

Top 10 Tips for Internship Interviews

1. Prepare

Research the organization. Visit their website, read and understand their mission statement. Find out as much as you can about the company, employees, structure and clients. There is nothing that impresses an interviewer more than a candidate that shows a real interest in the organization and its goals.

2. Practice

Think about why this internship is one you want and you would be good at. You will be asked questions around your interests, and skills as they relate to the internship position. Spend time before the interview preparing answers to typically asked questions. In addition, you will be asked questions that explore the behaviors or competencies required in an internship. Preparing for these types of questions in advance.

3. Customize

Be sure to customize your résumé for each interview opportunity. Tailor your skills and experience to what is required for the job you are applying for.

4. Dress Professionally

First impressions are always important. It is always better to overdress than underdress. Dress for the job you are applying for.

5. Arrive Early

Plan to arrive about 15 minutes early for your interview. This gives you enough time to find parking, check in, prepare yourself, and relax.

6. Make a Good Impression

It is important to create a favorable first impression. Greet the doorman, receptionist, and everyone else you meet politely. Remember to turn your cell phone off and avoid using gadgets while waiting. Greet your interviewer with a firm handshake and ensure your body language is positive throughout the process. Examples of positive body language include smiling, eye contact, solid posture, active listening, and speaking clearly.

7. The Elevator Speech

In case you don't know what this is, an elevator speech is prepared in case you suddenly find yourself in a situation (for example in an elevator with the president of the company) where you need to pitch yourself within a few short moments. Prepare your elevator speech beforehand, which should detail who you are, what your goals are, and why you are a great candidate for the internship.

8. Include the Right Documents

Bring extra copies of your résumé, cover letter and references. If you have a relevant work sample, bring it along with you. An assignment, presentation, award, writing example, portfolio, term paper or research project that may be relevant are all great examples.

9. Ask Questions

Before your interview, research and prepare relevant questions you can ask the interviewer. Preparing these ahead of time shows the interviewer that you have spent time thinking about the internship opportunity.

Questions to ask might include: How do you anticipate my skills can support your organization? What types of new skills will I be able to learn? What will a typical day be like?

10. Give Thanks

Thank each person who interviewed you before you leave. Writing thank you emails shortly after the interview will give you an edge over other candidates.