**
- The first 30 seconds is when you want to connect with the interviewer
- Begin building rapport!
- People tend to hire people they like and with whom they connect
- Be prepared with small talk: the weather or local sports are always safe topics, be positive!

**Rules of the Road DURING the Interview**
- Watch your body language – sit up straight and confident
- Use hand appropriately
- Be enthusiastic, let your passion show
- Vary your voice, use inflection to hold their attention
- Don’t be afraid of a silence; take your time to formulate your answers
- Don’t use the word “but”; use “and” instead
- Do NOT swear or use slang
- Speak professionally and avoid “like” or “um”
- Don’t lean on the interviewer’s desk or invade his/her space
- Do not touch anything in the office
- Ask for the interviewer’s business card
- Smile and enjoy yourself!

Adapted from “The Job Coach for Young Professionals”, Susan Kennedy and Karen Baker, 2009