

Interviewing Tips

- Arrive 15 minutes early to fill out a Job Application. Make sure it is filled out neatly and completely (Job Application forms are always used as an early indication of your work habits).
- Dress appropriately for an interview: Men should wear a conservative dark blue suit, a clean, well-pressed white shirt (a white shirt is a must) and a red tie. Try to look "presidential." Women should wear a conservative business suit.
- Call if you are going to be late.
- Be prepared with the knowledge of a company's background and its products either from its Web site and/or annual report.

Interviewing is a six-step process

- Asking questions about the position
- Making a presentation of your background relative to your questions
- Answering tough interview questions
- Qualifying
- Closing
- Sending a follow-up letter

Asking Questions

Always come prepared with at least six open-ended questions. For example:

- Javier Arce from SuperbTech called me up and told me a little bit about your position. Can you tell me more?
- Oh, by the way, what is your background?
- How long have you been with the XYZ company?
- Why is this position open?
- What are the three primary tasks you want a _____ to perform?
- What do your top sales representatives earn?

What do your average sales representatives earn?

Are there any accounts in the territory that have ongoing revenue flows?

What are the key elements you are looking for in a successful Sales Representative (Field Applications Engineer, etc.) for the XYZ Corporation? (this is the most important question you can ask)

Make a presentation of your background relative to your questions

Rehearse the presentation of your background by using a tape recorder. You will always be asked to describe your background (e.g. split your background in half-from and educational standpoint and a vocational standpoint). Always summarize your vocational chronology (I have fifteen years in your industry, the last five of which have been with...) Explaining every job and the reason for leaving puts all managers to sleep.

From an educational standpoint, I have a Bachelor's Degree in Computer Science from the University of ...where I completely financed my college education. I graduated in the top 10% of my class.

From a vocational standpoint, I have spent fifteen years in your industry. For the last five years I have been with ...where I consistently ranked as the #2 salesperson, in a region of 15 sales representatives...or where I partnered up with two salespeople, bringing in \$3 million dollars in new revenue, providing pre-sales field applications support...specifically: demonstrations, benchmarks, and executive level presentations.

Interviewing Questions (see comprehensive list of every question in our client section)

Be prepared to answer several of the following sample interview questions:

Why don't you tell me a little about yourself professionally?

Can you tell me three characteristics about yourself?

What do you like about yourself? What do you dislike about yourself?

If you had to think for a minute, could you tell me about your strengths? Could you tell me about your weaknesses?

Why are you considering making a change?

Why should I hire you?

- Can you tell me two or three things about your job that are most important to you?
- What criteria do you use to evaluate the company you are going to work for?
- Why have you had so many jobs in the last 10 years?
- What are the most difficult aspects of your current job and how do you approach them?
- What do you like about selling? What do you dislike about selling?
- What do you like about Pre-Sales support? What do you dislike about Pre-Sales support?
- What qualities do you think a successful manager should possess?
- Can you describe the best manager you ever had?
- What qualities do you think it takes to be successful in life?
- What accomplishments in your last position are you most proud of?
- What is your current base salary?
- What did you earn last year including bonuses and commissions?
- How much money will it take for you to come on board?
- Can you provide references from three former managers?
- Can you provide copies of your last two reviews?
- Can you provide copies of your last two W-2s?
- What is your family's or spouse's chief criticism of you?
- How do you spend your leisure time?
- Do your friends consider you to be a lucky person?
- My ideal candidate would have 5 years of experience in....and you don't. Why should I hire you?
- Do you have any final questions?

Reservations and Stalls

Be prepared to handle some tough reservations (things that are correct about your background). All interviewers put reservations in front of candidates either consciously or subconsciously to see how they answer tough questions under pressure. Minimize the reservations and start talking about other things that you will bring to the table. For example: "My ideal candidate would have five years of.... and you don't. Why should I hire you?"

- Although I am short on experience, I am long on enthusiasm. I am the kind of individual that will put 250% of my time and effort into learning your products and 250% of my time and effort into selling your products. This is what sets me apart from the rest of the candidates you will be seeing. That's why you should hire me.

Qualify

Remember to qualify; this leads to a natural close. Qualifying also demonstrates your sales and communications skills (also see final questions below). In addition, it allows the interviewer to get out any reservations they might have with regard to your candidacy. It also allows you the opportunity to overcome any reservations with regard to your background. First, tell them that you like the opportunity then qualify the opportunity by putting yourself in the third person, using your first and last name. Interviewers always have less trouble talking about candidates in third person. Never say, "what do you think of me?" For example:

- I am very impressed with everything I have seen here today. What's your impression of Cathy Candidate (use your first and last name here)?
- If you had 48 hours to make a decision and it was solely your decision, would you hire me?

Close for the Job

Always remember to close and ask for the job. If you don't ask for the job, you most likely won't get it. First, tell them that you like the opportunity, then close for the position. For example:

- Let me reiterate my strong interest in the position we have been discussing. I am very impressed with everything I have seen here today and I want to work here. What's the next step?
- Having recently evaluated several other opportunities, this ranks as my #1 choice. I want to work here, What's the next step?

In summary, to maximize your chances of landing the best job, be **ENTHUSIASTIC** (this is absolutely the most important aspect of an interview), ask good questions, answer questions completely, and finally, ask for the job.

Final Questions

Always come prepared with some final questions:

- Where do I stand relative to the rest of the salespeople (field engineers) you have seen? (**this question is a must**).
- Again, If you had 48 hours to make a decision and it was solely your decision, would you hire me?
- When are you going to make a hiring decision?