

For Job Seekers: Eight Interview Tips and Four Questions to Ask

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You may ask “More on job interviewing?” What do I offer that is new on this topic? My response is that I share my years of experience on both sides of the interview table and you will learn from my mistakes and gain insights into the dynamics of the job interview.

My goal is to coach you on how to become a more effective interviewee. Face it: The stakes are high as now that you’ve made it through the resume-screening process and a decision-maker has determined that you are worth a phone call or — even better — a face-to-face interview at the company’s office. Preparing for your interview is a worthwhile investment of your time.

Tips & Techniques

1. *Consider where you are in the interview cycle.* Is it a preliminary screening interview by phone? Is this your first or second interview? Is it an interview for finalists?
2. *Establish your goals prior to your interview.* Do you want to get past the initial screening process? Do you want to sell yourself as the most qualified candidate?
3. *Determine the needs of the hiring organization and the needs of the hiring boss.* Learn about the company before your interviews, and prepare related questions in advance of the interview.
4. *Ask yourself: Is the interviewer the hiring executive or one of a number of interviewers?* How much clout does this interviewer have? Either way, encourage the interviewer to talk about his/her needs, issues, and expectations. Everyone likes to talk about themselves.
5. ***Listen, listen, and listen.*** You can’t go wrong when you actively listen.
6. *Keep your answers concise.* Ask: “Have I answered your question?” Don’t become defensive.
7. *Ask questions.* Play back answers, paraphrasing them for clear understanding.
8. *Present a favorable image.* Show that you are “likeable.” Avoid offering strong opinions on sensitive subjects such as politics and religion; if you do express controversial opinions, you will have a more than 50 percent chance of alienating your interviewer.

Four questions to ask the interviewer:

- What are the key issues, duties, challenges of this position?
- What are the most important responsibilities of this position?
- What would you expect me to accomplish the first six months?
- How will I know if I am successful if I am hired?

McHugh Expert Interview

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I-11, *McHugh Interviews McHugh on Executive Recruiting*, 2011

Self-Employment

Ever wonder what it takes to become successfully self-employed? If self-employment interests you be sure to check these McHugh Resources: The Self-Employment Advisor <http://self-employmentadvisor.com/> and the LinkedIn group, The Self-Employment Forum, <http://goo.gl/AoDWEU> .

About John B. McHugh

John B. “Jack” McHugh is a 40-year veteran of the publishing business. Jack has worked as an executive for Houghton Mifflin, Wadsworth, and Saint Mary’s Press. Jack is also an experienced association publishing executive. For seven years, he was Publisher and Director of Programs at the American Society for Quality, and for a two-year period, he served as the Interim Publisher at the Project Management Institute. Jack’s specialties include association/nonprofit publishing, book publishing, executive recruiting, journal publishing, rights and permissions, organizational design, and startups. He is the manager of the LinkedIn™ group Association and Nonprofit Publishing.

McHugh Executive Recruiting Services

John B. McHugh is an experienced executive recruiter with a specialty in commercial and nonprofit publishing, including college, business, technical, professional, religious, and association publications. He has written extensively about the field of effective publishing management, drawing on his expertise as a successful executive of both book and journal programs.

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