



**Odell Companies**

660 N. Central Expressway, Suite 240  
Plano, TX 75074  
469-246-4500 (Local)  
800-880-7900 (Toll-free)  
FAX: 972-233-1215  
info@odellsearch.com

## **GUIDELINES FOR A SUCCESSFUL PROFESSIONAL INTERVIEW**

*In your life span there is nothing more vital in shaping your future than the few moments you spend in interviewing for a job change. All the education and work experience may be overshadowed if you are not prepared for the interview.*

### **BE PREPARED!!**

Just as you would research before making an investment, whether it is buying a home, car, stocks, etc., you should conduct a thorough research of the Company before investing your future. Know the Company, its size, products, plant location, financial stability, growth potential. How can you impress an interviewer you want the job if you know nothing of the Company? There are a number of research publications providing this information, such as *Company's Annual Report, Thomas' Register of American Manufacturers, Moody's Manuals, Fitch Corporation Manuals, Standard & Poors Corporation Records* - all available in your public library. Your broker or banker is also an excellent source as well as the Internet.

For this reason, we have set forth some fairly specific guidelines you should use to achieve a successful interview. All applicants, irrespective of level, should be well prepared. By applying these guidelines, you can control the direction and pace of any interview. Your Counselor will advise you of the time and place of the interview as well as the identity of the interviewer and his position.

Bear in mind - an interview has a dual purpose. The employer must decide if your qualifications meet the Company's requirements, but equally important you must decide if the Company has the growth opportunity and the career path you seek. Therefore, you should prepare a list of questions you feel is necessary for your evaluation of a company.

#### **Probing questions you might ask are:**

- *A detailed description of the position.*
- *Company's growth plans.*
- *Reason the position is available.*
- *Anticipated indoctrination and training program.*
- *Advancement opportunities and potential earnings.*

## **THE INTERVIEW**

### ***... Things You Should Do***

In most interviewing situations, some of the obvious but critical things you should do are:

- Be on time or slightly early.
- Complete neatly all spaces on application.
- Use Mr. or Ms. upon introduction until told otherwise.
- Dress conservatively: shoes shined, tie straight, clean shirt and suit, suits or dresses for women.
- Use a firm enthusiastic handshake.
- Make notice of something in office of importance and comment positively (preferably family pictures).
- Sit up straight but relaxed.
- Listen!
- Look interviewer directly in the eyes at all times.
- Show interest in the Company, the job, the interviewer. Ask pertinent questions such as history, growth rate, size in dollars, responsibilities, supervisory authority, progression, how long with company, why, etc.
- Respond to questions with direct, well thought out answers.
- Tell the truth.
- Know about the Company by researching ahead of time.
- Know what you want.
- Underplay your need for a job.
- Carry your share of the conversation.
- Be positive with all of your answers.
- Be observant.
- Ask probing questions yourself: Why is the job available, what is the turnover (this job and the company), who is the supervisor, their background, their personality, any nepotism, positive and negative.
- Ask for the job; always show definite interest. You have nothing without an offer. If there is the slightest interest on your part, express it.
- Call the Odell Counselor immediately following the interview and advice of all positives and negatives and how you and the employer left things.
- Write a "thank you" letter to the employer and "ask for the job" again. Your Counselor will offer some ideas.
- Exhibit confidence above all!

## **THE INTERVIEW**

### ***... Things You Should Not Do***

- Do not smoke or chew on a toothpick.
- Do not chew gum.
- Do not be conceited or bored.
- Do not answer with one word answers.
- Do not be "pinned down" to a salary. Your Odell Consultant will handle salary negotiations.
- Do not ask about benefits until an offer is made.
- Do not leave unanswered questions on application or during interview.
- Do not hedge on your answers, misrepresent yourself, or mislead the interviewer.
- Do not make excuses.
- Do not get in a hurry when working on applications, tests, or questionnaires.
- Do not pose a threat to your interviewer's position.
- Do not act disinterested.
- Do not name references until necessary.
- Do not discuss race, religion, politics or controversial subjects.
- Do not volunteer confidential information about previous employers.
- Do not waste time on interview.
- Do not be late or miss an interviewer.
- Do not be pressured into a lesser position.
- Never turn down an offer until talking with your Odell Counselor first.
- Do not act "hungry" or overbearing.

## **BE PREPARED**

### ***To Answer Questions Like . . .***

- Why did you choose this particular vocation?
- Why do you want to work for us?
- What are your short range (3 to 5 years) objectives? Your plans for achieving them?
- What are your long range (10 years) objectives? Your plans for achieving them?
- Have you had any performance evaluations and reviews by previous employers? Have you improved on any short-comings? How?
- What are your strengths? What is your biggest weakness?
- What are the reasons for your job changes?
- What are your outstanding accomplishments in your present job and your career so far?
- Looking back over the past 5 to 10 years, what would you say are the most important ways in which you have changed?
- Describe an ideal job with regard to: supervisor, working conditions, location, salary.
- What do you know about our company? (The company which you are interviewing). Location of offices? Its products or services? Growth? Growth potential for the future?
- Your involvement in community/civic activities.
- How sound is your financial condition? Own home? Life Insurance? Savings? Investments?
- How long would you stay with us?
- If you could start again, what would you do differently?
- Why should we hire you?

## **CLOSING THE INTERVIEW**

There is an old adage taught to most salesmen that says: AYou will never make a sale unless you ask for the order. This is good to keep in mind when seeking a job offer. You are selling yourself, your skills, experience, education, etc., just as if you were selling a product. It could be said Ayou will never get an offer or a job unless you ask for it. This means to show strong interest via the power of suggestion. Once the interview is complete, the interviewer will make you aware of it. Do not ramble on unnecessarily. Wind it up! Be sure to show definite interest by asking for a second interview. It is not too early to ask for the job.

### **Examples:**

*I certainly appreciate your time and courtesy. From what you have told me so far today, the opportunity here looks excellent, and I am most interested in pursuing it with you. When do we discuss it further?*

*(Interviewer's name), it's been a real pleasure talking with you and from all indications the situation as you describe it looks excellent, and I am most interested. What's the next step?*

These are but two examples of AFirst Interview Closes.

It is a must that you show interest at this point. There are several variations which you can use. Be sure to write a follow-up Athank you letter. This letter should include a thank you for the interviewer's time and you should express your appreciation. Also, you should briefly highlight reasons why you can perform in the capacity for which you are interviewing and should close by expressing interest in pursuing the opportunity. Your Counselor will help you in drafting the proper letter.



**Odell Companies**

660 N. Central Expressway, Suite 240 ~ Plano, TX 75074 ~ 800-880-7900 (Toll-free) ~ [info@odellsearch.com](mailto:info@odellsearch.com)