

10 Keys to Nailing a Job Interview

By Jim Clifton, CEO, Gallup through LinkedIn and forwarded by
[Asset Resource Group](#)

Here are 10 best recommendations:

1. **Show confidence.** The single most critical state of mind in any job interview is self-assuredness, so confirm that your personal pitch is based 100% on your innate talents and strengths. I'd recommend that you take [Gallup's Clifton StrengthsFinder® assessment](#), which tells you your top five strengths out of 34. Write down your top five strengths and keep them in the forefront of your mind during the interview. If you lead with your strengths, you'll exude self-efficacy and genuine, unstoppable confidence.
2. **Detail how your strengths will help the company grow.** Businesses have exhausted all cost-cutting measures. They've applied Six Sigma, Total Quality Management, and lean thinking to make their companies more efficient and muscular. Now they want to play offense and grow their businesses, so position yourself as having growth-oriented skills. Show how you can help them grow teams, sales, and customers.
3. **Emphasize how you can help companies achieve big profits.** In some quarters, particularly on college campuses, "profit" is a dirty word. Check that idea at the door. A company will hire you if you can show that you'll make it more profitable, so specify how you'll do that. Maybe your strengths lie in sales, efficient work, or effective management. Whatever -- you're there to boost the bottom line. If you're just not comfortable with profits, you can pursue honorable work in government or the nonprofit world.
4. **Give extremely specific evidence that you understand customers.** The biggest problem most companies have right now is getting more business from existing customers. If you can offer compelling evidence that you've turned a customer around -- or deepened a customer relationship -- you will score big points.
5. **Know more about the organization where you're applying than the interviewer does.** This makes you look exceptionally smart.
6. **Get as physically fit as you possibly can.** There's no easy way to say this, but obesity and smoking can be barriers to getting hired. They instill a fear of higher healthcare costs, while also unfairly projecting an image of less discipline and drive. I don't endorse this prejudice -- I'm just being frank that it exists.
7. **First impressions matter.** Look your best. Walk with confidence, give a firm handshake, look interviewers in the eye, smile a lot (but sincerely), and take an interest in the interviewer.
8. **If you're asked to give a presentation, make it a 10.** An 8 or 9 won't cut it -- you have to hit it out of the park. Don't get talked into trying out new material. Do what good politicians do: No matter what the question, bring it around to your areas of strength. And stress customers and profits.
9. **Casually let the interviewer know you're exploring other opportunities -- only if it's true.** This always works, but it must be genuine.
10. **Never talk about pay until after you've been offered the job.** Going right to compensation and benefits is a real turnoff. Emphasize your deep interest in the mission and purpose of the company, especially when talking to the top people.