

## Landing a Job

# Step Two: Job Interviews

by Sunny Nolde

You finished your resume and sent it in! The phone rings ... they want you for an interview next week. Luckily, there are three basic stages for a job interview: before, during and after.

### The Before Stage

The before stage is research. Prior to the interview learn as much about the prospective employer's business as possible. Call the company, go to the library and read trade publications to investigate their assets, specialties, and names of top executives. Know the interviewer's name, and have a list of questions to ask him-her.

Arrive 10 to 15 minutes early. Experts suggest allowing an extra half hour more than you actually need to reach your destination. The before stage means to be prepared.

### The During Stage

The during stage should not be difficult if you are prepared. When you greet the interviewer call him-her by name and shake hands. Remember that an interview is two-sided. First decide if the position available is right for you. Second let the interviewer know that you are the right one for that position. Generally, interviewers make their evaluations within the first four minutes based on appearance, demonstrated motivation, communication skills, academic standing, personality and command of speech.

Interviewers are more influenced by unfavorable information than by favorable information. Three automatic "turn-offs," according to the Columbia Graduate School of Business, are lack of preparation, inappropriate qualification for position the firm hopes to fill, overconfidence and late arrivals.

### Common Questions

There are several common questions interviewers ask. Prepare the answer that works best for you. Be positive, self-assured and sincere when responding to the interviewer. Remember that your attitude and how you say something is as important as what you say. Sample questions:

- Describe your strengths, your weaknesses and your skills.

- What do you judge your major successes, accomplishments to have been? Your failures, your major disappointments.

- What were the three most important events (decisions) of your life? What decisions have you most regretted? Why?

- Are you a leader? Why do you say you are a leader?

- Are you tough and aggressive?

### Your Questions

Your opportunity to question the interviewer will also come. Listed below are some questions which might prompt you to move the conversation along. It is acceptable to jot down some of these on an index card and take in to the interview with you. Most importantly, as stated previously, do not ask questions which have been

- How is the business organized?

- Is there a standard for individual promotions or are they given at random?

- How long have you been at this job?

- How is your time divided (percent paperwork, percent administrative work, percent travel, etc....)

### The After Stage

The after stage or follow-up is equally as important as the first two. Send the interviewer an appropriate thank-you letter specifically stating when you will call him to find out about that job position. Do not overlook this part of the job search. You want the prospective employer to know you are seriously interested in the job.

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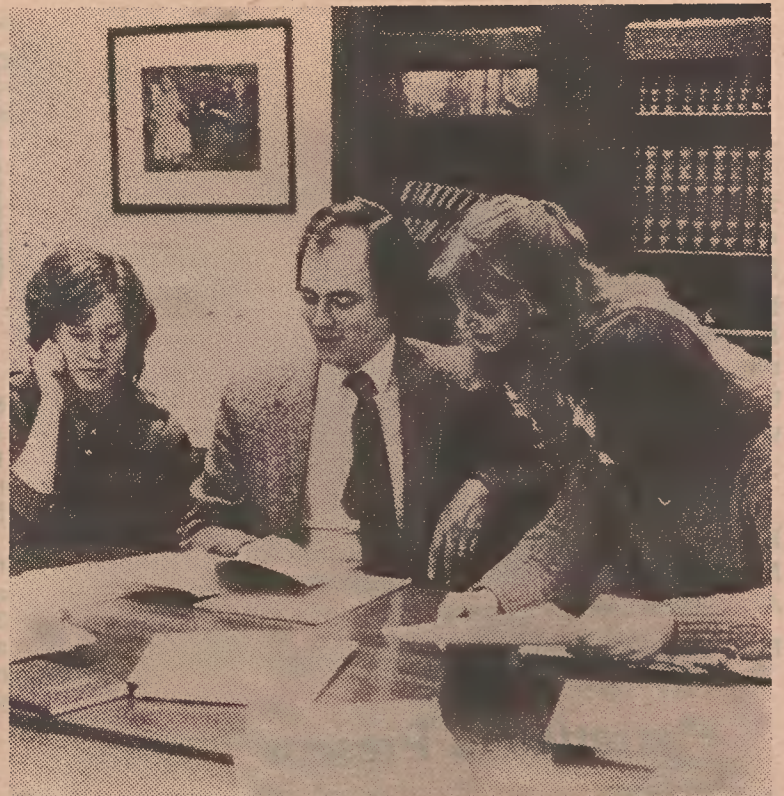
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