

Top 10 Things to Mention in an Interview

The job interview might be the only thing left between you and the position of your dreams. Even when you're the most qualified candidate with references galore, a poor interview performance can leave a lousy impression on a potential employer.

Yet, you can avoid nearly all interview mishaps if you prepare the right way for your interview. This means always knowing which talking points to bring up — and why these points are important in determining if the position is a good fit for you.

Here are 10 things to always bring up in an interview:

1. The Work

The most fundamental goal of the interview is to determine whether you have the skills to do the job. Still, your interviewer may not even know how to figure out if you have what it takes. You must be ready to do it for them. Be prepared with a list of your [top selling points](#) so the interviewer is completely aware of your advantages over others.

2. The Company

In a 2011 survey by AccountTemps, 38 percent of managers said the number one interview mistake they encountered was little or no knowledge about the hiring organization. Don't let that happen to you. Do your homework ahead of time so you are ready to say why you want to work at that job and for that company.

3. The Culture

The work environment can determine whether you love your job or hate it. Address the work culture with your interviewer to make sure your values align. There's nothing worse than landing a job only to realize the organization is not a place where you would feel comfortable working.

4. Industry Knowledge

Want to "wow" the interviewer? Show off your knowledge of the industry. Talk about [recent newsworthy events](#) or the company's newest products. Thoroughly understanding your industry proves your passion for the field. In addition, having this knowledge suggests you have a deeper level of expertise than the average candidate.

Related: [How Following Industry News Can Boost Your Career](#)

5. Past Experiences

Your past experiences demonstrate how you would perform if you landed the job. So, you want to be prepared to describe past experiences where you had a big impact. If you have numbers to back up your claims, that's even more persuasive.

6. Portfolio

A portfolio is a visual representation of your past work. It not only shows off your accomplishments, it also gives you added value. While a [portfolio](#) may not be essential for many positions, having physical representations of your work that you can share upon request will make you look good because you went that extra mile.

Related: [5 Reasons Why All Job Seekers Need to Have a Work Portfolio](#)

7. Your Plan For the Position

Your interview needs to show the company what you can do for them. Lay out what you'd do, should you get the job. This plan doesn't need to be detailed—it just needs to illustrate how you would positively contribute to the position. For instance, presenting how you would reduce customer turnover is an easy, yet beneficial way to show an employer why you would do well.

8. Your Referral (if you have one)

There's nothing wrong with name-dropping if the person helped you land the interview. If you were referred to the position, be sure to remind the interviewer. This connection may put some legitimacy behind your candidacy, as well as spark a positive conversation between you and the interviewer.

9. Thought-out Questions

Always make sure you have [questions](#) at the end of the interview. From queries about the interviewer's role to thoughts on the history of the position, questions show your desire for the job. They can also give you more insight into the role, which may not have been addressed during the more formal portion of the interview.

Related: [9 Killer Questions Candidates Ought to Ask the Interviewer](#)

10. Next Steps

Understanding the next steps in the interview process is essential. Always ensure you're aware of what these are. It may be a second interview. It may be giving the company a list of references. It may mean you won't know the outcome for a few weeks. By asking about these next steps, you'll know what to expect and gain some peace of mind. You'll also show your enthusiasm for this position.

As you can see, job interviews can be a much smoother process if you use this checklist. Do your research, emphasize why you are the best candidate for the job, and always leave on a good note. You'll find the outcome of the interview will be much more positive if you do.

Alan Carniol is the Founder of [InterviewSuccessFormula](#), a program that helps job seekers to deliver powerful answers that prove why they are the right person for the job. Follow Alan and Interview Success Formula on [Twitter](#).

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