

Do ask the employer

- Please describe the duties of the job.
- How does your company encourage professional development?
- What qualities are you looking for in the candidate who fills this position?
- When will you be making a hiring decision?

Do not ask the employer

- What is the salary?
- What benefits do you offer?
- How much vacation time is allowed?



Top Qualifications Employers Seek

1. Communication skills
2. Strong work ethic
3. Teamwork/works well with others
4. Initiative
5. Analytical/problem-solving skills
6. Computer/technical skills
7. Flexibility/adaptability
8. Interpersonal skills; relates well to others
9. Detail-oriented
10. Self-confidence

Skills New Grads Commonly Lack:

***Communication & presentation** Verbal & writing skills** Teamwork** Overall interpersonal skills** Good work ethic: commitment to organization** Time management** Ability to multi-task to meet deadlines** Professionalism in attire** Workplace maturity.*

National Association of Colleges & Employers
Fall 2008 Employer Survey

9/09



A

Polished Interview



Montana State University Billings
(406) 657-2168
careers@msubillings.edu
www.msubillings.edu/careers

Platinum Partner



Did You Know?

Researchers say that within the first 20 seconds, employers will decide whether or not they want to hire you. Be sure you make a great first impression!

Be Prepared!
You only have
20 seconds to
sell yourself!



Dress for Success!

- Wear appropriate clothing—usually a conservative suit or sport coat for men and a suit for women.
- Carry a briefcase, not a backpack.
- Practice good hygiene—clean hair, breath, and nails.
- Be well groomed! Your clothes should be pressed and smell fresh.
- No pierced parts or visible tattoos!
- Conservative is better: avoid gaudy jewelry, loud colors, heavy perfume, and bright nail polish.
- Make a strong first impression-- use direct eye contact, offer a firm handshake, and remember to smile!

Before your Interview...

- Be certain of the time and place of the interview and names of the interviewers.
- Learn as much as you can about the company with which you are interviewing. Research their website and read any additional materials provided.
- Arrive 10-15 minutes early.
- Bring a pen and notebook with you as well as extra copies of your résumé.
- Prepare a list of questions you plan to ask the interviewers.

Practice, Practice, Practice

- Ask Career Services professionals or a friend to conduct a “mock interview” with you.
- Develop answers to anticipated questions.
- Practice in front of a mirror or a video camera.
- Use the **STAR** technique for more powerful answers: describe a **S**ituation or **T**ask, the **A**ction you took, and **R**esult achieved.

Common Questions...

1. Tell me about yourself.
2. What do you know about our company? Why do you want to work here?
3. Describe your strengths and your weaknesses.
4. What are your short-term goals?
5. What are your long-term career goals?
6. What can you contribute to our company?
7. Describe your experience working on a team.
8. Talk about the last time you handled pressure. What will you do differently next time?
9. What kind of manager or work environment motivates you to do your best?
10. What are your questions for us?

The last few tips...

- Be prepared to answer each question *in terms of your qualifications* for the job.
- Avoid sharing personal information.
- Relax and remember to smile!