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**It's Not Luck - It's Preparation: Secrets of Preparing for Your Job Interview**

**By Jennifer Stewart**

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If you think the interview process consists of a 30-minute time slot spent face to face with an employer, then you're wrong. The interview process begins much earlier!

People who are successful at interviews are not the lucky ones. They're the people who have invested a considerable amount of time and effort into the process. If you want to create a good impression at your interview, you need to begin preparing for it at least a week in advance.

First you should try to find out a bit about the company and its products or services. There are several reasons for this:

- If you're familiar with some of the names, terms, and products associated with the company then you'll feel more relaxed at the interview. Knowledge really is power. There's nothing worse than feeling that you're totally ignorant about procedures, personnel, and products. No one expects you to have a detailed understanding of the place, but you should at least know whether the company employs twenty people or two hundred; whether it makes sausages or software ... Don't laugh, some people really do turn up for interviews totally unprepared.
- The employer will be pleased that you know something about his business and this will put him in a better mood. You'll also impress him as someone who has initiative and is willing to make an effort.
- You'll stand out from other applicants who haven't taken the trouble to do this research.

Where to Find Information

- Look in the Yellow Pages to see what sort of image the company projects.
- Read through any other advertising material put out by the company to familiarize yourself with products and services.
- Review the company's Web site.

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- See if you can get hold of the last annual report (if available).
- Check the business sections of newspapers and specialty magazines for information on larger companies.
- Talk to family and friends to see if they know anything about the company or business.

Once you're there, as well as answering questions you'll be given the opportunity to ask some, so three days or so before the interview, start drawing up a list. It's perfectly acceptable for you to take a notepad into the interview; you can write down the topics for your questions on this and refer to it when the time comes.

Don't write out questions word for word and then read them because this sounds too stilted. By writing down topics or headings you'll sound much more natural because you'll be forced to form the questions on the spot.

Here are some topics you could ask about:

- What the job involves - your interviewer will tell you a little during the interview, but you can always ask for more detail
- Who you'll be working with
- Any training programs the company has in place which might suit you
- The prospects for advancement within the company
- Any special dress requirements
- The company's long-term goals
- The reason this position is vacant
- If the company pays competitive wage or above

It's usually not a good idea to emphasize the importance of the pay at this stage. However, you are entitled to know if you'll be paid the minimum wage or higher for the position.

Jennifer Stewart has extensive experience working with students and freelance writing clients in compiling resumes, writing letters of application, and preparing for job interviews. This article is taken from *Talk Your Way into Your Dream Job: THE Guide to Successful Job Interviews*, part of the *Finding a Job — Tips for Success* series available at [www.findajobtips.com](http://www.findajobtips.com).

### **Interview Preparation Made Easy: Create An Interview Preparation List**

**By Donna Monday**

Here's a quick way to compare your own job experience and qualifications with those that your prospective employer is looking for in a specific job position. Make an "Interview Preparation List". When you prepare for a job interview, it's good to have a quick reference of your past work experience that you can study ahead of time to help prepare you for the specific job you're interviewing for.

Grab a sheet of paper and make three columns.

Column A will be "Position Requirements"; Column B will be "Your Qualifications and Experience"; and Column C will list "Your Stories". For this exercise, you'll be using the actual job description from the employer.

So, in Column A (Position Requirements) you'll take one piece of the job description and write for example: "Ability to work well with others." Ok. Now you'll have to think about your own experiences while working well with others. What specific examples do you have that demonstrates this ability?

Great. You've thought of something. In this example, we'll write under Column B (Your Qualifications and Experience) "Worked on the XYZ project team."

Now you need to break it down even further and list a specific action-oriented example of "working well with others" on the XYZ project team.

In Column C (Your Stories) you write something like this: "Coordinated winning marketing campaign which resulted in a successful launch of new product." Wow. See how successful that makes you look?

Keep going until you've listed something for every part of the job description. Use your list when preparing for a job interview or even to prepare your resume.

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Donna Monday  
Get Hired Now! Use These Online Interview Tips

Interview Preparation Made Easy: Create An Interview Preparation List

5 Simple Rules for A Great Job Interview

Crazy Interview Questions

The Inevitable Job Interview Question: "Why Did You Leave (Are Planning To Leave) Your Last Position?" and How to Deal With It.

Preparing For The Honeymoon Trip

The Ultimate Guide To Acing ANY Job Interview

Complete Library Of Cooking

Inside The Minds of Winners

Brian Garvin's MLM Secrets

Yard Sale Secrets Revealed



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