

MPL Career Link Center

Interviewing

Before the Interview

Learn about the company or organization

Be prepared to show your knowledge about the company during an interview. Most have websites that can help you learn about them. Find out:

- what the company or organization does
- the number of employees and locations in the Philadelphia area
- recent changes and new products or programs

Getting to the Interview

No matter how you will travel to the interview, **plan the trip in advance**. Find out the exact interview location, including the correct address, floor, office or suite number. Figure out how long the trip should take, and **add extra time for delays**.

What to Wear:

Men

- Solid dress shirt in white, cream or pale blue
- Dress slacks, no jeans
- Solid blazer or suit, if appropriate
- Well polished shoes and socks in a dark color

Women

- Tailored, conservative dress or suit in neutral or solid dark color
- Shoes should be basic pumps with low or medium heel
- Sheer neutral tone hosiery
- Simple hairstyle
- Makeup, jewelry, and perfume or cologne should be kept to a minimum

NO-NO's for either gender: Gym clothes, tee-shirts, rumpled or ripped clothing, miniskirts, bare midriffs, low-cut tops, flip-flops.

Common Interview Questions:

- Why do you want to work here?
- How does your previous experience relate to the job here?
- Why do you want to leave your company?
- If you are unemployed, be prepared to explain why
- What are your strengths? What are your weaknesses?
- What is your definition of great customer service?
- Where do you expect your career to be in five years?
- Can you give an example of how do you might handle working alongside someone who is difficult to get along with?
- Tell me about a time when you had to accomplish a difficult task. How did you manage it?
- What skills do you have that would benefit our company?
- Do you have any questions about our company?

Dos

- Arrive a little early and be friendly to all you meet, including the receptionist.
- Do your homework. Prepare three good questions that will show that you know what the company is all about.
- Bring several copies of your resume and your list of references in your briefcase or folder.
- Try to relax and become comfortable with the interviewer.
- Watch your body language! Sit up straight and look interested. Good eye contact, a warm and natural smile and a firm handshake help you present a confident image.
- Watch your grammar and mind your manners.
- Emphasize the positive.
- Be ready to describe what you can do for the organization.

Be prepared to ask questions. *Almost all interviewers will ask if you have any questions, so have some ready. Questions about the company should relate to information you've learned from your research.*

Don'ts

- Don't chew gum, bring a beverage or invite friends into the interview
- Don't leave your cell phone on – turn it off.
- Don't play comedian or try to entertain the interviewer. It's important to be personable, but don't overdo it.

- Don't exaggerate or lie. You might be tempted to embellish your achievements in the interview, but it will come back to haunt you on the job!
- Don't be afraid to think before you speak. Think first about what you want to communicate.
- Don't speak badly about your former employer. If there were problems with previous experiences, try to put your answers in the positive rather than the negative.
- Don't be the first person to bring up salary or vacation.

Don't expect an immediate job offer.

After the Interview

A thank-you note should be sent the same day as the interview. Thank everyone you met and remind them you are still interested in the job. You might also list one or two you forgot to mention in the interview.

Online Websites:

[Job-Interview.net](#) Question Bank, Practice Interviews, Interview Library, Interview Tips, and Interview by Job Type

[JobBank USA](#) Combines resume, cover letter and interview resources with an online job site.