

# JOB SEARCH TIP SERIES

*provided by...*

## STATE REP. DAN DEASY

### INTERVIEW SKILLS

- ✓ Conduct research on the employer, hiring manager and job opportunity.
- ✓ Review common interview questions and prepare your responses. (see reverse side for sample interview questions)
- ✓ Dress for success. See Tip Sheet for Dressing for Success.
- ✓ Arrive on time, relaxed and prepared for the interview.
- ✓ Be authentic, upbeat, focused, confident, candid and concise.
- ✓ Remember the importance of body language.
- ✓ Ask insightful questions.
- ✓ Practice good nonverbal communication:
  - Demonstrate confidence: stand up straight, make eye contact and connect with a firm handshake.
- ✓ Listen:
  - Listen to all information given, this makes it easier to answer questions; good communication skills include listening and letting the person know you heard what was said.
- ✓ Do not talk too much:
  - Do not ramble and tell the interviewer more than he/she needs to know.
- ✓ Do not be too familiar:
  - This is a professional meeting to talk business not a place to make a new friend or be laid back.
- ✓ Use appropriate language:
  - Do not use cuss words or slang words; do not reference age, race, religion, politics or sexual orientation.
- ✓ Take care to answer questions:
  - Answer questions, do not avoid questions.
- ✓ Ask questions:
  - Be prepared to ask questions about what goes on in the company. This also helps in assisting you to find out if it is the right place for you.
- ✓ Don't appear desperate:
  - Follow the three C's: cool, calm and confident.
- ✓ Sell yourself and then close the deal.
- ✓ Thank the interviewer in person and then again by email or by postal mail.

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### **BEHAVIORAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS**

Listed below are some examples of behavioral interview questions that you may be asked during a job interview.

1. **Tell me about a time when you have worked well while under pressure.**
  - The best way to answer this question is to give a specific example of how you have handled stress well in a previous job. That way, the interviewer can get a good understanding of how efficiently you work in stressful situations.
2. **Give me an example of a time when you handled a challenging situation.**
  - To answer this question, recall a challenge that was significant and that was met successfully. You should fully explain what you did to overcome the challenge, and also how you did it. Make sure you express your takeaways and how you've grown from your challenges.
3. **Have you ever made a mistake? How did you handle it?**
  - The best way to answer this question is to talk about a specific example of a time you made a mistake. You should briefly explain what the mistake was and then quickly switch over to what you learned after making that mistake. You might also want to explain the steps you took to make sure that you did not repeat the same mistake.
4. **Give an example of a goal that you set for yourself and tell me how you accomplished it.**
  - A handy approach to answering this question is to use the STAR approach: talk about a Situation or Task (S-T), the Action you took (A) and the Results achieved (R). This will help you shape an answer that is unique to you.
5. **Have you ever had to make a really tough decision at work?**
  - When answering this question, give one or two specific examples of difficult situations you have actually faced at work. Then discuss what decisions you had to make to remedy the situations. You want to come across as confident and capable of making big decisions calmly and rationally.
6. **Tell me about a time when you worked on a team.**
  - Telling a story from your past is the most effective way to communicate your strengths as a team member. When answering this question you should use the STAR approach that was mentioned previously. In your answer, focus on how you helped the group achieve something together.
7. **Share an example of how you were able to motivate employees or co-workers.**
  - In your answer, describe the situation, your action, and the results. (This is a modified version of the STAR interview response technique.)