

We believe

this is your day.

Interview Tips

Remember Your First Day of High School?

You most likely spent a ton of time thinking what you were going to wear, what you were going to say and ask, where you were going to go. Well, your first – and every other – interview that follows is kind of like that first day of school. It takes thoughtful planning in order to make good first impressions.

While graduation day may seem far off, now is the perfect time to start looking for internships and job opportunities. And while you may never have been on a job interview yet, that's ok. Luckily for you, we've listed the most important components to acing that first interview, as well as the many interviews that are sure to come.

Dress the Part

Remember that old cliché “don't judge a book by its cover?” Generally, that would apply, but not during the interview process. You can have a stellar resume, but if you walk into an office dressed inappropriately, you're only hurting your chances of getting the job. So remember:

- While some dark wash jeans may be appropriate for the first day of school, only dark conservative dress pants are acceptable on the first interview.
- Trade your favorite band tee for a collared shirt or a nice blouse.
- Choose dress shoes over sneakers. Flip-flops are a cardinal fashion “don't” for interviews.
- On the flip-side, though, don't show up in a tuxedo or last year's prom gown. There is such a thing as being overdressed.
- Make sure your appearance is clean and doesn't detract from your interview. Wash your face, brush your teeth, lose the bling.
- Self-expression is great, but the goal is to impress with your skills and goals, not necessarily how well you keep up on the latest fashion trends.
- Don't forget about your hair, either. Make sure it's out of your face, and preferably not spiked into a mohawk or dyed anything fluorescent.
- Be you, but be professional. Some office dress codes are more lenient than others, but wait until you actually get the job before you start pushing the envelope.

You're On Time If You're Early. You're Late If You're On Time.

- Plan ahead so that you can arrive with a little time to spare before you interview, ideally about 10 minutes.
- Look up directions, and leave early enough so that not even traffic or a missed train or bus will affect your arrival.
- Once you're there, do a last-minute cell phone check. Don't let that slightly inappropriate ringtone or vibrations ruin your chances of snagging your dream internship. Ensure that your phone is on silent. Your interviewer(s) are your number one priority. Your BFF or roommate can wait.

Show Some Initiative

- Do a little research about the company, your interviewer and the position you're interviewing for.
- Be sure to prepare a list of questions for your interviewer as well. It's not best to open with "Um... well, how many sick days do I get?" and you should never bring up salary questions. Ask questions like these:
 - What makes the office/restaurant culture here unique? What makes you excited to come here every day?
 - What opportunities will I have to learn new skills or gain valuable leadership abilities?
 - What skills and attributes do you think are most vital for this position?
- Bring a notepad to take notes, as well as a couple extra copies of your resume. It will speak volumes of you if you come prepared with two or three crisp copies on you.

Present Yourself with Confidence

- Make it a conversation. Remember, you're simultaneously interviewing the company to see if it's a good fit for you as well. This shouldn't feel like an inquisition.
- Try to sit up straight, make eye contact, and keep hand gestures to a minimum.
- Avoid all hair twirling, gum chewing, and spacing out.
- Stay attentive to what your interviewer is saying and make sure you take a few notes. The last thing you want to do is to ask a question that your interviewer already answered. Plus you'll want to refer to your notes when you write a thank-you note.

Answer Positively and Creatively

- Answer questions with creativity. Almost every interviewer will ask each candidate "Why should we hire you above the other candidates?" or "Tell me a little bit about yourself."
 - Rattling off your resume is not memorable when everyone else will likely do that.
 - Think of a short summary of yourself and then one or two key stories you can share about your past experience. These should highlight your skills, abilities and team spirit.
 - People – and interviewers – remember a compelling story, not resume bullets.
- Do your best to keep the interview positive. Bad mouthing a previous employer or work experience will only reflect poorly on you in the long run.
- If you are asked to describe your strengths and weaknesses, make sure the strengths outweigh the weaknesses, but also, try and portray your "weaknesses" as places for personal growth.
- Always give the impression that you are actively progressing and trying to better yourself.

Above all, just allow your best qualities to shine through. All it takes is some preparation, the tips listed above and a little common sense to nail the interview and get that dream job. For more information and tips, check out www.aboutmcdonalds.com/students.

