**INTERVIEW POINTERS**

A good resume and cover letter get you in the door, but a good interview gets you the job. To interview well, you must prepare in advance and use good judgment. This means not simply polishing your answers to typical interview questions, but also being attuned to and aware of the company culture. The former makes you a good general interviewer, the latter ensures you've got a good match when searching for a job.

Names

Interviews generally follow a flow, beginning with an introduction to the individual or panel with whom you're interviewing. If you're bad with names, write down the names of the people with whom you're interviewing or circle their names on the provided schedule. When addressing an interviewer, use his last name and honorific, such as Dr. Smith, if interviewing in a formal industry such as medicine or banking. However, if you are interviewing in a new media or software firm, for example, where the interview team is dressed casually, use first names. Using a last name and title in this case makes you appear too stiff and formal, which can damage your chances of getting a job at a company that prides itself on its casual environment. If you're uncertain, ask the first time.

Research

When you interview, it's critical to pepper your answers with information specific to the company. This assures the interviewer you're a serious candidate with a grasp of the business environment or issues the company faces. Answers that include your research also provide a level of comfort to a potential hiring manager. She wants to know not only that you're skilled, but also that you're a good fit for the company.

Practice

Practice basic interviewing techniques to help your interview end with a job offer. Seem eager, but not gushing, which comes across as insincere. Use a video camera to review your body language as part of your practice -- check that you maintain eye contact, use good posture and keep a polite, interested expression on your face. Practice answers to typical questions, such as noting your strengths, weaknesses and why you're interested in the job. When discussing weaknesses, spin your answer to the positive. For example, if you know you're a poor note taker, explain that you've invested in a laptop to better organize and track your notes.

Turn Off Your Phone

While texting, social network updates and phone calls are part of everyday lift, they don't have a place in the interview process. Don't text or update your social network page during an interview. Not only is it impolite -- and very likely to end your chances at the job -- it distracts you. Keep your phone turned off throughout the interview, even if it requires going text-free for an entire morning or day. If necessary, excuse yourself to the bathroom during a break and answer an urgent voicemail. However, do not use this time for an extended chat. Your behavior during the interview process is a good indicator for the interviewer of how seriously you take the job and how well you'll perform.