



Interview Process & Preparation

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General Interview Preparation/Overview

The goal of the interview is to get the job offer! Ambrion has had the experience of taking thousands of candidates through the job search and interview process. Based on this experience we know what companies and hiring managers are looking for from candidates during the process. Whether you are a senior executive who has interviewed many times, or you are preparing for your first job search, it can be hard work. One thing to keep in mind is that interviewing is a process and the key to success in this process is **preparation**. The following overview will help you properly prepare for the interview process:

- Understand first and foremost that you will be extended an offer or passed over based upon a hiring company's perception of you during the interview process. Whether the process consists of one interview or ten the hiring company makes a decision mostly based upon how they perceive you during the interview process. Creating the right perception, and understanding how to do so, is vital in determining whether or not you will receive the offer.
- Your Ambrion recruiter will be an excellent resource in preparing for upcoming interviews. Utilize them! Recruiters can "set the stage" for the interview as a recruiter will have inside information that is not typically available to a job candidate. Ask questions of your recruiter or schedule a meeting with him/her to discuss the interview process in person. A quick "study session" will go a long way in securing the position!
- Navigating the interview process is an art. Learning to navigate this process successfully can be learned. Ambrion has worked with hundreds of companies and thousands of interviewing authorities and know what works and what doesn't during this process. It is up to you to fully leverage and trust this resource.
- Try to acquire as much information about the company, the job, the culture and the hiring manager as possible prior to your interview, and then throughout the interview process. Get a written job description whenever possible and make sure you have a thorough understanding of the position including a breakdown of duties and responsibilities and expectations of new employees.
- Use the Internet and other resources to find out as much as you can about the company. Media, such as annual reports, trade journals, the company website and your network of professional associations can all provide useful information
- Be prepared to answer *and* ask questions! Writing out and verbalizing answers to common interview questions will help curb nervousness. In addition, always have a list of prepared questions to ask prospective employers.
- Be prepared to talk about yourself. This can be uncomfortable and can lead to overly wordy or very short explanations so be prepared. This is your opportunity to sell yourself by giving specific examples of strengths and accomplishments.
- Relax – the more prepared you are for an interview, the more confident you will feel and the better you will perform!

Keep the following points in mind when preparing for an interview

- Sharp, professional appearance
- Show enthusiasm and high energy
- Do not overplay the money issue, focus on the opportunity
- All references made regarding previous employers and peers should be positive
- Maintain direct eye contact throughout the interview
- Use a **firm** handshake
- Show up fifteen minutes early to the interview and be courteous to the receptionist
- Thank the interviewer/s for their time
- Ask solid, well-researched questions about the position and company
- Give concrete responses to questions, including examples
- Be assertive but not arrogant
- Express yourself clearly
- Demonstrate well defined goals and career direction (short-term and long-term)
- Maintain solid self-confidence
- Remember your manners
- Show maturity
- Be decisive
- Show you are ready to make a career move
- Always be positive
- Demonstrate you have high moral standards
- Represent yourself as self-motivated and self-directed
- Establish yourself as tolerant and easy to work with
- Demonstrate you can take direction and constructive criticism
- Let them know you want the job!

Common Interview Questions

The following examples are some of the most common questions asked during an interview. It's a good idea to write down AND verbalize answers to these questions prior to the interview. If you have any concerns about how to appropriately respond to any of the following questions, please be sure to discuss the question with your Ambrion recruiter!! **The questions in blue indicate common behavioral based interview questions.**

- Tell me about yourself.
- Why are you leaving your current position? Could you walk me through all the positions on your resume, and explain why you left each position?
- Why should we hire you?
- What do you excel at and what do you need to improve upon?
- What are your short-term and long-term career goals?
- What motivates you?
- What have you liked and disliked about your previous positions? (stay positive)
- What qualities have you liked/disliked about your previous managers? (stay positive)
- What is the ideal job for you?
- Why are you interviewing for a position with this company?
- What is the greatest challenge you have faced in your professional life?
- Give an example of how you work under pressure/handle stress.
- Give me an example of a manager that you have great respect for and why?
- Give me an example of a manager you did not respect and tell me why? (be careful!)
- What is your management style/philosophy?
- What management style/philosophy do you work best under?
- How do you evaluate your subordinates?
- What were your most notable accomplishments in your last position?
- What mistakes have you made in your career? How did you fix them?
- Why do you think you will be successful in this company?
- How would you describe your personality?
- What would your supervisor, peer, subordinate say about you as a professional?
- If you could start your career again, what would you do differently?
- How do you handle criticism?
- How long would it take you to make an impact in this company?
- How would you rate yourself as a professional?
- Have you ever had to fire an employee? How did you handle the situation?
- What was the most difficult ethical situation you ever faced?
- Give me an example of a situation where you were angry with your job/boss and what you did to rectify the situation.
- What are your salary requirements?

Answering the ‘Tell Me About Yourself’ Question

The following is an excerpt from the March 2003 Fordyce Letter:

Experience has shown me that most of my clients will open the interview with some form of “*Tell me about yourself*” question. Your ideal answer should be a prepared and well-thought-out initial marketing statement of yourself and your skills that are applicable for the open position.

The answer to this question should be a three-part, pre-planned marketing statement that can more or less be reused from interview to interview. Even if you are not asked the dreaded question, preparing for it usually sets you up to open the interview confidently, intelligently, and impressively.

PART ONE of that three-part marketing statement is a one-sentence summary of your career history. For example, let me share with you a former candidate’s opening sentence:

“I am a five-year veteran of public accounting with substantial experience working with publicly traded manufacturing clients.”

Your whole career needs to be condensed into one sentence that encapsulates the most important aspects of your career. You should attempt to leverage this experience in order to make your next career step.

PART TWO of the pre-planned marketing statement will be a one-, maybe two-sentence summary of a single accomplishment. This statement should capture the client’s attention! It immediately follows your initial career summary sentence from above. This accomplishment should be one that the client will be interested in hearing, one that is easily explained or illustrated, and one that clearly highlights your bottom line impact. When done correctly this will build interviewer intrigue about the accomplishment so that he/she inquires further, giving you an opportunity to further discuss your career success. The above candidate’s accomplishment sentences were:

“Recently, as a Manager in a Big Five public accounting firm, I had hands on experience working with US GAAP, FASBs, and SEC reporting issues. One of my clients was under an SEC investigation and I was able to work with the client and the SEC to verify the financial information provided in the 10K and 10Q. My work resulted in validating the financial reports that the client had published.”

PART THREE, the final piece of the marketing statement, is probably the most fluid piece. It needs to be a one-sentence summary of specifically what you want to do next in your career. The reason this third part is difficult is that it needs to specifically address what you want to do next, AND it needs to change from interview to interview to make sure it matches exactly what the client will be interviewing you for. The above candidate’s final statement was:

“For the next step in my career, I would like to move out of public accounting and build on my career as a financial reporting manager with a publicly traded company.”

Behavior Based Interviewing

The concept behind behavioral based interviewing is that by asking questions related to previous actions or behaviors, you will be able to determine how someone will handle similar situations in the future. Thus, how someone has acted or responded in the past is probably how they will handle themselves in the future. Focus on tangible examples of previous accomplishments and be prepared to elaborate on your answers with real life situations that relate to the subject matter of your conversations. General answers about behavior are not what the employer is looking for when asking these questions. Instead, you must describe, in detail, a particular event, project or experience, how you dealt with the situation and the outcome. Examples of behavior based questions are:

- Describe a time when you had a conflict with a peer or your manager and how you handled it.
- Give me an example of your leadership abilities and how you utilized those abilities to resolve issues in your department.
- Tell me about a situation where you had multiple deadlines and projects due and had very limited opportunity for direction from your manager. How did you handle that situation?
- Give me an example of a time when a subordinate was not meeting expectations. How did you deal with the individual?
- Give me an example of a time when you were singled out or recognized as an exemplary employee. What was the situation?
- Give an example of how you work under pressure/handle stress.
- Give me an example of a manager that you have great respect for and why?
- Give me an example of a manager you did not respect and tell me why? (be careful!)

During the interview, you will be asked difficult questions. Again, make sure you practice putting your responses into verbal form. By familiarizing yourself with the types of questions you may be asked, you are arming yourself with all the necessary tools to overcome difficult obstacles.

Talking Money

Talking about money can be one of the most stressful aspects of the interview process, but it doesn't have to be. As with all negotiations, you should know going into the process that if you want to get something, you *may* need to give something in return. Remember what is important to you. For example, if working for a great mentor is your number one priority, you may consider flexing on components of your total compensation. Your recruiter will be a valuable sounding board. He/She will have the ability to remain objective when you may not. His/Her compensation is directly related to the offer amount that you receive, so trust in their ability to negotiate and know he/she will lead you confidently into the career path you are seeking. Carefully review the following points and discuss these with your recruiter if you have any hesitations or concerns before beginning the interview processes:

- Be honest with your recruiter. He/She will ask you your salary requirements several times throughout the interview process. Be honest! If your requirements change, let your recruiter know immediately as your recruiter may be providing compensation guidance to the client as well.
- Do not base your decision on salary alone. Make sure you will be happy in the position. No amount of money will make a bad position good.
- Be flexible. Compensation packages are usually a combination of salary, bonuses, benefits and other perks – take all of these into consideration when looking at an offer.
- Companies *want* to make a fair offer and bring you in at a level that will enable them to give you a fair increase at review time. They are also concerned about internal equity. If they have other people in similar positions, they have to be careful not to bring you in outside of these employees' salary range to avoid internal conflict. Salaries should always be kept confidential, but it is amazing how fast salary-related rumors/facts spread throughout a department!
- If you are working with a recruiter, you will know the salary range of the position prior to an interview and you can feel comfortable stating that your requirements fall within the range that the company offers. It is important to discuss this with your recruiter ahead of time. They have the most intimate knowledge of where the hiring managers will bend and can give you the most specific advice on how to answer this question and leverage your options.
- I have had multiple cases of candidates eliminated because they would not give any information on salary. It is ok to start with broad answers, but if the interviewer continues to ask more specific questions about compensation you will need to become more specific with your answers. Be conscious as to how the interviewer is feeling about your answers here.
- If you are asked a money-related question during the first interview, it is usually designed to eliminate those that are making too much or too little. If you are unaware of the salary range on the position, try to get that information before answering the question. Then, answer the question strategically so as not to eliminate yourself. You may want to use one of the following responses when asked:
 - “The most important things in an opportunity to me are strong mentorship, the job itself and the company. What is the salary range for the position?”
 - “I’m looking for a job and a company to call home. If I’m the right person for you, I’m sure you’ll make me a fair offer. What is the salary range for the position?”
 - “I will entertain your best offer. What is the salary range for the position?”

The Day of...

No doubt, the interview jitters have probably already set in which is very normal. But, rest assured, if you are prepared and confident and have followed the advice given in this packet, you will have armed yourself with everything you need to do well in the interview. The following pointers are aimed at getting you through the day!

- Arrive fifteen minutes early. Stop at the rest room and double check your appearance. Breathe mint? Make sure it is gone prior to speaking with anyone. You know what they say about a first impression!
- Turn your cell phone off! Better yet, don't bring it into the interview.
- Fill out all applications neatly and completely, using blue or black ink. Be honest with the application...you work in a profession that demands ethics!
- Consider greeting the interviewer by his/her surname (i.e. Mr. Johnson) with a smile, direct eye contact and a firm handshake.
- Wait to be seated.
- Do not smoke (either during or before the interview) or chew gum
- Sell yourself by using specific examples; do not use simple "yes" or "no" responses.
- Stress what accomplishments you have made, resources you have saved, or goals you have achieved. What sets you apart from everyone else?
- Answer all questions directly and provide an example whenever possible.
- Keep all comments about previous companies, supervisors and positions positive. Do not come across as negative.
- Do not discuss the compensation or benefits package on the first interview unless they bring it up. Remember to utilize the advice of your recruiter.
- Sell the value you can add to the organization – tell them what you can do for them!
- Always represent yourself honestly. If the employer asks you a specific question, answer with an honest response.

Phone Interviews

Career-management experts estimate that more than 80% of job interviews are won or lost (mostly lost) during the first five minutes of a phone screen. This can be especially tough if you rely on visual presentation and your physical presence to define yourself in interviews. The key, again, is to be prepared!

- Find a quiet place to talk where you know you will have no interruptions or background noise, such as TV, pets, or children. This may mean scheduling a babysitter for this time.
- If at all possible, use a landline vs. your cellular phone – the connection will always be better.
- Do not answer your call waiting if another call comes through during your interview. If you are the one who makes the initial call for the phone screen, you can disable your call waiting by dialing *70 before dialing the number.
- Have a copy of your resume, note pad, pen, a list of prepared notes and basic questions sitting with you for your phone screen. In addition, you should have your calendar and any research notes on the company.
- Stand up if you feel your voice carries better – your enthusiasm will come through over the phone and above all else, sound positive, self-confident and focused.
- Be aware that phone screens are used to screen candidates out of the process if they don't meet the broad requirements of the position, so be sure not to ask questions related to salary, vacation time, or benefits at this time as this creates the wrong perception in the mind of the interviewer.
- Focus on what you can immediately contribute to the company. Not on what the company can contribute to you.
- Talk directly into the mouthpiece and try to be aware of the volume of your voice. If you have a bad connection or have difficulty hearing, have the interviewer call you back or adjust the volume on your phone.
- Educate your roommates/family on the correct way to answer the phone and take a message. Their behavior greatly influences the impression of the potential employer.
- Your voicemail or answering machine message should be professional and courteous.

Proper Attire & Appearance

Conservative is always best when it comes to dressing for your interview. Keep in mind you are immediately judged based on what you are wearing; and that first impressions will go a long way toward establishing yourself as a viable candidate (or not). If you do not own clothing that is appropriate for an interview, you should go to a store where you can get good advice from a sales person. This is not the time to find the latest fashion trend or make a statement on casual attire. Find a classic suit or simple dress with a jacket and always have it dry-cleaned and ready to wear. Make sure your hair is done properly, avoid any gaudy jewelry and cover any tattoos. Although dress codes vary from company to company, your appearance for an interview should always be professional!

Women:

- A suit (pants or skirt) in modest, subdued colors is best
- Avoid short skirts and extremely high heels
- Shoes should be in good condition and polished
- Nails should be well groomed and manicured
- Make-up should be conservative and lightly applied
- Perfume should be very light or none at all
- Avoid overly extravagant jewelry

Men:

- A suit in subdued colors is best
- Shirt should be neatly pressed, preferably dry cleaned and starched
- Shoes should be in good condition and polished
- Wear a tie – even if you will never wear one after you get the job
- Nails should be trimmed and clean
- Beards and mustaches should be well groomed
- Avoid jewelry except for wedding ring and wristwatch
- Perfumed body spray or after shave should be very light or none at all

Questions to Ask in an Interview – Closing Questions

Questions to Ask in an Interview

The questions you ask your interviewers will be beneficial for many reasons. Not only do they convey that you are taking an active interest in the position and company, but they offer further knowledge to you regarding the history of that position as well as current expectations. Believe it or not I have had many candidates over time not have any questions for the prospective employer. Every time this has happened the same perceptions have been created. The two predominant perceptions are; 1. The candidate has a lack of interest in the position; and 2. The candidate is not detail oriented enough as they are not doing any due diligence. The questions should emphasize what is truly important to you:

- What will your expectations be of me in the first month/6 months/year in this position?
- How quickly are you looking to make your hiring decision?
- Who are your major competitors? How do you compete with your major competitors? What is your current market share?
- Tell me about a typical day/month in the department.
- What milestones does the company intend to reach in the next 5 to 10 years?
- What are the company's overall strengths/weaknesses?
- Describe the culture of the company/department
- What are some of your prominent management philosophies?
- Why is the position open?
- Where did the previous person go? If the individual left the company. Was an exit interview conducted? If so, what concerns did the previous person convey as a rationale for leaving?

Closing Questions

Your closing questions will be asked toward the end of the interview and are almost always directly related to your current position within the interview process. These are designed to give you a better idea of where you stand in the interview process and what the prospective company's interest is in you.

- Do you have any hesitations at this point about the success I could bring to the company? or What question/concerns do you have about my background as it relates to this position?
- How do I compare with other applicants?
- Is there anything in my background that would keep me from receiving an offer?
- What is your hiring process? or What is the next step?
- When can we schedule the next interview?
- Consider asking if you can meet a few current employees.

Follow Up Letter

Don't lose the position due to lack of professionalism –you must follow up your interview with a thank you note or letter! Be sure to have someone else proofread your letter. To avoid misspellings of names and/or companies, and to make certain you have the correct address, be sure to ask for a business card at some point during the interview. Fax or email a copy of the letter to your recruiter for review for him/her to keep in your file. Please consider the following points when creating an effective follow-up letter:

- Send the note or letter out the same day as the interview if it is at all possible. Ideally, try to ensure the letter/email is received the next business day. This will portray a sincere interest in the position.
- Keep it short and to the point.
- The body of the letter should address four main points:
 - Thank each person for his/her time
 - Express interest and enthusiasm towards the company and position
 - Highlight experiences or accomplishments that demonstrate your specific qualifications for the position
 - Ask to set up the next meeting/interview
 - See below example

Example Follow up Letter

Dear Mrs. Hiring Manager:

Thank you for your time today, I was pleased to meet with you to discuss ABC Company and the Accounting position.

The interview left me particularly impressed with the quality of products you manufacture and the total market concept your organization has used to shape your products. I have successfully implemented Oracle while with XYZ Company, as well as managed a staff of up to 55 professionals. This experience; along with my internal motivation, add to my confidence that I would make a successful impact given the opportunity to manage your Accounting area.

I would like to reiterate my strong interest in the position and in working with you and your staff. Please feel free to call me at the following phone number if I can provide you with any additional information: (612) 555-1212

Again, thank you for the interview and for your consideration.

Sincerely,

John Smith

Job Acceptance

Congratulations. You have worked hard and deserve to have this new opportunity. But even after you have completed all of the interviews and received a job offer, you are still judged on your actions. Your final responsibility in your job search is properly accepting the offer with professionalism and enthusiasm, thus paving the way for your new role and responsibilities with a new company. Make sure that your follow up does not lapse during this final phase of the process.

Below you will find a sample job acceptance letter that confirms what has already happened verbally and sets the stage for your start at the new company. Make sure that you have included the time and date of your first day of employment and that you reiterate your enthusiasm for the opportunity. It's also a good idea to include the phone number where you can be reached prior to your start date so that your new manager knows where to reach you should any last minute items come up.

Sample Job Acceptance Confirmation

Date

*Hiring Manager
Company
Address*

Dear Mrs. Hiring Manager

I am happy to confirm my acceptance of the Senior Analyst position. I have given my present firm two weeks notice, and will report to your office on (the arranged start date), at 8:00am (or whatever time was discussed).

Let me reiterate how pleased I am at receiving this opportunity. I am anxious to begin, and anxious to start making a positive impact at ABC Company.

Please feel free to call me if you have any questions prior to August 2nd. My home number is 612-555-1212.

Sincerely,

John Smith

Resignation & Counter Offers

Resignation

No matter how much you want to leave your current position, resigning can be a difficult and stressful task. However, there are steps you can take to minimize the anxiety. First and foremost, your resignation should come in the form of a letter. Putting your thoughts in a letter will help reduce anxiety and is also the most professional way to handle the process. Your resignation letter will become part of your personnel file. The letter should be courteous, positive and decisive, leaving no room for counteroffer discussion. (See example below) Secondly, give a fair and professional notice. Two weeks is typically an appropriate time frame for you to wrap up any loose ends and for the company to put a plan in place regarding your replacement. Consulting with your Ambrion recruiter will help alleviate some of the stress associated with this process and assure the process is handled with the utmost professionalism. At the end of the day we want to maintain positive relationships with all those we have worked with in the past. You never know when one of these relationships will cycle back into your professional life. It is imperative that they remember how professionally you handled yourself.

Example Resignation Letter:

Date: 01/01/2000

Managers Name

Title

Company

Dear

Please accept this letter as my formal notice of resignation from XYZ Company, effective (2 weeks from the date above). It has been a pleasure working with XYZ Company and the knowledge I have gained throughout the years has been invaluable. This is an irrevocable decision that I have made based on the needs of my family and for my own reasons of professional growth.

In the next two weeks, I will work diligently to tie up any loose ends that may still be outstanding.

Sincere thanks and best wishes for continued success.

Sincerely,

John Smith

Counter Offers

One of the worst things you can do in the resignation process is to discuss counter offers. Below is information as well as different perspectives of counter offers.

- National statistics indicate that 89% of individuals who accept counter offers are gone within 6 months.
- Within eighteen months, 93% of those accepting counter left, either voluntarily or involuntarily.
- Your reasons for wanting to leave will still exist. Your bad boss, bad coworkers, dull environment or limited advancement opportunities do not get corrected by a few more dollars. Promises made along these lines are often broken, or are not even feasible over time.
- By having a counter offer discussion you ultimately raise the red flag that the only thing you care about is money. If you accept the counter offer your employer will feel as soon as a better monetary offer surfaces you will be gone.
- Where is the money for the counter offer coming from? In many instances you are simply receiving you next scheduled raise early? (Companies have strict wage and salary guidelines which must be followed)
- Counter offers can be a stall device to give your employer time to get through a project or actually find a replacement for you.
- When promotion time comes around, will your employer gamble on someone who will leave for more money?
- What type of company do you work for if you have to threaten to resign before a fair market value assessment of your skills is given? Counter offers are only made in response to a threat to quit. Why do you have to resign to receive an offer of better working conditions?
- Your employer knows the statistics mentioned in the first two bullets above. Do you think they will gamble on promoting you over someone that has been more loyal?
- You have now made your employer perceive you as unhappy. From this day on, your employer will perceive you as a possible disgruntled employee and your loyalty will always be in question.
- When times get tough, your employer may begin the cutback with you.
- Statistics show that if you accept a counter offer, the probability of voluntarily leaving in six months or being let go within one year is extremely high.
- Accepting a counter offer is an insult to your intelligence. It makes you look wishy-washy and non-decisive.

The bottom line is that well-managed companies don't make counter offers. Their policies are to establish fair and equitable practices upfront so that both the employee and the company can maintain their professionalism throughout a resignation.

Think about this: While you are busy accepting the counter offer, the new company has already called a recruiter and they are busy filling the position you could have had with someone other than YOU!

Ten Mistakes Made By Job Hunters

- Narrowing the types of opportunities you will consider. It is important to have an open mind about this process.
- Hunting alone, without using other networks or resources.
- Doing little or no homework to prepare for the interview.
- Not clarifying a time limit when you make the appointment with an organization.
- Not being aware that Human Resources primary function is to screen you OUT.
- Letting your resume be used as the agenda for the job interview.
- Not having a 50/50 balance in the interview, or having a conversation that was too one-sided.
- When answering a question of theirs, talking anywhere from 2 to 15 minutes at a time. In other words, talking too much.
- Approaching them as if you were desperate for the job, hoping they will give you an offer because you need one, not because you *want* the job or are qualified.
- Not sending a thank you note shortly after the interview.

Ten Keys for a Successful Job Search

- Be open to different types and sizes of organizations.
- Hunt for interviews using the aid of your network and your recruiter, because a successful job hunt requires casting the broadest net possible.
- **PREPARE.** Do your homework prior to an interview. Practice interviewing and thoroughly research the organization.
- Leverage your network to get introduced to the people who are responsible for the hiring decision on the positions you covet.
- Go to the interview with your own agenda, your own questions and curiosities about whether or not this job fits you. If you do not ask good questions, the interviewer will think you are not interested.
- Be prepared to talk about yourself and the value proposition you offer to the organization with regards to the organization's needs and/or their challenges.
- When answering a question of theirs talk only between 20 seconds and 2 minutes at any one time. Be conscious about providing content rich and concise answers. *This needs to be practiced to be done effectively.
- Always present yourself professionally and positively throughout the process regardless of whom you are speaking with, including admin staff. You are being evaluated the moment you step into the building until the moment you leave.
- Always write a thank you note the same evening of the interview and mail or email it by the next morning at the latest. Proofread all written correspondence.
- When filling out a job application, ALWAYS represent yourself honestly. Do not exaggerate previous compensation levels, degrees or designations and always put the exact dates of employment on the application. If you get to the offer stage with any company, they will check and verify all of this information and you would never want to have an offer rescinded because you were dishonest!

The Employers Perspective

Just as you are evaluating and judging the interviewer and the company, the interviewer and the company are judging you. This includes details such as your hair cut, your manner of dress, your body odor (including perfume or body sprays), your posture, your use of non-verbal signals, your breath, your fingernails (dirty, clean, clipped or not), and your correspondence with the receptionist, etc.

As you are focusing on the positives in your interview, the interviewer may be focusing on the negatives; looking for any reason to remove you from the process. You should be conscious of the perceptions you are creating and never demonstrate any of the following signs during an interview or phone screen:

- Dishonesty or lying during the interview or on the application! Do not inflate compensation numbers!! Do not omit felony or misdemeanor information from your past, regardless of how old.
- Irresponsibility.
- Inconsistency in your responses. Interview processes will often ask the same questions (possibly in different ways) multiple times in an effort to identify inconsistencies. This can create the perception of manipulation or dishonesty.
- Smell of smoke or alcohol.
- Arrogance or excessive aggressiveness (Humility is a great buffer here). The perception of arrogance is an immediate eliminator 95% of the time.
- Money is your primary motivator. NO company wants to feel this. They will perceive you to be leaving when the next highest offer comes along.
- Tardiness or failure to keep appointments and commitments on time, including the job-interview (try not to reschedule your interview if at all possible).
- Not following instructions or obeying rules.
- Negative attitude or blaming things on others (keep it positive).
- Laziness or lack of motivation.
- Lack of enthusiasm for position or opportunity.
- Instability. (Be prepared to discuss why you left each of your past positions).

Your goal during the interview process is to create a perception in the hiring authority's mind that is as accurate to reality as possible. It is very frustrating to be eliminated from an interview process based upon a perception (acquired during the interview process) that is not reality.