

Mock Interviews/Interview Skills Training

The Mock Interview

- Research interview questions on the internet that pertain to the position the client is applying for
- Have the client come in dressed for an interview
 - This will give an idea of whether the client needs interview clothing or not, and how well they know the position they are applying for
 - They should dress one level above the position they are applying for
 - The level needed can be determined by completing informational interviews at similar businesses, or by going with the client to the place of business to see what their general business attire is
- Complete the interview

Critiquing of the interview

- Did they answer the questions asked?
 - Were they able to provide an answer based on knowledge and experience or did they avoid answering the question because they were unsure how to answer it?
 - If they avoided a question or gave a limited answer, coach them on better ways to answer the question... if you don't know much about the position, look up information to help them answer the question better
 - If they don't know the answer at all due to lack of experience, coach them to answer by how they would address the issue if put in that situation ... it's OK not to have all the answers

How to interview better

- Body language
 - 90% of all communication
 - Show examples of aggressive or passive actions – leaning forward, leaning away from others, rolled shoulders, slumping in the seat, looking down, facial expressions, tone of voice, etc.
 - Show appropriate use of hands
 - Show appropriate amounts of eye contact
 - Show how to address a room, not just a single interviewer

Mock Interviews/Interview Skills Training

- **This plays a big role in establishing trust right at the start** ... one of the most important pieces of interviewing. Trust factor alone can get you a second interview!
- Basic motivational interviewing
 - Using some basic techniques of motivational interviewing ... turning the interview from Question/Answer into a conversation
 - Get the interviewer to talk about their company, the position, their staff, their product ... the more they talk, the more you get them to talk, the more you learn and the better you appear to the interviewer
 - Restate the question when asked to make sure you understand the question
 - Bring a notebook and writing utensil to the interview and write down the question when asked, or points you feel are your strong areas so you are able to concentrate on those areas and answer the question completely ... this also helps keep your train of thought incase you get off track mid question
 - Ask a question of the interviewer in reference to the question they asked

Before the interview

- Show up on time, or 5 minutes before the interview is to start (unless requested to show up early to complete an application or other forms)
 - People are busy and do not want people in their lobby 15, 20, 30 minutes before their interview. Be on time, but not late
 - If you arrive very early, do not park in the business parking lot or enter the business early, pick a local store close by to wait, then go to the interview on time.
 - People are watching and paying attention to people that are too early or late and may be looking to see when you arrive
 - Make sure to be pleasant with the receptionist ... many times, they are asked what your presentation was like when you entered the building, what their impression of you was and what your interaction was like.
 - If the receptionist is busy, do not instigate small talk, if they are not busy, then some small talk could be helpful to get to know them
 - If there are clients in the lobby, they may start conversations with you ... interact with them in a pleasant manner. Some of them may be there to question you before the interview ... or the interview staff may be watching to see if you interact with clients and if so, how

Mock Interviews/Interview Skills Training

Criminal background or history

- There should not be any questions in the interview around criminal history (at least not in Oregon) during the interview
 - This should lower the nervousness a little during the interview
- If there is a question, you are not required to answer it at this point ... only until after a position has been offered do you have to answer any questions related to background.
- If the interview goes well, meet with SE Specialist to develop a narrative about background history (if any) and what took place
 - What was the situation that took place that led to the arrest? Substance use? Homelessness? Wrong associates? Youth?
- Things they are looking for
 - Looking for repetitive patterns in arrests
 - Looking for grouping of arrests
 - Looking for changes in actions since arrests (long period of no arrests, schooling, children, marriage, etc.) ... this is to show a lower chance of recidivism moving forward
 - If using stat background checks review to see if they are 5 year, 10 year or lifetime crimes ... you need to list all of them on a background check, however some may not turn up as disqualifying if they are beyond their review date