

Follow-up

A letter of thanks* should be sent after every job interview. A follow-up telephone call may also be appropriate unless the employer has emphatically said not to call.

Regardless, be prepared for one of the following to happen, either you will be offered the position or you won't. If you are offered the position, re-evaluate the job to be certain it's the right one for you and then make your decision. If you are not offered the position, be professional and thank the employer for considering you. Invite them to call upon you again if another position becomes available.

(For more information about thank-you letters, you can refer to our Resume Quick Reference Guide or one of the references below)

Bibliography

Bloch, Deborah P., Ph.D., *How to have a winning Job Interview*, Illinois: NTC Publishing Group, 1996

Donner, Gail J. RN PhD and Wheeler, Mary M. RN Med., *Taking Control of Your Career and Your Future*, Canadian Nurses Association, 1998

Faux, Marian, *The Complete Resume Guide, 4th Ed.* New York: Prentice Hall, 1992

Search Consultants International, *Interviewing Etiquette*, www.searchconsultants.com, 1999

Registered Practical Nurses Association of Ontario
Career Development Centre

Interview Skills

A Quick Reference Guide

Vision

Nursing... one profession... many partnerships

Mission

Dedicated to quality driven decisions that enhance professional practical nursing.

To Contact the Career Development Centre

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Questions You may be asked

- Why do you want this job?
- Why are you leaving your current position?
- What are your strengths?
- What are your weaknesses?
- What is your current position, what do you like and/or dislike about it?
- Identify something you have done that your feel has worked well
- Identify something you wished you'd done differently and how you would change it
- Describe a difficult situation and how you handled it.
- What are your career goals?
- How would your co-workers or boss describe you?
- Why do you think you are the best person for this job?

(Tip: be positive, even when identifying such things as your weaknesses. For example, you might say "I have the tendency to take on too much at once, but I have made significant improvements in my ability to prioritize my activities")

Questions you might ask

- Tell me more about the organization
- What are the unit, department, organization goals?
- What are the continuing education/professional development opportunities available?

(Tip: the time to discuss salary and benefits is after you have been offered the position, not during the interview.)

The Interview

Tips For A Terrific Interview

(source: Search Consultants International website)

- Double check the time of your appointment. Plan to arrive 5-10 minutes before your scheduled appointment. Don't be too early; it doesn't look good to loiter in the lobby for half an hour!
- Bring extra copies of your resume with you. Have your reference list available.
- Look sharp! Clean, pressed clothing and impeccable grooming from head to toes will tell an employer a lot about you.
- Be confident, show enthusiasm, smile, be yourself. Give a firm handshake and maintain eye contact. No fidgeting!
- Be sincere and pleasant, but don't be informal. Remember, this person will be your employer, not your pal!
- Take the time to plan your response before answering a question. Ask for clarification if you don't understand something. Be honest and if you don't know an answer, say so.
- At the end of the interview, thank the employer and ask what the next steps are (i.e. when might you expect to hear back from them)

Introduction

In January 1999, the provincial Nursing Task Force report was released which contained a number of important recommendations about nursing in Ontario. One of those recommendations was about attracting women and men to choose nursing as a career and fostering the retention and recruitment of RPNs and RNs

In June 1999, RPNAO, with funding from the Ontario Ministry of Health (MOH), created a Career Development Centre in response to this recommendation. The Centre's goal is to provide assistance to RPNs seeking employment in Ontario through a number of methods; CareerLine, a 24 hour toll free employment opportunity voicemail system; Career Fairs, jointly sponsored by RPNAO, RNAO and the MOH; and career development services such as resume writing, interview skills, job search initiatives, career planning and planning for continuing education.

This booklet addresses basic interview skills. Further information can be found by reviewing the publications listed in the bibliography, by telephoning the Career Development Centre or by visiting your local public library.

Great! You've Got An Interview

Your well-written resume and cover letter have reached the eyes of the prospective employer and you've been called for an interview. Remember that there are two very different purposes of the interview:

- for the employer to select and hire the best possible person for the job
- for you to find employment

Your goal is to demonstrate that *you* are the best person for the job and to make certain that this is the best job for you. To accomplish this you will need a few skills related to interviewing.

The following techniques may be helpful as you plan for your first meeting with your future employer.

Parts of the Interview Process

The interview process has three main parts:

1. Preparation
2. The Interview
3. Follow-up

Preparation

The importance of preparation is best demonstrated by thinking of an instance where you had to meet with someone who was ill-prepared. Perhaps they appeared rushed because they were late arriving. Maybe they were unable to answer questions because they had not done adequate research.

Or perhaps you were put off by their untidy appearance because they obviously didn't take the time to press their clothing or comb their hair. Imagine a prospective employer's opinion of you if you come to an interview without proper preparation!

Getting ready for the interview means:

- Gathering your facts about who you are meeting (name and title), date, time and place of the meeting, and pertinent details about the organization or department in which you are seeking employment.
- Getting mentally ready, being positive, and confident and relaxed
- Preparing physically, adequate sleep prior to the big day, a clean well-groomed appearance and appropriate clothing. This is not the day to eat onions at breakfast!
- Doing your homework

Interview "Homework"

- *Prepare questions you want to ask the employer*
- *Prepare positive answers to questions you think you may be asked*
- *Bring a list of references, including complete name, address and telephone information*
- *Be prepared to answer questions about your resume (i.e.gaps in your work history)*
- *Mentally match your skills to the position requirements; this will help you demonstrate to the employer that you are the best person for the job.*