

FLY WITH THE WIND!

Engaging Inuit Youth in the Canadian Economy

Preparing for a Job Interview

So you dropped off your resume to an employer a couple of weeks ago and probably forgot about it. Then you get the call you have been waiting for.

“Hello, we received your resume and would like to arrange a time and date for an interview. Would you be available next Monday at 10:00 in the morning?”

Wow! You have just taken a major step towards getting the job you applied for, but you don't have it yet. You still have to do an interview. The employer will want to get to know you and your skills and abilities, and will likely want to ask you some detailed questions in relation to the job.

It is normal for people of all ages to get nervous about the job interview process. Few people like to talk about themselves and their qualifications. But like many things in life, the more prepared you are the better chance you have of doing really well in the interview. Here are some tips that some Inuit youth involved in this project came up with to help you through the process and come out successful.

The old saying 'you only get one chance to make a good first impression' is particularly true when going for a job interview. Here are some essential things to do and not to do.

- Present yourself well. Go in looking your best. You don't have to look like you are attending an award ceremony or dress like you are a finalist on American Idol. Be sure your hair and nails are clean. Wear clothes that are appropriate for the job - no patches or t-shirts with photos or sayings on them. No baseball hats, sunglasses, baggy low hanging pants or tops that have very short sleeves or deep v-necks.
- Turn off your cell phone and put it in your pocket during the interview. Your potential employer doesn't want to see that you are more interested in talking or texting with others than in the job.
- Sit properly. You want the person interviewing you to think "yes, they look like they would fit in well and represent the office or business well".
- Remember you are selling yourself. Try and speak clearly and confidently. Don't be overly-friendly or familiar, but do try to be relaxed. Look them in the eye and answer each question clearly and confidently. Be polite.
- Do not chew gum, smoke or squirm in your seat.
- Sell yourself as the best candidate for the job. Tell the interviewer about your education, previous work or volunteer experience and why you are interested in that job. What can you do for them that no one else can? Don't talk about really personal information in your speech. Your family and friends, religious beliefs, or your favorite hockey team may be important to you but it isn't to the interviewer.
- Practice what you will say with friends and family well before the interview. You can even try it in front of the mirror to see how you will look to the interviewer. This may seem like a chore and you may be shy or self-conscious about talking about yourself but you will really be glad you did it when the interviewer looks you in the eye and says "tell me about yourself".
- To really do well in the interview, spend some time before you go to learn about what the business or organization does. This will help you respond to questions better by relating them to things the company does. For example, if the company sells snowmobiles and the interviewer asks you what you like to do, you could mention that you have always liked spending time on the land and have driven snowmobiles since you were young.
- Be prepared for questions that may be related to the position you are applying for. If you are applying for administrative assistant or store clerk for example, you may be asked about your skill level on computers and certain software programs. If you are applying for work in a store, you may be asked to do certain tasks on a cash register. Think about



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the job that you are applying for and learn about what you will be required to do.

- When you are finished the interview smile, shake the interviewer's hand, thank them for their time and say that you hope to hear back from them in the near future. It is perfectly acceptable to ask when they expect to make a decision. A day or two after the interview call the interviewer and thank them again for the opportunity to meet with them. Being polite is essential in all jobs, but calling back again to thank them reminds the person that you are both polite and interested in the position.
- If you haven't heard back from the interviewer after the date they mentioned in the interview, don't hesitate to call and see if a decision has been made. They won't mind the call and it can help reduce the stress of waiting to hear.
- Be calm, relaxed and remember to breathe. Maintain eye contact, listen carefully to their questions and be positive;
- Do not bring gum, coffee or your cell phone unless it is turned off and out of sight. Try not to seem restless or uneasy;
- Let the interviewer know what you already know about the company and why you are specifically interested in working for them. They will appreciate that you have done your homework.
- Follow-up with a call or email within 24 hours of the interview. If there are additional questions or an important skill you have that you forgot during the interview, this is the time to ask or provide more information

Remember to:

- Learn about your potential employer through their website, brochures, friends or family who may have worked there or visit them to see first hand what their business is about;
- Practice answers for possible interview questions;
- Be prepared by dressing appropriately and bring your cover letter, resume and references. Have some of your own questions for the interviewer like what their company's goals are in the future;
- Be punctual. Arrive 10-15 minutes early, be sure you know the location of the interview, and remember good interview manners start the moment you walk in the door;

Good luck!



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