



WHY IT'S CRITICAL TO BEGIN AN INTERVIEW IN A POSITIVE WAY



I recently coached an individual who was preparing for an executive position with a mid-sized nationally recognized organization. We began the practice interview with a typical question for a position at this level, “what makes you qualified for this position.” Those of you who we’ve coached know this question is simply a variation of “tell me about yourself” but your answer must be focused on how your skills align to the position. The candidate didn’t have the typical back-

ground for this position however, was extremely qualified. They started the answer with “I have a unique background which oddly enough, makes me qualified for this position.” STOP! Everyone has a unique background and you don’t want to shoot yourself in the foot at the start of the interview. We teach in the seminar the way you answer the first question will set a tone for the entire interview. If you excel on this question, they’ll look for ways to confirm that you are a fit with the posi-

tion. The same holds true if you blow the first question; they’ll begin looking for ways to confirm that you’re not a fit for the remainder of the interview. The first impression includes your handshake, introduction, and initial response to the first question. Make sure your total first impression is positive so they’ll try to confirm your qualifications and fit for the remainder of the interview. Back to the answer... in this situation, you should remove words like “unique” and “oddly enough” since these are negatives and can be misinterpreted. The correct start when answering this question is “my experiences align perfectly with this position” and then you must demonstrate how your unique background actually makes you a more qualified candidate as compared to those who have the typical background. This is a great way to distinguish your interview from the competition since they’ll likely have similar experiences. It also makes your interview memorable and allows you to stand out from the crowd!



THE BEHAVIORAL INTERVIEW

This type of interview is becoming more common in today's job markets since many hiring managers believe the best way to predict future performance is to look at past performance. The format is straight forward and you'll be asked questions such as: "Tell me about a time that you had to deal with a difficult customer and how you handled the situation" or "Tell me about a major accomplishment and how you achieve this". The behavioral format differs from traditional question which are usually hypothetical. An example would be "How would you deal with a difficult customer". The traditional approach allows a candidate to overstate their skills while the behavioral format requires a concrete example which limits the ability to inflate skills, unless the candidate is lying (which is never recommended). The key to behavioral questions is to understand the position and those specific skills which are required to be successful in this position. Next, you need to prepare using your past experiences and a structured approach to answering. This will ensure you address all the elements a hiring manager needs to hear in your response. In addition, behavioral questions may have several parts and you need to ensure all parts are covered in your response. At our seminar, we teach you how to identify and respond to behavioral questions. We also give you an opportunity to practice answering these types of questions before you meet with a hiring manager, when it really counts!



ask the hiring manager

What should I do if I'm going to be late to the interview?

Answer: We recommend that you not be late. However, there are a few situations when a late arrival is beyond your control and you might be able to recover the interview. Notice that we said a few since a late arrival will typically end an interview. You may still go through the interview, however the hiring manager has already determined that you can't follow instructions or be relied upon to satisfy deadlines. If you're going to be late for any reason, we recommend that you call ahead and inform the hiring manager of how late you'll be and why. Under no circumstance should you make-up a reason for being late, however you can frame the reason in a positive manner. For example, if you overslept (which is a terrible reason to be late), you can tell them of your excitement for the interview and therefore couldn't sleep all night. When you arrive, apologize and re-state your reason for being late. They might overlook this if you have a good reason and an exceptional interview.

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UPCOMING SEMINARS

Our team is currently working on the fall 2013 schedule. At present, we plan to be at several locations in the Ohio region:

- University of Cincinnati / Xavier University
- Wright-State University / Wright Patterson AFB area
- Miami University
- The Ohio State University
- Ohio University
- Bowling Green State University
- The University of Toledo
- Kent State University
- University of Akron

Specific dates/times are TBD as of the publishing of this newsletter and we'll update the website when specifics have been confirmed.

Please email us at service@interviewskills101.com if you have questions regarding the upcoming schedule. We hope to see you at one of our seminars with the goal of preparing you for the most important day of your career, the interview day...because without a successful interview, you won't get your ideal job.

