

YOU'RE HIRED!

Top Interview Tips
By Nigel J Armitt, FCMA, CGMA

10 TIPS TO REDUCE STRESS AT INTERVIEWS

Why do we feel fear?

1. Fear of the unknown

It would be great if you could just sit in the waiting room before an interview and read a magazine or book. That's not how the majority of candidates feel though!

Your mind may be full of negative thoughts including:

I really need this job to be able to pay the bills, and maybe they won't like me.

This is the wrong way to think - you must think positively.

Then you will not come across as desperate - "Please, please hire me."

TIP: Start your thinking from I am going to do my best and will view this interview as a meeting between two people getting to know each other.

The worse that can happen is I may not be successful (this can be for many reasons even one's not linked to my personal performance at the interview - If you want to know more then read my eBook You're Hired!) but I will learn from the experience and NOT give up - I will continue until I am hired.

If you don't get this job - is it the end of the world? You will survive the day.

As Edison once said: ***"I have not failed. I've just found 10,000 ways that won't work."***

Interviewers can tell candidates who fear so don't give them a chance - sit up confidently and try to think all the time it is simply a meeting between two people.

2. Fear of coming across, as you don't know what you're talking about.

You simply forget ALL that you researched or studied before the interview.

TIP: Practice, practice, practice, before the interview is key to STOP this happening because your answers will then come naturally.

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You will not have to stop and think - now what is the right answer to give to that interview question?

Instead the right answer will already be in your sub conscious ready for you to recall the answer with out any delay or hesitation.

Pause before you answer. This makes it appear as though you are thoughtful, but not struggling during the conversation.

TIP: Call up a friend and set up a mock job interview. Have them ask the toughest interview questions. Repeat. Repeat so many times that you can confidently answer even the most difficult question in your sleep. Thoroughly review the job description and research the company to be well prepared.

3. Fear of Rejection

Nobody wants this. Don't think this way.

The fact is it may have nothing to do with you. It can be about the company or organisation wanting to employ someone for as low a salary as possible or with the most very recent experience in a particular industry. There are so many factors that could be affecting the offer. There may be already a preferred internal candidate, relatives promised the job, chemistry is not quite right between you and your new boss, a mismatch in salary, other requirements, etc., etc.

An interview is a two-way conversation and therefore you will be interviewing them just as they are you.

Remember that the interviewer would not have called you in if you were not considered to be a good fit for the company. You have a great deal to offer the company and it is their loss if they should decide otherwise.

TIP: Therefore you must not think about rejection otherwise you will NOT perform at your best. Put it out of your head. Close your eyes just before the interview in private and visualise yourself sat across from the interviewer getting on well and talking calmly to each other with confidence, enthusiasm and ease.

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Take the control back and reject the feeling of fear.

When you have done everything to prepare for the interview, and you are satisfied you can present yourself in the best possible way, the next step is for you to let it go.

You will learn something from every interview.

By meeting new people and having new experiences you will start to enjoy the meetings. Who knows you may start to like interviewing.

4. Be Confident

Your resume stood out from the crowd enough that you have been invited. Remember this as you prepare and meet the interviewer.

TIP: As you enter, think of someone you admire, and consider his or her great qualities. Recall how they present themselves, how they walk, talk, and greet others. Remember how that person exudes self-confidence and think to yourself - I will do the same.

5. Treat Yourself to Your Favourite Breakfast

Get plenty of rest the night before. You want to put your best step forward. Don't allow yourself to go to the job interview on an empty stomach. Make sure you eat lightly to avoid stomach growls and indigestion. You can't go wrong with a fresh salad! Water is a must to rejuvenate your body—bring a bottle with you into the interview because your nervousness might cause a dry mouth. Enter bright-eyed, bushy-tailed, and full of energy. Show the interviewer you can tackle the toughest task. Enter and exit with a winning smile.

6. Just remember to Take It Easy

Just take it easy it'll all be over very soon. Every stressful moment you spend in the interview room is a moment to release. Relax. You have researched and prepared in advance. You are ready.

TIP: A trick to help you relax: keep your hands under the table, when appropriate, and rub the flesh between the first finger and the thumb in a circular motion.

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Keep smiling, you're almost finished.

Don't worry you will get through the interview and survive the other side!

7. Let Your Personality Shine Through

After all the interview questions have finished from the interviewer he/she will ask: "Tell me about yourself," it is the time to let your personality shine through.

TIP: Talk about how your core values and skills are a match for the company.

There usually will have been some comments made earlier by the interviewer about the problems /issues the company is currently facing which they want the person in the role you are being interviewed for to solve.

TIP: Now is the chance for you to say how you will solve those problems and give some relevant examples of HOW you did this previously in other situations wherever you have been - university, employed or voluntary work.

Ask the interviewer any of the pre- prepared questions you wanted to ask, or share a passion that you have outside of work.

Calming techniques

TIP: Practise deep breathing meditation.

The key to deep breathing is to breathe deeply from the abdomen, getting as much fresh air as possible in your lungs. When you take deep breaths from the abdomen, rather than shallow breaths from your upper chest, you inhale more oxygen. The more oxygen you get, the less tense, short of breath, and anxious you feel.

- Sit comfortably with your back straight. Put one hand on your chest and the other on your stomach.
- Breathe in through your nose. The hand on your stomach should rise. The hand on your chest should move very little.

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- Exhale through your mouth, pushing out as much air as you can while contracting your abdominal muscles. The hand on your stomach should move in as you exhale, but your other hand should move very little.
- Continue to breathe in through your nose and out through your mouth. Try to inhale enough so that your lower abdomen rises and falls. Count slowly as you exhale.
- Relaxation techniques such as yoga, and meditation classes, are recommended for anyone who has an extreme case of “interview fright.”

Positive Self-Talk

TIP: I'm prepared. I can do this. Stay calm and relaxed. This job is mine. I can ace this interview in my sleep.

Repeat phrases like these in your head or out loud and you'll start feeling more confident.

- N J Armit, Author of You're Hired!

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