

INTERVIEWING TIPS	
WHO is Eligible?	All employees
WHAT is the Opportunity?	<p>To perform well in an interview takes preparation and practice. Don't try to wing it!</p> <p>For many government jobs, your interview will be competency based. Get inter training through the Education and Training Office. Contact your training manager for details.</p>
WHAT is the Outcome?	<p>Increased knowledge</p> <p>(See Pages Below)</p>
EDUCATION AND TRAINING OFFICES	
Hill	Hill AFB Education and Training Office
Robins	Robins AFB Education and Training Office
Tinker	Tinker AFB Education and Training Office

Job Interview Tips

Know Your Target

Organizations like candidates who know what they want from a job. They are also impressed with someone who has done research before arriving at the interview. Make the effort to look into the organization you're interested in, and you'll find yourself ahead of the competition.

To get a sense of how the organization you're interested in sees itself, go to their website and read about them.

You may also be interested to find out what other people think about the organization you're interested in. These days, most organizations are rated and reviewed by online users in some way. Just be wary about what you're reading, because anyone can post an opinion, whether it's an accurate representation or not. Additionally, the Better Business Bureau is an organization that helps people find trustworthy businesses and charities, and may be able to tell you if the organization you're interested in is a member or not.

As you do this research, you can begin to develop questions and take them with you to the interview.

Job Interview Tips

Know Yourself

During an interview, your job is to sell yourself, so you need to know your skills well enough to do this effectively. Connecting your skills with the company's needs is the best way to get hired.

List your accomplishments and then think of which skills it took to do them. Did baby-sitting require psychological sensitivity? Did selling kitchen knives require skills of persuasion? Did playing school sports and maintaining a high GPA require strong time-management skills? Review your skills list and refine it into a "package" you can explain easily in a minute or two.

And don't forget to sell yourself as a person. Most organizations want honest, smart, friendly, motivated and responsible employees. Do you deal well with people? Are you smart and conscientious? Self-motivated? For example, did you show determination to get back on the slopes after you broke your leg skiing? Again, after you make your list, refine it so you can explain your personal assets in a minute or two. It's also wise to remember that everything you say is part of the interview, even if you end up at lunch or a casual setting.

Job Interview Tips

Know Yourself

You can make all the lists you want, but there's no substitute for rehearsing how you'll handle an interview. Ask your parent, sibling or friend to be the interviewer, and give him or her a list of questions to throw at you, especially the hard ones (see some examples below). You will benefit and gain confidence from having thought about the answers, and you may be able to apply them to questions that you didn't anticipate.

If you get a question you can't answer, simply say you don't know. Then say the question is something to which you would like to give more thought and that you are willing to learn what it takes. An employer will respect someone who is honest and open about his or her limitations.

Here are some sample interview questions:

- Discuss a situation where you had to resolve a conflict.
- Discuss a situation where you had to demonstrate teamwork/leadership skills.
- Describe a situation where you failed.
- Describe a situation where you set a goal and met it.

In addition, be aware of your body language. If you can record yourself on video, use it for practice. Otherwise a mirror will do, or get feedback from your parent, sibling or friend.

Hand and arm movements shouldn't be too large. Don't fiddle, shake your leg or tap your fingers. This is unprofessional and may distract your potential employer. Your posture should be relaxed, but alert. Don't slouch; if you look bored the interviewer will assume you'd be bored in the job, too.

Communicate interest and energy. Be yourself. Your potential employer knows you're nervous, but try not to make it so obvious that it becomes a distraction.

Job Interview Tips

Dress the Part

Looking professional means looking respectable. While a suit is nearly always appropriate in a corporate setting, sometimes it does not make sense for the organization. Whatever you choose to wear, it should be clean, ironed, coordinated and appropriate. Skirts should not be above the knee, shirts should not be cut too low and jewelry should be moderate. Shirts should also cover the entire shoulder—no tank tops. Even employers who don't ask that their employees dress up will appreciate that you've chosen to put your best foot forward.

Personal grooming is part of your "dress" too. Be sure to freshen up before your interview, but don't overwhelm your potential employer with your favorite perfume or cologne. Take extra time to feel confident about your appearance and it will be one less thing that stands between you and your dream job.

Job Interview Tips

Arrive Early

It may seem obvious, but if you're not on time for your interview, the game is over. Getting there early makes a good impression on the interviewer and allows you to take a few deep breaths, organize your notes, refresh your memory on any points that you've found difficult in your practices and scan any company materials that may be available in the waiting room. It also allows you to use the restroom if needed, freshen your breath and make any last-minute appearance adjustments.

Make sure you have directions to your target organization, along with a backup route, in case of unexpected obstacles. Also, have the telephone number of someone to notify in case you're running late.

If you can, perform a dry run a few days before your interview: Travel to your target organization and be sure you know how to get there—to the door—without getting lost. Planning ahead means you'll feel better about yourself, and you'll be more relaxed in the interview.

Job Interview Tips

Make a Good First Impression

Potential employers are looking for someone who is confident, assertive and friendly, and they will be taking this opportunity to see if you're a good fit. You'll want to follow these quick tips whenever you meet anyone at your target organization, particularly the person who'll be interviewing you:

- Look the person in the eye as you offer your right hand for a handshake.
- Shake his or her hand firmly, but easily; try to have the web of your hand touch his or hers.
- Smile at the same time, and say something enthusiastic, such as "Hello, Mr. Byrnes. It's a pleasure to meet you!"
- If there is small talk, keep it simple — weather, how great the lobby looks. Avoid politics or off-color humor (racial, ethnic or religious jokes). Small talk may establish a positive rapport, and the rest of the interview will feel more natural and less like you're being grilled.
- Be courteous to everyone you meet; you never know who will put in a good word for you after you've left the office.

Job Interview Tips

Answer Well

You're going to be asked some questions, and there are some tricks to answering them well.

- Don't ramble. Concise answers with strong points are better than disorganized babble. Respect the fact that your interviewer is taking time out of his or her busy day to meet with you.
- Look the interviewer in the eye when you're answering.
- Gather your thoughts. If you need a moment to collect your thoughts in order to answer a specific question, feel free to say, "I need to think about that for a moment" or "That's a great question."

The interviewer will respect your honesty and your desire to offer a thoughtful answer. If a question is particularly difficult, try to remember how you approached similar questions while practicing. If you blank out, be honest, but definitely put a positive spin on your answer. A little humor, in moderation, never hurts either.

Job Interview Tips

Be Yourself

In the interview, let your true personality shine through. Trained interviewers spot actors quickly, and they are unlikely to hire anyone they feel they can't trust.

Be proud of the unique collection of talents, motivations and skills that make you the individual you are. Believe in your ability to learn, grow, develop. Show "the real you" and you'll be well on your way to getting hired.

Job Interview Tips

Ask Questions

Usually at the end of an interview, you'll be asked if you have any questions. If you don't ask something, it can be taken as a sign of lack of preparation or interest. So prepare some questions before the interview, and take notes during the interview to keep track of questions you might want to ask.

There are two areas you should inquire about—the organization and the job itself. Are you clear on the responsibilities of the job? If not, ask for clarification. Do you see where the job fits into the structure of the organization? What is the working environment like? Is there a path for advancement?

If all else fails and you can't think of what to ask, check your notes and ask your interviewer for clarification or further detail about something he or she has already brought up. It will show that you were paying attention and were interested in what he or she had to tell you. If it seems appropriate, ask your interviewer what his or her favorite thing or least favorite thing about working at this company is—you may learn about something you wouldn't have otherwise known.

Be sure you know what the next steps are after the interview. Are they going to contact you? When do they think they will do that? Would they prefer that you follow up with them? How is the best way to do that?

The end of the interview is also a good time to emphasize how interested you are in taking the process to the next step and why you think you're the perfect candidate for the job. You can reinforce this sentiment by asking your interviewer for his or her business card so that you can be in touch with him or her.

But don't beg for the job; let your positive attitude and enthusiasm speak for you. Upon leaving, make sure to shake the person's hand again and make sincere eye contact. And, of course, don't forget to thank him or her.

Job Interview Tips

Follow Up

Your interview isn't over when you walk out the door. As soon as you get home, write a short thank-you note to your interviewer. Tell him or her that you appreciated the time he or she spent with you and the chance to learn more about the job and the organization. Traditionally, a thank-you note refers to a neatly handwritten card mailed to the organization's address, but it is equally acceptable (and expected) to send a thank-you email to your interviewer.

You should also ask for feedback. It will help you perform better when you interview again.