

## Quick Guide: Presenting Yourself at Interview

If you have got an interview, then congratulations! Your application must have made a good first impression. Now you need to take time to prepare yourself for the interview to make sure you don't waste the opportunity. So here are the **top ten tips** to get you off to a good start and perform well in the interview.

- 1. Research the employer and the job.** Find out as much as possible about these as it will offer you real advantages. Make enquiries about their customers, competitors, reputation, any recent developments or changes in the organisation, what exactly the job will involve and what sort of person you think they want.
- 2. Plan your journey.** Consider a "dummy run" if you are unfamiliar with the area and check how long the journey will take. Ask the employer for directions, bus routes or details of car parking. Aim to arrive at least 10 minutes before the interview.
- 3. Think about what you will wear.** Aim for a neat, tidy, clean and uncluttered appearance. If you look good it helps you feel good. The interviewer will be trying to assess whether you will fit in so dress for the job you want, not the job you've got.
- 4. Make first impressions work for you.** Most employers like people who appear confident. First, accept that symptoms of nerves, such as "butterflies", are your body's natural way of meeting a challenge. In small doses it can give you a boost to help you make a good impression.
- 5. Relax while you wait for the interview.** If you feel your confidence levels dipping then think positively. Picture yourself enjoying the interview and answering the questions brilliantly.
- 6. Walk into the room confidently.** Move forward to shake hands when the interviewer makes the first move. Shake hands in a firm and friendly manner and introduce yourself.
- 7. Establish eye contact with the interviewer** as soon as you enter the room and maintain it during the interview to reinforce your interest.
- 8. Listen attentively to questions** and ask to have them repeated if you don't at first understand. Answer as fully as you can without wandering off the point and provide examples of your achievements where appropriate.
- 9. Prepare a few questions** which will demonstrate your interest in the job and highlight your value to the organisation.
- 10. Emphasise your strengths** but always tell the truth, speaking clearly and confidently.

**Compiled by Isobel Trumper**