

## Eight Job Interviewing Tips from McHugh and Novak

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“When I interview a candidate for an executive position,” according to Jack McHugh, “rarely do my questions have one correct answer. Rather I am looking at a job candidate’s ability to answer a question quickly, succinctly, and cogently.”

To help you succeed in your job interview, we offer you these eight tips.

- *Cultivate Your Listening Abilities* The ability to listen is a must for success in any organization. Rephrase and playback the question for clarity.
- *Demonstrate Logical Thinking* Logical, orderly thinking is the key to success on the job. Even more vital is the ability to explain the logic of your reasoning or position on an issue.
- *Show the Ability to Think Analytically* This is a close cousin to logical thinking. In an interview, many questions may not have a right or wrong answer. They are often posed simply to allow you to display evidence that you followed an analytical process to arrive at an insightful answer.
- *Practice Succinctness* Long-winded answers that are short on substance will inevitably get you negative marks. Aim for a maximum of two to three minutes an answer. Direct answers are always the best. If you don’t know the answer to a question, just say so
- *Be Like Successful Politicians: Anticipate the Questions* Once you have done this, then think about your answers and rehearse them.
- *Exhibit Candor* Be candid without being apologetic. If you failed at something, explain why. If you don’t understand a question, frankly say as much.
- *Refrain from Bad-mouthing Anyone* Never speak negatively about others, particularly former bosses and colleagues, even if your work history includes a difficult colleague or boss. If pressed, fall back on the generic and innocuous, “We just approached some situations differently.”
- *Avoid Evasiveness* If you have long, seemingly unexplained gaps in your employment history; be prepared to fill them in honestly. For example: “We had two school-age children, and schools closed for the better part of a year during the pandemic” is an explanation that any reasonable employer should be inclined to accept these days.

And one more thing: remember what the late Molly Ivins said, “When you are in a hole, stop digging.”

**Also of interest** are these 15 free articles on career management and networking.

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