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99 interview tips that will actually help you get a job

by JAMES CLEAR — 18 COMMENTS

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We all have to make a living somehow — and most of the time that process starts with a job interview.

In fact, even if you're not interviewing for a job, you're probably interviewing for something else. At some point in our lives, we all interview for something — to get a scholarship to college, to get a job, to impress a publisher for that book you want to write, and thousands of other things.



The only problem is that most of the advice that you'll find on job interviews is either so basic that it's not useful or so ridiculous that it's a waste of time.

Yes, it's true that you should polish your shoes before an interview. Sure, it's a good idea to wear a noticeable accent on your clothing, so that you stick out in the recruiter's mind. And maybe people don't enjoy shaking a cold hand in the winter, so if you have time to run them under some warm water after you walk in the door then I guess you should do that too.

But let's get real.

Do you actually think that any of those tactics are going to *win* you the job? Is the candidate who remembers to bring a pen going to be the one who sticks out?

Maybe if it's really really close. Like thisclose.

Instead of worrying about 10 little things that could be a tiebreaker, why not spend time thinking about the stuff that actually matters? Then you could blast the other candidates out of the water. You'd be so far ahead of everyone else that the hiring manager could care less about whether your handshake was cold or if your shoes are scuffed or any other meaningless metric.

So with that said, here are 99 interview tips that will actually get you the job. Oh, and before we get started I want to say one thing: I put in over 25 hours and interviewed dozens of career experts for this article. This is the absolute best information I could find. If you want more articles of this quality, then sign up for free updates right now. All you have to do is enter your information below.

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Let's get started.

I. Mindset and approach

1. It's your job to sell yourself. If you don't do it, then you can be sure that no one else will. Most of us understand this, but that doesn't mean that we're all comfortable with it. There is no need to bloat your accomplishments or make false claims, but there is every need to paint the best picture of yourself. If you're feeling apprehensive about this idea, then remember: it's not bragging if you did it.

2. Apply to fewer jobs. When you need a job, it's easy to shotgun your resume in 100 different directions. And that is exactly why the stack of resumes is so high for that job you want. Everyone is sending out the same resume to every job they can find. Slow down. Focus on a few jobs that you actually want. Then tailor everything about your application to each specific job.

3. You're interviewing them too. Your goal should be to find a job that you actually care about and a company that you want to be a part of. If you focus on jobs like that, then the interview will be much better. You'll be genuinely engaged. You'll ask more questions because you're interested and not because "that's what you're supposed to do in an interview." Plus — and here's a crazy bonus — if you only apply to jobs that you look interesting, then you aren't going to end up in a job that you never actually wanted. Sort of makes you wonder why you're applying to a bunch of jobs that you aren't going to enjoy, right?

4. Realize that some things are of minimal benefit. If you really wanted, you could write out a list of 1000 things to remember for a job interview. Of course, most of them wouldn't really help you because some things just aren't that important. Your focus should be on solving problems for the company, on proving why you're the best candidate for the job, and on finding a culture and community that you naturally fit in with. If you do those three things, then you'll find that the little things (like remembering to iron your shirt) are... well... little things.

5. Sometimes you may need to be persistent. If you want to make an impression, then you might have to find the courage to never say die. You might need to take ten people out to lunch before you find a contact that can help you. You might need to send a progress report to the recruiter every week for two months before they even care. You might need to start a project on the side and email a progress report to a recruiter every week for two months before they start to pay attention to you. You might need to ask one person to vouch for you. Then you might need to ask five more. Don't lose hope and keep moving forward everyday. Keep walking and you'll make it to the finish line.

II. How to prepare for an interview

6. If you want to be an exceptional candidate, then you need to do

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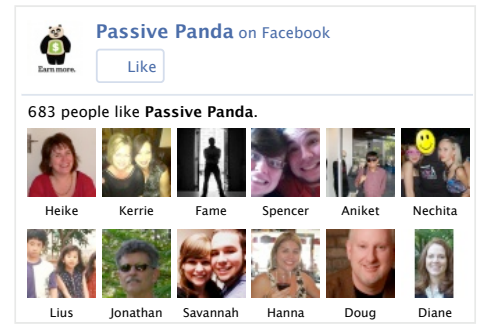
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exceptional preparation. Preparation is the number one thing that will set you apart from other candidates. Want to be more impressive? Prepare more. If you are obsessed with preparing for every aspect of the interview, then you will be ready to crush it.

7. Know why you are applying for this job. Yes, you want a job so that you can pay for your lifestyle. But what are your underlying motivations? Why are you driven towards this job? Why are you passionate about this position? How do your values match the values you will need to do your job? This is a deep question and if you know the answer to it, then you will understand what drives a lot of the answers you will give during the interview. You'll have a better idea of why you're a good fit for the job ... and that makes it easier for you to tell the recruiter why you're a good candidate.

8. Research everything you can about the company. You want to know about the place you're going to work not just so that you can sound intelligent in the interview, but so that you can figure out if it's a place that you actually want to work at. Even if this isn't a "career" for you, it's likely that you'll be in the job for a year or two. A year might not seem that long, but talk to anyone who hated their job for a full year ... and they'll tell you that one year is a long time. See what you can find on the company. You'll want to know what you're getting into.

9. If you're applying for a job at a public company, then check out the financial statements and SEC filings. Go online and search for the Annual Report, Proxy Statement, and 10-K for the company that you're interested in. These documents aren't thrilling reads, but they have excellent information in them. Even if you only read the summary near the beginning of each document, then you will be well versed on the inner workings of the company. The corporate filings are also a great way to discover specific questions about the company and you can mention that you read these documents in your research.

10. Get to know someone on the inside. Employees can give you an idea of what "a day in the life" is like and can help you determine if this is a place you would like to work at. Plus, if you mention your meetings with employees during the interview then you will make an impression as someone who is serious about the job. If you don't know where to start, then head over to LinkedIn or Google and do some searches for people at the company you are interviewing with. If all else fails, give them a call and talk to someone in the department that you want to work in. It shouldn't be too hard to find someone willing to let you take them to lunch.

11. Show them that you are familiar with that culture and that you're a good fit for it. Interviewers are looking for qualified candidates and people who fit in well with their community and culture. They want to be able to trust you, so show them that you display values that are consistent with their group. (Side note: if you really aren't a good fit and don't match up well with the people you talk to, then you might want to reconsider going there. There is no sense in spending tons of time with people you don't enjoy being around.)

12. Describe the ideal candidate. Once you know a bit more about the company, spend some time writing out a full description of the ideal candidate. Try to be totally objective about it. What would the company want? See things from their perspective. If you were the recruiter, what would the perfect candidate look like?

13. Reframe your experiences. Once you understand what the company is looking for and what the ideal candidate would look like, you can reframe your experiences to meet those expectations. For example, if the job description requires a "proven ability to motivate others," then it is basically asking for "effective leadership skills" ... but one of those phrases might match up better with your background than another. Spend some time thinking about alternative phrases and

how you can reframe your skill set to match the desired qualifications.

14. Create an “I can handle it” list. If you can convince the recruiter that you can handle the job, then you’ll have a much better chance of getting the job. Print out the list of required skills and experience that comes with the job. Next to each item, write down an experience you have had that is relevant. It doesn’t need to be a perfect match... just an experience that proves that you can handle the task. This is also a good place to look for stories from your personal life or previous work that match up well with the “I can handle it” list. It’s a great way to keep your stories relevant to the position. The hiring managers want to make a good call because their reputation is on the line. You need to ease their fears and show them that you can handle the position. (Hat tip to Julie Melillo.)

15. Develop a list of “sound bites.” Sound bites are short phrases or sentences that you want to make sure you say throughout the interview. These are phrases that highlight everything that is great about you as a candidate. The exact way you tell a story might change, but you’ll always want to include the sound bite. For example, “I once worked with a co-worker who constantly pushed her work off on me because Excel spreadsheets are a strong point for me and she knew this...” is a great sound bite to use at the start of a story about dealing with a difficult co-worker. It kicks things off and refers to one of your skills. You can tell the rest of the story naturally and still know that you included a solid sound bite. You should have a sound bite for each story you tell. (Hat tip to Stephanie Kiester)

16. Own your online reputation. Everyone going through the job process is going to have their name searched. You don’t need to be an internet superstar, but it’s a good idea to have an online presence that puts recruiters at ease. You either need to be comfortable with having the hiring manager reading your tweets and browsing your Facebook pictures or you need to adjust your privacy settings so that those areas are hidden. Some people provide a lot of value through social media, so perhaps they want hiring managers to see that. It doesn’t matter which method you choose, but make sure it’s a conscious decision. This is one area of the job process that actually is under your control, so it would be silly to not take responsibility for it.

17. If you know who is interviewing you, then search for them online. You can flip the script and search for your interviewers as well. Of course, you’re not looking for dirt, you’re looking for evidence that you might fit in well at the company, for areas of common interest, and for possible questions you could ask the recruiter.

18. Determine who the most appropriate people are that you can list as references. Then, tell them that you are listing them. It’s important to give your references a heads up. If you feel uncomfortable telling someone that you’re listing them, then what makes you think that they are going to be a good person to talk about you?

19. Do as many practice interviews as you can. It’s not fun — and it might even be more awkward than the real interview — but doing practice interviews with friends, family, or others is a critical piece of the puzzle. You need feedback not just on your responses, but also on body language, tone, and approach. You’ll never know how your answers need to change unless you deliver them a few times.

20. Use the STAR method to guide your answers. This simple formula ensures that you accurately describe your experiences and highlight the results they provided. The STAR method includes,

S: The Situation – describe it

T: The Task or problem – what dilemma or problem did you face?

A: The Action – what action did you take?

R: The Result – what was the result of your action?

Make sure that each experience you describe includes those four areas. (Hat tip to Fred Cooper.)

21. Devise bullet points for each question, not a full script. You will want to write out your answers to hard questions beforehand because the written word forces you to clarify your thoughts. However, you only need to know the main point or primary story that you want to tell for each answer... you don't need to memorize everything word for word.

What questions should you prepare for? These questions...

III. Tough job interview questions

22. Hiring managers usually ask questions related to five categories.

- a) Your background, so that they can understand your experiences, education, and overall qualifications.
- b) Your knowledge of the job, so that they can test your understanding of the position, their company, and the industry.
- c) Your personality, so that they can understand your work style and social style and decide if that fits in with their company.
- d) Your skills, so that they can get an idea of your abilities and test your knowledge and competency for the job.
- e) Your future goals, so that they can get an idea of your career aspirations and determine how motivated you will be in the position.

If you're fully prepared for these five types of questions, then you'll be ready for most interviews. (Hat tip to Lisa Quast)

Here are a few questions that you should be thinking about beforehand...

23. Tell me a little bit about yourself. Use this question as an opportunity to tell a short story about yourself that describes the values you have and why you think they are important for the job.

24. Why are you interested in our company? This is where you show that you did your research. Tell them what you know about the company, about the challenges they face and the opportunities they have, and how you fit in well with that overall picture.

25. Give us an example of a challenge you faced and how you overcame it. Once again, a good story here is crucial. One solid story about overcoming a challenge will stick with a recruiter long after the interview.

26. What are your strengths? Only mention strengths that you can back up with clear proof. Prove your strengths with numbers and percentages, not generalized statements.

27. What are your weaknesses? This is a classic question that everyone hates. If you say that you "work too hard" then no one takes the answer seriously, but if you say a real weakness then you look like a bad candidate. So what do you do? My suggestion is to pick a technical skill that is real, but mostly unrelated to your job. For example, you could say "Finance isn't really my thing. I understand the big picture of profit and revenue, but small details and the mechanics of how it works — that's just not how my mind works. So I would say that's a weakness, but it's also a reason I'm applying for this job in marketing. I know that it leverages my strengths and steers clear of some of the weaknesses."

28. Did you and your former boss ever disagree? Never speak poorly about a former employer in an interview. It doesn't matter what the circumstances were or how bad it was — keep things positive or neutral. Nobody wants to hire someone that might talk bad about them down the road.

29. Why did you leave your last job? Be honest, but also use it as an opportunity to show why this job is a better fit.

30. Are you a team player? Yes, you are — and make sure you have a good story and some proof to back it up. If you can provide the results that your team efforts provided, then that's great too.

31. What books or magazines do you like to read? This question is meant to find out how much you keep up with the industry, market, and so on. Feel free to throw in some of your own personal tastes, but the hiring manager wants to hear that you read things that are relevant to the job you're applying for.

32. Why should we hire you? Don't make vague statements here. Show them that you have done your research by highlighting what problems they are facing. Then, provide specific examples of how you're the right person to help solve those problems. Give them proof of your value and your answer will come across as clear, concise, and confident.

33. You won't be able to prepare for every possible question. Don't worry about having all of the answers before your interview. It's more important to develop stories that highlight your key virtues and adapt those stories to the questions that are asked.

IV. What to do the day of the interview

Before you arrive...

34. Print out your resume and bring multiple copies to the interview. You can't assume that everyone you meet will have your resume handy, so make sure that you have copies of it ready for anyone you might encounter throughout the day.

35. Print out your list of references and their contact information. If someone asks who they can contact to find out more about you, then you'll be able to pull that list out at a moment's notice.

36. Make sure your car is clean and your briefcase, purse, or bag are organized and contain only what you need. You never know if the recruiter will walk you to your car. Seeing a sloppy interior might not be a good way to end the day. (Hat tip Ronald Kaufman.)

37. Don't even bother bringing your phone to the interview. If someone gives you their number, write it down. You don't need to type it into your phone right away and it's worth the peace of mind to not have to worry about it ringing or buzzing accidentally.

38. Dress for the job you want. Stick to the dress code that they will expect of you as an employee. And when all else fails, it's better to be overdressed than underdressed.

39. If it's a good fit, then bring a few additional materials that highlight your accomplishments. These could be recommendations, awards, and so on. If it seems appropriate, then you can leave those materials with the hiring manager as further proof of your abilities.

After you arrive...

40. Treat everyone with respect. Smile when you come in and treat the receptionist, secretary, or administrative assistant with respect. It's not uncommon for recruiters to ask these people about their first impression, so you want to start off well.

41. Remember names. Make sure you know the name of everyone you meet and use their names throughout the interview. If you can't pronounce their name or don't know how, then ask again right away. Asking how to say someone's name isn't awkward if you do it immediately. If you ask 30 minutes later, then it reflects poorly on you.

42. When you shake hands, pump twice. This is a minor detail, but apparently many people worry about how to shake hands properly, so this tip is worth mentioning. Keep your handshake short and professional. Grasp hands, pump twice (up down, up down) and release. Practice with a friend one time and you'll get it. Don't make it harder than it has to be.

43. Answer the question that is asked of you. Don't stray off topic and babble about unrelated areas. Show that you're focused on the task at hand and engaged in the conversation. Better to have a short answer that's on point, than an in-depth one that is off topic.

44. Use time frames and numbers. Remember tip #20, the STAR method? Well, the R is what everyone forgets. Don't forget to mention the results that you have achieved and how long it took you to achieve them. Results are compelling, broad and general statements are not.

45. Don't be afraid to say that you don't know something. It is far better to truthfully state your skills and experiences than it is to lie, get the job, and be asked to do something you don't know how to do ... and then have to fess up. Keep things truthful and accurate and you'll put yourself in a position to succeed.

46. Start with a short answer and then go into more depth. If you begin your answers by rambling off on a long story, then it often takes awhile for you to get to your point. This confuses the interviewer and can make them wonder if you're addressing the right question. If you start with a quick statement that shows you understand the question and have a solid answer, then you can continue with a full story and go into more depth. Even a short introduction can make it easier for the listener to follow along. Something like, "Yes, I do believe I have the qualities of a good leader. I'll tell you a story as an example..."

47. Employers value people who are capable of taking an opportunity and running with it. The situations and circumstances change, but a person who can take advantage of whatever opportunity is presented to them will always be valuable. Regardless of the level you will play in the organization, do your best to showcase that you have the ability to handle whatever comes your way.

48. There are no rules about the types of questions you should be asked. Some people whine and complain about getting a hard question. You should be ready for hard questions. And if you get a question that you don't understand fully or aren't sure where to go with it, then ask them a question back. Get more clarity from the interviewer and see if you can get a better understanding of what they are looking for. Have them restate the question in different words. If you have a back and forth conversation, then you will usually talk your way through the tough questions. Sitting in silence, guessing awkwardly, and then complaining about the question later on doesn't help anyone.

49. The interviewer's assumption is that this is you at your best, so be ready to bring your best. Enough said.

50. When all else fails, smile as often as is appropriate. It's hard to hate someone who is happy.

V. Phone interview tips

51. Preparing for a phone interview is just as important as preparing for an in-person interview. Usually, you won't have the chance to meet face-to-face if you ruin it over the phone, so make sure you've prepared for these preliminary interviews as well.

52. Make sure you have a location to take the call that is quiet and free from distractions. If possible, avoid going outside since excessive wind can often ruin a call.

53. Wear something that makes you feel like a winner. Maybe that's a suit, maybe it's jeans ... whatever it is, just make sure you have a physical presence that makes you feel good about yourself. You might not be face-to-face with the interviewer, but what you wear is just as much about how you feel as it is about what others think.

54. Keep it simple. Don't make the mistake of printing out your answers, laying a bunch of pages on the table in front of you, and thinking that you'll have time to look up the answer to each question. This isn't an interview over email, it's a phone conversation. Your replies are instant. Instead, develop a list of key bullet points and phrases that you absolutely want to cover. You can easily check off these bullet points as you talk about them.

55. Do not reveal your salary expectations on a phone interview. This is a common play by recruiters and they want to box you into a number as early as possible. If you hear something along the lines of, "What are your salary expectations?" Then simply respond with, "Well, I think we're a little ways from having that chat, but if it seems like a good fit for the both of us, then I'm sure salary won't be a problem." If they push further, then just insist that you can't give a number until you meet your co-workers, visit the company, and have a better idea of what the job will entail. Tell them that you're simply not comfortable revealing a number until you can see the full picture.

VI. Second interview tips

56. Show that you're in it for a career and not a job. Most people just want a job. They want to be employed and get paid. Show the recruiter that you're looking for a career. You want to become a part of the culture, of the company, of a team. You want to be there through good and bad and support the people around you. You researched the company history, their culture, their advertisements and marketing campaigns, their Twitter and Facebook pages... you want to get to know them because you want to know the type of family that you're being a part of. You're in it for a career — not just a job.

57. Ask "What intrigues you about me enough that you called me in for a second interview?" It's obvious that they like you because they invited you back for a second interview, so you might as well find out what they like. They will give you some key areas that they are impressed with, which makes it easier for you to briefly highlight those strengths as well as focus on the other areas that will seal the deal.

VII. Questions you should ask

58. Start the interview by making it easy on the recruiter. Ask them, "What

can I do to make today as easy as possible? How can I make your life easier today?" This sets a nice tone for the interview, gives you an indication of the recruiter's personality, and will give you some good information to start with. (Hat tip to Bruce Hurwitz.)

59. Find out what is important to them. It might seem like the interview is all about you, your career, and whether or not you're a good fit for the job... but it's actually about them. You need to discover what's important to the company and how you can help them reach their goals. At some point during the interview, be sure to ask "What's really important to the company within the first 90 days of me joining?" The answer to that question will give you specific problem areas that you can talk about solving for the company.

60. If a question comes to mind during the interview, then ask it. Most recruiters would prefer to have an interactive conversation during the interview. For example, if you give an answer that describes how you're excellent at working in teams, then it would be the perfect time to ask about the opportunities you would have to work on a team in the new job.

61. You should have at least three excellent questions ready for the end of the interview. If you have fewer then it won't look like you did your homework. Don't ask about vacation benefits or something else that can be easily researched. Ask something that is integral to how you'll perform in the position.

Here are some examples of good questions you can ask...

62. What is the organizations plan for the next five years, and how does this department fit in?

63. How will my leadership responsibilities and performance be measured? By whom?

64. What do you think is the greatest opportunity facing the organization in the near future? The biggest threat?

65. Now that we've had the chance to talk a bit more, do you have any doubts or concerns about whether or not I would be a good fit for this role?

66. Can you explain a typical project that I would be working on? What would "a day in the life" of this position look like?

67. How do my answers compare to other candidates that you've seen?

68. Give me an example of someone you hired for a position like this that you are delighted you hired.

69. Twelve months from now, I want you to tell me that hiring me was the best decision you have made the whole year. What needs to happen for us to have that conversation?

70. Give me an example of an employee that exceeded expectations.

71. What are your company's strengths and weaknesses compared to its competition?

72. What are the significant trends in the industry?

73. How do you develop your employees and make them better once they start working here?

74. How are decisions made here? How much is team-based and how much is on the individual?

75. What performance expectations do you have for a good employee in this position? What would success look like?

76. Tell me about some of the department's successes in the last few years.

77. In my research I found the following competitors, [companies A, B, and C]. Can you please tell me what they're doing that keeps your executive team up at night? If the job doesn't work out, you can call up their competitors and say, "I just had an interview at Company X and given what they told me about you and why you keep them up at night I think I'd rather work for you! Can we meet for coffee?" You'll get that coffee and it may just turn into an offer. Only do this only if you're denied after the first interview. Once you have a second interview with the company, they're interested and it's best to keep your discussions confidential until you close it or walkway. (Hat tip to David Perry.)

78. Say thank you and actually ask for the job. If you think you're a good fit, then say so. If this job is your dream job, then tell them that.

VIII. Negotiating salary

79. Always be ready to talk salary, but don't be the first one to bring it up. The one exception to this rule is if the company asks you to start signing papers, but never brought up what you will be paid. This is a discussion you need to have, so make sure you have it before you sign off on a new job.

80. Know what you're willing to accept before you walk in the door. Many candidates never give themselves a chance to negotiate a better salary because they don't spend enough time thinking about it beforehand. Take some time and consider the compensation that you would be happy with receiving. What number would you walk away from because it's too low for you? Don't get locked in a bad position because you're not sure what you are willing to accept in the first place.

81. Know what you're worth. Get as much data as you can on the going rate for the job. Check online and offline sources. Reach out and talk to people at similar positions in different companies. If they are willing to tell you, find out what they make. Keep the conversation relaxed and simply ask, "What kind of salary could someone like me expect at your company?"

82. Understand the company's financial position. If a large company and a small company have similar openings, then the large one will usually pay more because they have more financial leeway. Where are you interviewing? How is that company doing financially? Some companies simply don't have much flexibility and it's important to realize that going in.

83. Talk with the recruiter, not against them — they need to sell you. The typical recruiter almost never has the ability to make the final decision on your compensation package. After you negotiate with them, they will need to go back and confirm the package with a hiring manager or another supervisor. In other words, the recruiter is going to sell you to the hiring manager. It's up to them to communicate why you deserve a higher salary. You want their support because they are going to need to sell you. You're not battling against them. You're working with them.

84. Some perks are easier to negotiate for than others. Typically, a signing bonus is much easier to negotiate than more vacation days or a shorter waiting period on 401k matching. There is usually some flexibility in your salary range as well, which is another good area to focus on. Not all perks are created equal.

85. If you're meeting resistance, then ask about starting at a higher pay grade. A higher pay grade helps because you can often earn a raise without needing

a promotion.

86. Ask to shorten the period that it takes for you to come up for a raise.

You might not be able to start higher on the pay scale, but it's very possible you could get a raise after 6 months on the job instead of 12. That's a quick boost for you and it only takes a few minutes to negotiate.

87. Remember that the salary negotiation is a conversation and conversations are two-way streets. If you make an offer and then continue to talk and make another offer, then you're negotiating with yourself. Allow the conversation to go back and forth and don't make more than one offer in a row.

88. Ask, "What is the salary range you have allocated for someone in this position?" This is a great question to ask at the very beginning of a job interview or the first time you meet a recruiter. It gives you the ability to get information on the expected salary before the actual debate arises later on.

89. "I'm going to need more information about the job/total benefits/expectations before I can name a number..." This is an excellent phrase to use if the interviewer is pressing you for a number and hasn't revealed their expected salary range yet.

90. "Do you have any flexibility in that number?" This is a great phrase to use right after the interviewer names their expected salary for the position. It offers a nice transition into the conversation of asking for more money.

91. "That sounds really good. What's the present value of that?" Sometimes recruiters will try to sell you on arbitrary numbers by saying things like "We're giving you 1000 stock options." Ask for the present value of all items in your compensation package and find out what the total dollar value is.

92. "I'm a bit disappointed..." This is a great phrase for starting the salary negotiation once you've discovered what they have initially offered you. "I'm a bit disappointed in the starting salary. What can we do to figure this out?"

93. "That sounds like a good starting place..." This is another solid phrase to use if you want to ask for a higher salary range. "\$45,000. That sounds like a good starting place. Now we just need to figure out the details."

94. "Let's review this after 3 months..." If you're having trouble making headway with the negotiation, but you're fine with starting at the package they gave you, then you can use this phrases to get a quicker boost. "Let's review this after 3 months and talk about a raise once you've had a chance to see my work."

95. "Can we get that in writing?" If you negotiate for a better compensation package, then make sure you get all of the details in writing.

96. If you don't ask for a higher salary, then the answer is always no. It takes some guts to push back and ask for more, but it's far better to ask and be turned down than not to ask at all. Getting what you want doesn't mean that you need to act like a jerk. Furthermore, you're not going to lose an offer because you tried to negotiate for a higher salary. The recruiter is expecting you to negotiate. If you want to keep it really simple, then just smile and ask for what you want while offering some proof to back up your request.

IX. Follow up email after an interview

97. Say thank you. Once the interview is over, send an individualized thank you note to each person you interviewed with and mention something specific that happened or that you said during the interview to remind them who you are. Don't

worry about saying all sorts of things. Just keep it short and sweet.

98. Be diligent and keep checking in. You don't want to pester them, but occasionally check in to see how the process is coming along and remind them of who you are and why you're committed to the position. Waiting one week before reaching out is usually a good time frame.

99. Smile. You've done your best.

Is 99 tips not enough for you?

If you're looking for more brilliant tips and tactics on interviews, negotiations, networking and all things related to earning more time, more money, and more freedom... then sign up for the Free Newsletter on Earning More.

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Editor's Note: I'm extremely grateful to everyone who helped with this article, including but not limited to: Monica Molstad Baresh, Tiffany Bradshaw, Chantay Bridges, Fred Cooper, Sander Daniels, John Paul Engel, Elizabeth Brody Gluck, Tony Goddard, Mark Grimm, Bruce Hurwitz, Stephanie Kiester, Jennifer Lee, Julie Melillo, Walker Mills, David Perry, Dawna Reeves, Paul Sloane, Larry Stybel, Patricia Thompson, Beth Walsh, and Chris Westfall.

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18 Responses to 99 interview tips that will actually help you get a job



Jacob

This is such a refreshing list of job tips. I've read through God knows how many lists of job tips and everyone makes good points, but its all so scattered. It's nice to see it all in one place!

[Reply](#)



James Clear

Jacob, that's good to hear. That was my goal with this article. I'm glad that it's a one-stop resource for you.

[Reply](#)



Aimee Carmichael

I am currently looking for some freelance roles of which a few may require an interview, I found this very useful. I really enjoy your blog.

[Reply](#)



James Clear

Thanks Aimee! Good luck with the potential interviews.

[Reply](#)



Jennelle

These are fantastic tips! I'm attempted to give this out to potential 😊 candidates who would like to be hired by me.

[Reply](#)



James Clear

😊 Feel free! Send them to as many people as you would like.

[Reply](#)



Adam

I have a big interview tomorrow and this was a great read to help me go into it with more confidence and preparation.

Tomorrow will be my first panel interview. If you have any tips for being interviewed by a panel that would be excellent. If not, it was still an amazing read I will probably read 3 more times until tomorrow. Thank you very much for the great article.

[Reply](#)



James Clear

Thanks Adam! I'm glad you enjoyed it.

Here are two ideas for group interviews.

1. Do your best to get the business card of every person on the panel when you walk in the room. Then, when you sit down at your spot, you can place each business card on the table in front of you in the same order that everyone is seated around the table. This way, when you answer questions you can refer to each person by name with a simple glance down. (If you can't get the business cards, don't sweat it. Just move on.)

2. When asked a question, start by directing your answer to the person who asked it. As you continue to talk, however, keep things engaging and talk to the whole group. Think of it more as a group conversation than as a question-and-answer session with each person individually.

Good luck!

[Reply](#)



Adam

Excellent tips that I will use. Normally I write the names down but business cards is a great idea as well to help me with thank you follow-up emails.

Thanks again interview in two hours!

[Reply](#)



Erik

I think these tips are great. I like that its broken down by where specific part of the interview process. Its honestly best to pick apart a few tips and cater it to your specific interview. In my experience it's always a plus to show up no sooner than 12 minutes before your scheduled interview time. Also use the restroom before you walk in the office.

I remember seeing one young lady actually keep the interviewer waiting because apparently she was so nervous that she did the #2 and had the interviewer waiting 15 mins for her. Another tip is to treat the receptionist the same way you would treat the recruiter. A little courtesy goes a loong way believe it or not.

Lastly if you don't get the job don't sweat it. It wouldn't be a bad idea to followup with the HR person every month or so. Sometimes things don't work out with the person that got the job and they end up re-posting the position. If you keep a level of rapport with the recruiter it may not be that you were not the write fit at the time but that the person they hired may have sold themselves better but were not able to deliver on those promises because they overstated their ability. you will be one of the first people they think about when it comes time to interview.

I write about this and other ways to "Bully" your life on my website.

[Reply](#)



Red

A first class article. This is required reading for anyone in the job market. I wish I had seen it when I was 20, instead of 70!

Bravo

[Reply](#)



James Clear

Thanks Red! Great to have you here!

[Reply](#)



Mohammad Jamshid

Thanks Clear,
I really support your ideas. I need your direction to show me a good book for writing.

[Reply](#)



James Clear

Hi Jamshid,

What type of writing book are you looking for?

James

[Reply](#)



Sardonycus

I've been unemployed for a few months now and this list will be very 😊 useful to me. Thanks

[Reply](#)



James Clear

Good luck!

[Reply](#)



Dennis Dee

I actually like it. There are a few just like what I did preparing and during the interview and life experience. At the end of the day, the interviewer always has the last to say.

[Reply](#)



Public Art Supporter

Thanks for the awesome list. You really helped me out today! I was super prepared. Let's hope I'm a finalist.

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