Teacher Companion

Interviewing Class Lesson Plan

Interviewing and preparing for the interview remain some of the most difficult parts of the job-search process. For first-time applicants and entry-level workers, the experience can be particularly daunting. Remaining confident and taking time to practice interviewing with friends, family members, and even teachers can help alleviate some of the stresses that come with interviewing for a job.

Practice can also help refine some of the verbal and nonverbal cues we often take with us into job interviews, such as awkward pauses and emphasizing the wrong information. An interview should be a back-and-forth exchange of information, not a one-sided conversation with the potential employer or the applicant doing all the talking.

Job seekers should treat the interview process as a professional experience from the get-go. Dressing appropriately, showing up on time, being polite, and turning off cell phones shows hiring personnel that the candidate is serious about getting the job. Many entry-level employers understand that inexperienced workers typically don't yet have the budget for a business-formal wardrobe, so business-casual is usually fine for interviewing at places like restaurants and retail outlets.

Showing the initiative to research the employer beforehand displays genuine desire for understanding the culture of the company, the duties of the position, and possible advancement opportunities. Conversely, focusing on self-serving topics like vacation time or salary requirements is generally viewed as distasteful and may even lead to disqualification from the hiring process, especially when the subjects have not yet been raised by the interviewer.

Never downplay experience in an interview. If you're interviewing for a server position at a restaurant, it isn't "just a server job." Instead, such a position may lead to a career in food services, restaurant management, or even business ownership. Candidates should focus on industry-related topics and conveying the knowledge they already have about the job. Remember that volunteering, prior summer work, and helping a friend or relative perform their job duties can all be valuable experiences that may work in the job seeker's favor when interviewing for a position.

Certain slides in this presentation offer educators an opportunity to break students into groups or lead class discussions about certain potential interview questions. While typical answers to common interview questions are also provided in this curriculum, stressing that each situation can lead to multiple "correct" answers may benefit students in the job hunting and interview process. Even though some questions are trickier than others, most are asked in order to gauge how the interviewee would fit within the company and react to typical situations that occur every day in the workplace.

All the slides should present themselves in a way that helps students understand the necessity of interviewing well. The accompanying video, resource links, and activities should be used at the teacher's discretion to help supplement the presentation. Thank you for choosing our job skills curriculum, and please look to our additional presentations for further assistance in helping your students navigate the job market confidently and successfully.