Interview Helpful Hints

- **Don’t worry about being nervous.** It's natural and generally expected. If you concern yourself, you compound your anxiety and this may prove debilitating. Sound preparation and a few simple breathing exercises will help control stress.

- Mind your **body language.** It often speaks louder than words. Strive for an **open and erect posture, maintain eye contact, and offer a firm, confident handshake.** Genuine enthusiasm is communicated as much by leaning forward slightly and displaying an alert, focused expression as by your actual words or tone of voice.

- Your responsibility is to **help the interviewer to be comfortable** during the interview. If anyone should be sweating bullets, it's the employer. The candidate has nothing to lose and everything to gain. The interviewer is being relied upon by his company to make a $50,000+ hiring decision (total cost of a hire includes recruitment time, salary, and benefits) based upon a 30-45 minute exposure. A hiring mistake hurts the bottom line and the interviewer's credibility.

- **Follow the interviewer’s lead:** yet don't be afraid to ask questions. Be careful to answer the specific question that is asked. If unclear, ask for clarification. On technical questions, it’s okay if you don’t know. It’s better, however, to relate it in some way to something you do know.

- If offered an opportunity to complain or find fault, **DON’T DO IT!!!**

- **Arrive 5-10 minutes before your appointment** prepared with all supporting documents (i.e. additional resumes, transcript(s), references, samples of work, pre-completed generic application). Showing up too early is not advisable. Throwing off the schedule of a busy manager may be a minus instead of a plus. In the event that you are delayed and will be late, stop to call the employer to apprise them of your estimated arrival time. Be sure to ask about any pre-employment aptitude testing, attitude surveys, or interest inventories when you schedule your interview. The best preparation for these is a good night’s sleep. Practicing with a similar test instrument can sharpen you up and reduce anxiety.

- Pay **special attention to attire and grooming.** It's one thing completely within your control in terms of creating a good impression. The dress code calls for a conservative business suit (both men and women) in a navy blue or charcoal gray color. Polished shoes, white shirt or blouse, and a fairly conservative tie completes the picture. Through quality and consistent performance on the job, one can earn the right to exhibit individuality in dress and style.

- Do not leave an interview without **restating your genuine interest, soliciting the employer’s impressions, and establishing the time frame and source of the next step** in the application process. Request a business card or be sure to record the name and title of each person with whom you interviewed.

- Always follow up with a **thank you letter within one day of the interview.** A typed, business format letter is preferable after an initial interview. Subsequent interviews may be followed with a hand-written “thank you” card, if sufficient rapport has been established with the hiring authority.