

## Top 10 Job Interview Tips for High School Students

**1. Arrive for your interview about 15 minutes in advance.** Make sure you take a trial commute to the interviewing spot if you are unsure of the location or how long it might take to park. Punctuality is a major concern for employers of teens, and late arrival will often kill your chances of landing the job.

**2. First impressions have a high impact.** Take care with the way you dress and groom yourself to show the employer that you are taking the job seriously. The employer will be especially concerned with your appearance if you are in a customer contact position as a server, store clerk, receptionist or front desk worker.

- Wear wrinkle-free clothing and avoid garments with those stylish holes.
- For most jobs, business casual will be suitable: Pants (not jeans), collared shirts, conservative tops, dresses and skirts, etc...
- Consider the type of organization you are targeting as you prepare your interview attire. Show a fashion flare in line with the orientation of the store if you are going for a job in retail.
- Shaggy, sloppy, slovenly appearance is not going to help you. Do not wear excessive cologne.
- Bring a notepad to jot down questions that may occur to you, points you want to remember to make in your behalf, and the interviewer's name if you tend to be forgetful.

**3. The receptionist, secretary or another staff member who greets you may not be your interviewer.** However, you can bet that the interviewer will ask about their impressions of you. Sit up straight, look them in the eye, smile and converse respectfully with them. Ask a question or two or make some small talk. Make them want to tell the boss that they like your personality and that you would fit in.

**4. Greet the interviewer with a firm but not crushing handshake,** a warm smile and look them in the eye. Make a mental or physical note of their name and use it during the interview, so you remember it for your follow-up. Always address the interviewer as Mr. or Ms. Employers will be evaluating how you might interact with their staff and customers, who are probably primarily adults. Here's how to introduce yourself at an interview.

**5. Turn your cell phone off or to vibrate,** and resist the temptation to take a peek at any time before, during or after the meeting, when you are in view of the interviewer. Employers are very concerned about losing productivity among teen employees who are constantly checking their phones.

**6. Exude energy, enthusiasm and a positive attitude at all times.** Employers want upbeat teen workers who don't bring any attitudinal baggage to the job. When sitting, avoid slouching and lean slightly forward, like you are eager to hear the next thing that the interviewer has to say.

**7. Take inventory of your strengths prior to the interview.** If the employer has advertised the job, look at the description and be prepared to say how you meet as many of the qualifications as possible. Be prepared to describe situations where you have used your assets to get things done. Draw upon academics, school activities, sports and volunteer work for examples, especially if you haven't held any or many jobs.

Review common questions and answers for interviews. Practice answering questions with a friend or family member so you can speak confidently during your interview. Don't be intimidated if you don't have all the qualifications for a job. Express a genuine eagerness to learn the job.

**8. Be prepared to say why the job interests you.** You can reference things like the tasks, work environment, what you would learn and the people with whom you would interact.

Everything being equal in terms of qualifications, employers will often pick the candidate who seems most interested.

**9. At the end of the interview, be prepared to ask a few questions about the job.** Focus on issues like the nature of the work, training, supervision, clientele, and when you might expect to hear from them. Don't bring up pay. If the job seems like a good fit, look the interviewer in the eye and tell them that you would really like to work there.

**10. Effective follow-up after your interview can separate you from the other candidates.** As soon as you leave the interview, compose a thank you note expressing your gratitude for the interview and stating briefly that you would love to work with them and why you think it's a good fit. A card is a nice touch if your handwriting is legible, but email is also acceptable. Whichever you choose, send it immediately. It will reinforce your punctuality and ability to get things done, as well as reiterating your interest in the job.

Source: TheBalance.com