

HOW TO WIN THE INTERVIEW

5 Strategies on Standing Out
in the Hiring Process



THE
**KEN
COLEMAN**
SHOW

CONGRATULATIONS! Your resumé has been selected from the mountain of applications, and your interview is set. It is your time to shine! It's your showcase—think of it as a performance! No one wants to “wing” a performance, so you must prepare intentionally in order to perform exceptionally.

All you need to do to win the interview is spend time and effort on these five key areas: what you need to know, what you need to expect, how you need to dress, how you need to act, and what you need to ask.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'KCE'.

1

WHAT YOU NEED TO **KNOW**





WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

- ▶ The company history and story
- ▶ The company vision, purpose and mission statement
- ▶ The company values
- ▶ The company's products and services
- ▶ The company's big wins and awards in the news

Most of these should be posted on the company's website, but in some cases you'll need to dig deeper to find this information by searching for media coverage on the company or asking someone who currently works there. Subtly incorporate a couple of these details into your conversation during the interview—when appropriate—to show that you care enough about the company and the job to do thorough research!

2

WHAT YOU NEED TO **EXPECT**



2

WHAT YOU NEED TO EXPECT

To relate your skills and experience to winning in the role. If the job description and requirements are posted online, read them carefully, then list specific ways your skills and experience meet or exceed those expectations.

To answer questions. This one's a given. But it's important to know what kinds of questions you'll be asked.

Here are some common examples:

- ▶ Why do you want to work for us?
- ▶ What was it like to work for your previous employers?
- ▶ What do you know about our company/this role?
- ▶ Why did you leave your previous job (or why do you want to leave your current job)?
- ▶ What are your biggest strengths and weaknesses?
- ▶ Why should we hire you (or why shouldn't we hire you)?

3

HOW YOU NEED TO **DRESS**



3 HOW YOU NEED TO DRESS

About two-thirds of hiring managers say a candidate's wardrobe can be a decision-maker in hiring, and 55% of hiring managers say that the way you dress and act can seal their first impression the second you walk through the door. ⁽¹⁾

- ▶ **Don't look wrinkled or outdated.** If it's been a few years since your last job interview, it might be time to invest in a crisp, new interview outfit. You'll make a great first impression, and you'll feel more confident. Of course, don't go into debt for this—bargain shop if you need to, and remember that name brand items aren't important as long as you look professional.
- ▶ **Dress in accordance with the company's dress code.** If you can't access these details or if all the employees wear uniforms, classic business attire is always a safe bet for your interview. It's better to be overdressed than underdressed!
- ▶ Unless you're interviewing for a position in high fashion, **stay away from super-trendy, loud outfits.**

4

HOW YOU NEED TO **ACT**



4

HOW YOU NEED TO ACT

Your facial expressions and body language speak for you before you even open your mouth, so be conscious of the non-verbal messages you could be sending!

- ▶ Make and keep good eye contact (but don't stare into your interviewer's soul).
- ▶ Smile (but keep it natural, not frozen or stiff).
- ▶ Maintain good posture. Experts suggest imagining there's a string connecting the top of your head to the ceiling so that you're sitting neutrally, instead of slouching or leaning aggressively. It's ok to lean forward slightly—just keep in mind that most people's personal space range is about 20 inches. ⁽²⁾
- ▶ Don't cross your arms or legs—it can make you seem closed off.
- ▶ Be enthusiastic!
- ▶ Express gratitude at the beginning and end of the interview.

5

WHAT YOU NEED TO **ASK**



5

WHAT YOU NEED TO ASK

I've talked with many leaders who've been surprised—even frustrated—with candidates who, when given the opportunity to ask questions in the interview, shake their head and say, "Not really. I think I'm good!" They may feel good about their performance, but that's not a good answer or a good strategy.

Ask questions early on and throughout the interview. Your questions are not just for information—they're opportunities to impress.

Ask for connection.

To break the ice, make the interview a conversation.

Questions to ask the hiring manager:

- ▶ How long have you been with the company?
- ▶ How did you get here?
- ▶ What is your leadership and/or communication style?
- ▶ What do you enjoy most about your work?

Just use common sense and don't ask anything that's too personal!

Ask about fit.

The interview is a two-way street, and you want to make sure that this is where you want to be.

Questions to ask the hiring manager:

- ▶ What types of people win here?
- ▶ What types of people have failed here?
- ▶ What is the company culture like?

Ask for clarification.

It's important that you're clear on what the role is and what will be expected.

Questions to ask the hiring manager:

- ▶ What are the key areas of responsibility?
- ▶ How does this role help the team win?
- ▶ How will my performance be measured?

Ask for the job.

When you get the answers to your questions and you feel great about the role, don't overlook one last important question. Ask for the job! It's a great way to show self-confidence and enthusiasm while leaving the ball in the hiring manager's court. Again, you'll need to use common sense and gauge your interviewer's tone and level of interest.

Here are some classy—and professional—ways to ask:

- ▶ Are there any ways I can help you determine that I'm a good fit?
- ▶ Are there any questions I haven't answered?
- ▶ What is the next step in the hiring process?

CLOSING THOUGHTS...

Finally, take a deep breath and don't let the process intimidate you. Embrace it! If you follow these guidelines, you'll be well on your way to the best interview of your life and one step closer to living the dream!



DISCOVER
WHAT YOU WERE

BORN TO DO.

Talk to Ken and get answers
to your career questions.

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