

The Renaissance Network (TRN) has developed recommendations to help you have a successful interview. These tips are based on years of collective TRN knowledge that we have found to be directly related to moving (or not) to the next step after a first interview.

Before the Interview

- Read the job description and note your experience relative to each job requirement. Be prepared to discuss how your background relates to the responsibilities and requirements of the position. Use specific examples of accomplishments and results from prior roles.
- Read over your resume to remind yourself of accomplishments that you've noted and how you've described each of the positions that you've held.
- Prepare information about the company's products, competitors, successes and failures so that you can speak knowledgeably about the company.
- Know the background of the person you are interviewing by reviewing their LinkedIn profile, and know who the key players are on the executive team.

Prepare a Written List of Questions for the Interview

For virtual interviews, make sure to test your Internet connection in advance, and make sure you know how to use Zoom, Teams, and Google Meets (whatever platform the interview is on.) Your background should be clutter-free, the lighting should be good, and you should dress professionally.

NOTE: Not all questions are necessarily good questions. Avoid questions that are irrelevant to the stage of the interview process. For example, don't ask about the number of vacation days in an early interview. Ask questions to show interest and enthusiasm and gain more knowledge about the company and the position.

Good Sample Questions

- What are your company's goals & growth plans?
- What are the most challenging aspects of the position?
- What do you consider are the company's strengths/weaknesses?
- What do you think gives your company an edge over its competitors?
- Is there anything in my background that I can clarify for you?
- How many other people are you interviewing for the position?
- What are the next steps in the interview process?
- What is the time frame to fill the role?

For In-person Interviews

- Learn the interview location ahead of time, get directions and allow for extra travel time. Please get in touch with your recruiter if you have travel questions.
- Arrive at least 15 minutes early in case an application or non-disclosure agreement needs to be completed.
- Although professional business attire is typically best, check with your recruiter about the company's culture.

During the Interview

- Sign onto virtual interviews a few minutes in advance.
- Answer the specific question being asked. Give clear and concise answers that give supporting examples of the question asked. Be careful not to go on at length about your background or about something other than the questions asked.
- Focus on your strengths as they relate to the position.
- Be able to demonstrate your knowledge about the company/industry.
- Show enthusiasm for the position and company; it is one of the most important things you can do. Given a choice between equally qualified candidates, the person who wants the job is the one most likely to be hired!
- Be prepared to take notes during the interview.
- Ask any relevant prepared questions and others that arise during the interview. (Again, not all questions are good questions. If you are not sure, please ask your recruiter.)
- Ask how your background fits the company's needs and if there are any concerns about your background. If there are concerns, this gives you a chance to address them.
- Ask what the next step is in the process.
- Express interest in the company and position.
- Get a business card from all the people with whom you interview; if in person or virtual, ask your recruiter for their names/titles/contact information.

After the Interview

Within 12 hours, send a short "thank you" email to all the people with whom you met. Mention something specific about what was discussed in the interview and express your interest and enthusiasm in the next steps. (Even if the interview is very friendly and relaxed, be sure to use professional language and proper spelling/grammar in your email.)

Please check in with your recruiter to share your impression of the interview and your interest in moving forward!