

INSTRUCTOR'S GUIDE

for

GETTING THE JOB YOU REALLY WANT SERIES, VIDEO 2:

GETTING TO KNOW WHAT AN EMPLOYER WANTS

"Interviewers are people, too. If you tend to think of an interviewer as the enemy, you should reconsider." Mike Farr, The Very Quick Job Search

Overview

This video emphasizes the importance of understanding an employer's point of view. An employer often looks at your appearance, dependability, and skills.

Your appearance is important and makes a strong first impression. That impression begins before the interview when you send printed materials, e-mails, or make phone calls. When you attend an interview understand that an employer may interpret a sloppy appearance as indicative of sloppy work habits and lack of dependability. Be sure your clothes are ironed, your hair is neat, and your personal hygiene is good before attending an interview. An employer wants you to fit in, and an unusual appearance, such as wearing lots of body jewelry or excessive makeup, can suggest that you will not fit in.

Dependability, responsibility, and accountability are three abilities an employer looks for. An employer wants to know that you are not distracted with personal issues, that you will get to work on time, and will have good attendance.

Dependability also means that you will work hard to meet deadlines and won't leave the job after a short period of time.

The focus of most interviews is on skills, experience, and education. You have to communicate as well about your soft skills. An employer will often hire somebody with fewer credentials who has the ability to learn, adapt, and work well with others. It is not always the most qualified person who gets the job, it's the best job seeker. Your ability to communicate why you should be hired can get you the job over someone with better credentials.

Remember that an employer may have been in your situation in the past. They are just people. Be yourself and don't be nervous. It's important that you understand the employer's expectations. Then, you can present a neat appearance, establish yourself as being dependable, and tell the employer why you can do the job; if you do, you will have had a successful interview.

Presentation Suggestions

Use the board or overhead to list the terms underlined above. Ask students to define these terms and discuss how they think they relate to an employer's expectations in a job interview.

When you feel the students are familiar with these terms, give them the **Anticipation Quiz** to complete prior to viewing the video. If you wish allow the students to state their answers and discuss them.

Show the video. Encourage students to make changes to the answers they put down for the Anticipation Quiz while watching the video.

At the conclusion of the video, ask students to discuss any changes they made to the answers on the Anticipation Quiz as a result of information in the video. Follow up the discussion with the **Activities**.

Use the **Discussion Questions** to request oral or written responses from students, or assign the questions as homework essays.

Give the **Quick Quiz** at the conclusion of class and correct the quizzes as a group.

Assign the **Homework Option**, if desired.

Anticipation Quiz

Directions: Answer these questions as completely as possible. You will revise your answers as you watch the video.

1. Can the fact that you appear dependable be more important to an interviewer than having the appropriate skill set for a job?
2. Are employers allowed to consider appearance when hiring employees?
3. T or F: The first task of an employer interviewing job candidates is to screen people out.
4. Does the most qualified person always get the job?
5. What can a mistake in an e-mail or resume tell an employer about you?

Answer Key

- | | |
|----|--|
| 1. | Yes |
| 2. | Yes |
| 3. | True |
| 4. | No |
| 5. | That you are sloppy or don't pay attention to detail |

Activities

Activity #1

Title: Projecting Dependability

Format: Small group

Time: 30-35 minutes

Materials: Digital timer, chart paper, markers

Procedure:

1. Organize the class into groups of three.
2. Provide each group with some sheets of chart paper and marker pens.
3. Note that a job seeker can project dependability through what he/she says, as well as through appearance, and gestures or body language.
4. Ask students to take turns role playing an employer and job candidate in an interview. Have each candidate try to convince the employer that he/she is dependable, responsible, and accountable. Have the third person in the group note phrases, gestures, and other things the candidate does or says that project dependability on the chart paper. Time each role playing and spend no more than 3 minutes for each (a total of nine minutes for each group of three).
5. Tape the chart papers from all the groups around the room and see if you can identify phrases or actions that come up more than once.
6. Have each student (or selected students if the time is short) use a phrase from the charts in a sentence describing themselves and their abilities.

Activity #2

Title: Soft Skills Inventory

Format: Individual

Time: 20-25 minutes

Materials: Index cards, pen

Procedure:

1. Write this on the board or overhead: "It is not always the most qualified person who gets the job, it's the best job seeker."
2. Explain what a soft skill is (skills that are not job-specific). List these three soft skills on the board/overhead: getting along with other people, the ability to learn new things, expressing yourself well.

3. Ask each student to write these three skills on three index cards (one on each card).
4. Have the students write a short description on each card of a situation he/she has encountered where he/she used the soft skill successfully.
5. Ask the students to take all three cards, and come up with a draft of a single paragraph that might be included in a future cover letter demonstrating that he/she has these skills.

Discussion Questions

1. Should an employer be able to consider factors of appearance such as height or weight? Why, or why not?
2. If you have changed jobs often, can you convince an employer you are dependable?
3. What benefits do soft skills offer employers?

Quick Quiz

Note: You may read these questions out loud, allowing time for students to respond, or copy and hand this out as a written exercise. If you read the quiz, write responses on the board/overhead.

Directions: Indicate whether each statement is true or false, according to the video.

1. If an interviewer doesn't ask about your soft skills, don't volunteer any information about them.
2. Being dependable includes having a good attendance record.
3. It's okay to show an interviewer that you have personal issues that will distract you from the job – after all, we're all human.
4. The 3 abilities employers look for are responsibility, dependability, and accountability.
5. Experience and education are more important to an employer than the ability to learn things and get along with others.
6. The impression of your appearance begins when you first meet the interviewer in person.
7. Your personal hygiene can influence a hiring decision.
8. Using computers in an office job is considered a soft skill.
9. Employers don't usually ask a lot of direct questions about your dependability in an interview.

10. It's rare that an employer has been in your situation as a job seeker.

Answer Key

- | | |
|-----|-------|
| 1. | False |
| 2. | True |
| 3. | False |
| 4. | True |
| 5. | False |
| 6. | False |
| 7. | True |
| 8. | False |
| 9. | True |
| 10. | False |

Homework Option

Imagine you are a human resources manager for a mid-size company. Pick two characters in a popular movie or television show. If possible, locate and print out a picture of the characters from the Internet and bring them to class. Write an essay from the potential employer's point of view comparing these two characters as if they were applying for a job. Address issues of appearance and attitude. Which do you think would be more dependable, and why? Which person would seem to have a more appropriate appearance for a typical office workplace, and why? Be specific about what you base your judgments on.