



## Interview Preparation Cheat Sheet

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### Before The Interview

When you're looking for a job, the prospect of an interview is the ultimate thrill. Until you actually have to show up for the thing, that is. Pre-interview jitters are common and they affect just about everyone. But the good news is, there are simple steps you can take to prep yourself before an interview, to assure you're putting your best self forward.

#### Step 1: Gather intel

Use the time before your interview to do some serious research on the company you're interviewing with. Here's where you should focus your search:

- **Current events** - Scan the web for current news on the company. This includes everything from corporate press releases, product launches, conferences, and social media activity.
- **Executives and influencers** - Get to know the C-level executives, including their backgrounds and previous companies. Also drill down to the heads of each division to get a sense for who's handling the day-to-day.

- **Company values, mission, and culture** - Assessing culture fit is now a standard part of the interview process, so make sure you understand what drives the company—and its employees—to succeed, and what they value.
- **Clients, products, services, and competition** - Understanding who and what the company is focused on every day will give you a lot of material for questions and discussions later on.
- **Your interviewer** - Learn as much as you can about your interviewer. Check social media, LinkedIn, Google, and everything in-between—just don't get too personal.
- **Inside information** - Resources like Glassdoor can give you valuable inside information on what it's really like to work at a company, not to mention tips on what to expect from the interview process.

## Step 2: Dress the part

Looking sharp for your interview is a no brainer. But there are some “rules” to dressing for an interview.

- **Company culture** - Do your research before the interview. A freshly-pressed suit isn't always the answer. Check the company's career page or social media accounts to get a sense for the culture and attire. If that doesn't work, you can always walk by their office during peak hours to see what their employees wear as they go in for work. Another option is to simply call the receptionist and ask them.
- **Aim for the middle** - Many companies have a “first date” rule for attire, which basically boils down to dressing not too fancy, and not too casual—and nothing too revealing or distracting, either. Stick to solids and conservative patterns. Typically blues and greys are the best options to go with. Think one notch up from what everyone wears day-to-day. You want to show you made an effort, but you don't want to stick out, either.
- **Be comfortable** - No matter what you wear, make sure it fits and it's comfortable. Fidgeting with your clothes during an interview is a huge distraction, so make sure you feel great in whatever you're wearing.
- **Be neat** - You don't need to have your shirts professionally starched (unless you're interviewing at an investment bank) but they should be clean and free of wrinkles, tears or wear. Keep your hair, nails, teeth—clean, trimmed, and presentable.
- **Accessorize modestly** - Accessories are great, but use them in absolute moderation. You want to look nice, but nothing too distracting.
- **Go scentless** - You never know what sensitivities your interviewer may have, so skip the perfume or aftershave (but don't forget the deodorant).



- **The details** - Check yourself head to toe. Make sure your makeup isn't overdone, that you're wearing a belt, your socks match, and your shoes are scuff free and presentable. Some interviewers notice the little details.

### Step 3: Practice

Any great performer will tell you the dress rehearsal is a key component to a successful performance. Before you take your spot at the conference room table, take an interview dry run to make sure you've got all the logistical kinks worked out.

- **Question prep** – Be prepared for the standard questions, and any you can guess based on your research. Write them down and practice your answers beforehand.
- **Test commute** – If possible, try out your route to your interview location before the big day. You want to ensure you do your test commute during the same time of the day as your scheduled interview to account for any traffic. Note any potential snags in the commute so you can add extra time for the day of the interview. Also in some scenarios you may want to keep an extra pair of “commute shoes” (aka sneakers) in your bag so you don't kill your feet, if wearing uncomfortable shoes to the interview.

### Step 4: Relax

You've made all the necessary preparations and now it's time to show what you've got. This is not the time, however, to get nervous. I know it sounds impossible, but spend the final few minutes before the interview focusing on relaxing. You already know what you need to do, so take a quick breather after you've checked in (or on the way up the elevator) and just breathe and relax. Now you're ready to impress!

### What To Bring

When you walk into the interview, you'd better be prepared with the right equipment. Having a proper portfolio to accompany you to your interview is the final touch you need to make the right impression—and land the job.

## Step 1: The presentation

First impressions are everything, and your portfolio is no exception. Find a respectable padfolio that you wouldn't be embarrassed holding in front of the President—or a CEO. Make sure it's big enough to hold all your materials comfortably and stylishly. You don't have to spend a fortune on a fancy leather padfolio, but a manila folder just won't do it.

## Step 2: Your resume

Obviously, you need to bring a few copies of your resume to your interview. But simply printing them out covertly on your current employer's printer—or your struggling laser printer at home—won't cut it. Impressions matter, and if someone asks you for a copy of your resume, this is how you should prepare.

- **The paper** – Don't cheap out if you can help it. Your resume doesn't need to be on fine linen paper, but if you can avoid the recycled office paper, it will help set you apart from the masses.
- **The copies** – Count how many people you'll be interviewing with, and add five. Just in case. You never know when things go so well they want you to meet the entire team.

## Step 3: Your work

This is what a portfolio is really about, after all. Keep a few printable examples of your best work in your padfolio, and be ready to explain each of them.

- **Use your colors** – If at all possible print your work in color. It shows the full character of your accomplishment so don't be afraid to show it off.
- **Keep it neat** – These pieces of paper are the expression of your talent, so treat them with respect. Keep your work tidy and neat. Be ready to present each sample or presentation as if it's a work of art.

## Step 4: Your info

You never know how things will go with an interview. Just like any other situation in life, you want to be prepared for the best-case scenario.

- **Who are you?** – It goes without saying you should always have your proper identification with you for an in-person interview. It's not something you should expect, but you don't want to be unprepared if the occasion



arises that an employer wants to hire you on the spot, or fill out an official application that requires your driver's license or passport number.

- **Where do you live?** – It probably seems like a ridiculous question, but if you've lived in more than one place in the past 10 years, an employer will likely want to know that history for a background check. Be ready with the addresses of everywhere you've lived in the past 10 years.

## Step 5: Your tools

You can't very well attend an interview without a pen and notepad.

- **Bring a pen** – Even a backup pen or pencil is not a bad idea, just in case.
- **Bring a notepad** – A clean one. One that doesn't have torn edges or coffee stains.

## Step 6: Just don't

There are some things you just shouldn't bring to an interview. Seriously, don't.

- **Clutter** – Keep your person and your surroundings clean and clutter free. Period.
- **Food and drinks** – If you're interviewing at the right place, they'll offer you a beverage. If they don't, go through with the interview—it's good practice at a minimum—then grab something to drink afterward. Regardless, don't bring a drink with you to an interview. That includes coffee, a water bottle, or Kombucha.
- **Gum** – You don't want to be chewing during the interview or looking for a trash can; if you're worried about your breath use a mint.
- **Your phone** – No, I'm not suggesting you leave your phone at home. But make sure to turn it off or on silent (not vibrate mode). Your attention needs to be focused on the interview.

## Must-Know Interview Questions

Just about the only thing that can squash the excitement of landing an interview is the anticipation of the inevitable canned—and curveball—questions you're bound to get when you're in the hotseat. While I can't give you the perfect answers for every question you'll be asked, I can give you a few pointers to help you answer any question thrown your way:

## Step 1: “Tell me about yourself.”

Talking about yourself can be surprisingly challenging. While you know yourself better than anyone, it’s easy to get off track or leave out the good parts.

- **Be brief and excited** - I’d recommend one to two minutes to answer this one, so keep it quick. Employers like to know a candidate has drive and ambition, but also—and possibly more importantly—passion. If you can’t get excited about what you’ve already done, or who you are, chances are your interviewer won’t either.
- **Brand yourself** - Start with a short sentence to set the stage and brand yourself for the position, for example: “I am someone that is passionate about Marketing.”
- **Get personal** - Pick the highlights and important milestones—think school accomplishments, your major, and where you grew up—and start with that. If your interviewer wants to know more, he or she will ask.
- **Connect the dots** - Make the connection between your experience and passions, and how you can contribute to the company culture and success when answering this question. Draw as many parallels to your life and that of the company’s culture, as possible.
- **Come full circle** - End your response with a statement tying it all together, for example: “Because I’ve had all of these experiences in my career, when I saw your Marketing Manager opportunity, I knew I’d be a great fit; and that’s why I’m excited to speaking with you today.”

## Step 2: “What are your strengths?”

This question can be tough, given most of us have been taught that highlighting our strengths is tantamount to boasting, and admitting weakness is, well, a sign of weakness. Here’s how to handle this classic:

- **Tell your (abridged) story** - People love a good story. Pick a few knockout accomplishments that really highlight a particular skill, and tell the story about how it all played out.
- **Get specific** - Find ways to tie your strengths to aspects of the role. Employers love numbers, so find ways to work in the stats of your success.
- **Show the result** - Just like in the movies we want to give your story a happy ending. Showcase the result to bring a positive resolution to your story and drive home your strength.



### Step 3: “What are your weaknesses?”

This is easily one of the least favorite interview questions. A seemingly “damned if you do, damned if you don’t” scenario, it seems hard to come out on top with this one, but it’s actually much easier than you think:

- **Be strategic** - The trick to this question is, make sure the weakness you choose isn’t related to any of the key responsibilities of the job you are interviewing for.
- **Start at the end** - We all make mistakes, but what employers really want to know with this question is what you did to fix it. Share how you overcame your shortcomings and turned into a rockstar in the end.
- **Don’t apologize** - We all make mistakes, so there’s no need to be apologetic about making them. Look at your areas for improvement as opportunities for future success, and your interviewer will see you as open-minded and driven to overcome any obstacles in your way.
- **Strengths aren’t weaknesses** - A lot of old school advice will tell you to position your “weaknesses” as strengths, like “I work too hard.” Don’t be “that guy.” We all have things we can improve on. Be honest with this one and skip the clever wordplay and get to what you’re trying to improve.

### Step 4: “Why do you want to work here?”

This question is more about testing your understanding of the role and your own goals than anything else. Don’t overthink this one, but do put some serious thought into it before you’re in front of your interviewer:

- **Be honest, but not too honest** - Share what impressed you about the company and the job description, and how that aligns with your personal goals. The “half-day Fridays” and foosball tables are not legitimate answers to this question.
- **Be ambitious** - Just because you’re applying for the role that you are, doesn’t mean you can’t aspire to move up within their company down the road. Employers like to see potential in a candidate, so don’t be afraid to express your ambition to advance—once you’ve put in the time.

### Step 5: “Do you have any questions for me?”

Always have a few questions prepared for this one, just in case. But your interview should’ve given you plenty of material, too.

- **Dig deep** - Ask honest questions that you really want the answers to. Tie your questions back to information you've uncovered on your own prior to the interview, and during, and weave that back to your discussions.
- **Get personal** - This is a great opportunity to learn more about your interviewer—which will come in handy when writing those thank you notes. Ask your interviewer how she got her start in the business, or about any advice she'd give for someone just starting out at the company.
- **Current events** – Do your research on the current events going on with the company and weave those events into questions. Read any recent press releases the company has put out or updates on their social media pages and ask how those relate to the role you're interviewing for. These will typically be the projects or topics that are top of mind for their company and will show you've done your homework and are up to speed with what is current for them.

## Step 6: “Why should I hire you?”

This is your chance to seal the deal. This is not, however, the time to pull out any hail mary's or try anything drastic:

- **Eliminate any doubt** - Reiterate how your skills would be a great fit, and where you see yourself growing within the organization.
- **Be a tiny bit cocky** - The operative word being “tiny.” Don't overdo it, but this is your chance to boast just a teensy bit. Just be sure you're framing it in the context of how you'll use those skills for the good of the company.
- **Culture fit** - Company culture is a hot topic these days, so don't forget to illustrate how you'll fit into that picture. Draw connections between your personal and professional goals, and how that fits within the company's cultural values.

## Phone Interview

Phone interviews are every bit as important as an in-person, and in some cases what gets your foot in the door. Here's how to make sure you charm the pants off the gatekeepers and advance to the next round.

## Step 1: Treat it like an in-person interview



The first mistake most interviewees make with phone interviews is treating it like it's different from a face-to-face. While you may not be physically sitting across the table from your interviewer, trust me when I tell you you're being evaluated just as closely.

- **Dress up** – Just because you can do an interview in your pajamas doesn't mean you should. Studies have shown that cognitive performance improves when we dress up, so give yourself an easy advantage and dress to the nines, even if you're only going as far as your kitchen table for the interview.
- **Take notes** – Doing an interview over the phone can be surprisingly distracting, which makes taking great notes even more important. Keep your resume, research on the role and company, and a notebook and pen nearby.

## Step 2: Set up

The beauty of the phone interview is that it can happen almost anywhere—if you're prepared.

- **Location** - Find a place behind closed doors, free of distractions. Your desk at work, or the nearest cafe isn't ideal.
- **Notes and websites** - Phone interviews are to your advantage. Since the hiring manager can't see you, you can have in front of you any notes, bullet points you want to get across, your resume, or even their company website pulled up on your computer in front of you. One thing to caution is don't script out your answers and read them back verbatim; this can make you come across sounding unnatural. The best thing you can do is make the phone interview a two-way conversation.
- **Landline or wireless?** - Try to use a landline if possible. If using your mobile phone (which is most likely) just ensure you are in a place with a strong connection. Dropped calls, bad signals or a low battery can quickly derail an interview.
  - **Power up** - If you absolutely must use your mobile phone, be sure to keep your charger with you, and keep your phone plugged in right up until the interview—if not during the interview.
  - **Hands free** - It's hard to take notes and concentrate when you have to hold a phone to your ear. Use your headphones or a hands-free device so you can take notes and feel more natural during the interview. Note: Do *not* use speakerphone for an interview as you want to ensure your interviewer hears the enthusiasm in your voice as clearly as possible.

### Step 3: Voicemail

It happens. Sometimes phone interviews don't happen as scheduled. How you handle this is just as important as the interview.

- **If your interviewer doesn't pick up** - If you call at the scheduled time and no one picks up; have your voicemail script prepared before you call:
  - First - State your first and last name and the position you're applying for.
  - Second - Note that you're looking forward to the phone interview together.
  - Third - Close out the call by again stating your name and including your phone number (enunciate each number clearly, as the employer may need to write it down).
- **If they didn't call you** - Wait 15 minutes then send a follow up email. Keep this email short and positive. Mention you're looking forward to the phone interview together and make sure to include in the body of your email your full name, the position you're applying for, your phone number, and your email address.
- **Your personal voicemail greeting** - The instant you start including your phone number on your resume, it's time to update your voicemail greeting. Make it clear, polite, and professional. If a potential employer rings you up unexpectedly, they'll have a great first impression.

### Step 4: The interview

The only difference between a phone interview and an in-person interview, is the fact that you'll have a phone in your hands.

- **Body language** - Your interviewer may not be able to see you, but she'll definitely be able to tell if you're acting naturally—or awkwardly. Use your hands and gesture just like you would in person.
- **Smile** - Our voices change slightly—but noticeably—when we smile as we're talking. Your interviewer will notice, even if they can't see you.
- **Listen** - Your interview is as much about your interviewer as it is you. Make an effort to listen as much—if not more—than you talk. Let your interviewer share her story, and take that opportunity to jot down detailed notes.
- **Silence is ok** - Sometimes in phone interviews there is what seems to be awkward silence. Don't worry, on the other end of the phone the hiring



manager may be reading your resume, taking notes, or preparing their next question for you.

- **Be brief** - It's easy to talk too much when on the phone, so keep a watch nearby and make sure your responses don't exceed two minutes.

## Step 5: Follow up

Again, a phone interview is essentially an in-person interview. All the same rules apply after the interview. Send a thank you to everyone you spoke with, within 24 hours (but the sooner the better), and use your notes from the interview to personalize each note.

## Video Interview

Video interviews are becoming the norm, which means it's likely you'll get screened by a recruiter or hiring manager by video before you make it to a round of in-person interviews. But just because you can see your interviewer, doesn't mean this is just like a regular interview.

### Step 1: Set the stage

Unlike an in-person interview, a video interview requires a bit of staging. Think of your interview like filming a movie. The stage has to be set just right if you want to make a good impression.

- **Choose your backdrop** – The key here is to keep it simple. A plain wall or drapes with muted colors works great. Anything with a wild pattern or crazy colors will just look terrible on screen, and probably distract both you and your interviewer.
- **Lighting** – You'd be surprised how much lighting can impact how you look on camera, so don't underestimate it. Skype recommends natural light whenever possible, and if not, aiming a light (for example a lamp) towards your face placed behind your computer is the next best option. If you don't light yourself the glow of the computer screen will give you a blue or pale tint to your face.

- **Get eye level** – You want your camera lens to be at eye level (not looking up at you). So if you are using a laptop, to raise it up put a box under it to give you the most flattering angle.
- **Frame and distance** – You want your camera to capture you, centered in the frame from your chest up, with just a little bit of room above your head. Web Cameras are wide angle lenses, so if you are too close it will make your nose or chin look larger and out of proportion. Have your camera/computer about an arms distance from your face.
- **Sound** – This is a crucial, yet often overlooked component. Interview behind closed doors, and keep the noise and distractions locked out. Having a rowdy roommate or noisy pet make a cameo isn't going to make you look very professional. Also keep in mind rooms without furniture (for example a bathroom) allow the sound to bounce off the walls giving you an unwanted echo.
- **Check your handle** - While "GolfMaster3000" may have been a great handle when you set up your account, it doesn't exude trust and reliability to an employer. Change or create a new handle that just uses your name. If that's taken, add something else to the end that highlights your skills, like "JenSmith\_Developer."

## Step 2: Wardrobe check

By now it should come as no surprise that you should dress up for an interview of any kind, but given how many times I hear about people Skyping in their sweats, it bears repeating. Dress as if you were interviewing in person. Period. But, video interviews have a few special considerations on top of dressing for the part.

- **HD** – High def is a lazy person's worst enemy. Check yourself out on camera before your interview.
- **Dress up** - Wear what you'd wear to an in-person interview, from the tie to the socks and shoes. Your interviewer might not be able to see it all, but trust me, they can tell who's wearing sweatpants with a sportcoat.

## Step 3: Dry run

As with any interview, you need to practice—especially when technology is involved.

- **Test interview** - recruit a friend to do a dry run with whatever application you'll be using for the interview. Make sure all of the following work flawlessly:
  - Lighting



- Microphone
- Minimal external noise
- Neutral backdrop

## Step 4: The interview

Just like an in-person interview, there are a few things you need to do on the big day.

### Pre-Interview

- **Set up early** - “Arrive” at least 15 minutes before your interview to make sure everything is working and set up properly. Then make the video call at the exact designated time.
- **Have a backup** - We can’t control everything, and sometimes technology fails us. Have a backup computer or your phone ready and waiting in case disaster strikes.
- **Got power?** Even if all your devices are at 100%, plug them in.

### Interview

- **Resume and notes** - Keep your resume and a notebook handy and within reach. It’s perfectly OK to refer to your resume during the interview, and absolutely a must to take great notes.
- **Stay hydrated** - Keep a glass or bottle of water in arm’s reach. Talking online is just as taxing on your vocal chords as in person, so don’t risk cotton mouth.
- **Watch your hands** - Because you’re in front of a screen it’s easy to forget about hand gestures, but don’t. Try to act just as you would in person, and use your hands whenever it feels natural.
- **Speak slowly** - It’s easy to speak quickly when you’re nervous, and for some reason it’s even easier when you’re on video. Make an effort to enunciate and speak slowly. This helps if there are any connection delays to ensure that they hear every word clearly.
- **Make camera (eye) contact** - In other words, don’t just look at yourself the entire time. Your interviewer can tell. Always make eye contact with the camera lens this will help the interviewer see you as looking directly at them; just like you would in person.

## In-Person Interview

Finally. All your preparation and planning has come to this: the in-person interview. No matter how many phone or video interviews you've had so far, this is the one that will seal the deal, so you'd better make it great. You already know the basics, but here are a few extra steps you may not know.

### Step 1: Arrive early—then wait

Being even slightly late to an interview is a deal breaker for most hiring managers. But there is such a thing as too early.

- **30-minute rule** - On the day of your interview, there is no need to add to the stress; give yourself an extra 30 minutes to commute to the interview location to get your bearings and give yourself a buffer in case you hit traffic (or get lost). At most, you'll be 30 minutes early, which is plenty of time to grab a coffee, or take a casual stroll around the block, or sit in your car and call a friend to clear your head. Then casually walk into the office between 10-15 minutes before your interview time.

### Step 2: Body language

Body language is obviously important in any interaction, but even more so in an interview setting. The challenge is, save for mimicking your handshake and smile in a mirror, or practicing on a friend; it's difficult to get a feel for how you'll come across at go-time. Fortunately, your mirror isn't your only tool when it comes to body language. Your brain can be pretty useful, too.

- **Handshake** – Yes this is still important. Make it firm, but not obnoxiously strong, and brief—one to two shakes is all you need.
- **Eye contact** – It may feel awkward, but try to maintain eye contact at all times during your interview. If it feels super unnatural, try looking at your interviewers eyebrows every few seconds to give yourself a break. You'll still appear to be looking them in the eye while giving yourself a short break from the awkwardness.
- **Good posture** – Sit up straight and keep your feet flat on the ground, or neatly crossed. Sitting up straight (oppose to slouching) gives your lungs room to expand, in-turn giving your brain more oxygen and making you more alert.

### Step 3: The interview



This is why you're here. Your performance for this portion will determine how much all the rest matters.

- **Have your answers** - You've practiced your interview questions, so you're ready. But at the same time be prepared for the unknown. Some interview questions are just a test to see how you react when put on the spot. In this case: pause, think, repeat the question out loud, think again, and do your best to answer in a calm and collected manner.
- **Have some questions** - Your interview is just as much about what you're asking as it is what you're answering. Have at least 5 questions prepared— these can even be written down in your portfolio—beforehand. It's also a great idea to come up with questions based on the notes you take during the interview.
- **Be engaged and interested** - Show your interviewer that you're interested and engaged in the conversation. Ask questions, take notes, and be genuinely engaged in the conversation.
- **Silence is OK** - I know it will feel awkward, but silence is totally OK in an interview. It gives both you and the interviewer time to collect your thoughts and think about where the conversation is going. If you encounter a lull in conversation, don't be weirded out, it's totally normal and acceptable.

## Step 4: The Exit

Once the interview is over, your exit is the finishing touch of the entire encounter. Regardless of how everything went up until this point, this will be the last in-person impression you give, so make it a good one.

- **Smile** - When the interview is over, don't forget to smile—even if you don't feel you have the energy to do it.
- **Set expectations** - It's completely acceptable to ask what the next steps will be, and when you should expect to hear a response. Let your interviewer know that you'll be following up in a week if you don't hear from her.
- **Handshake** - Once again, this is important. End your interview with a solid handshake and thanking them by name.

## After The Interview

Whew! You made it through the interview! After you've given a good strong handshake and a winning smile, all you can probably think about is putting one foot in front of the other and making it out the lobby doors. But as you might've suspected, you're not done just yet.

### Step 1: Celebrate and debrief

Yes you still have a lot to do, but there's something to be said for giving yourself a little credit, and taking the time to digest what just happened. Do this as soon as possible after you're out of sight of your interviewer's building:

- **Pat yourself on the back** – It doesn't matter if you bombed the interview or aced it, the act of interviewing is stressful and exhausting and before you can even attempt to do anything else, you need to give yourself some well-earned kudos. Stop by your favorite cafe (or pub) and treat yourself while you work on this next bit.
- **Debrief** – It's time to whip out your notes and fill in the blanks. Jot down everyone's name you met with, along with a bit of information about each conversation. This will help you when it comes to step #2.

### Step 2: Write your thank you notes

Resume, cover letter, and interviewing techniques continue to change over the years, but one constant remains the same since the very first interview: the thank you note. It doesn't matter how long the interview, or who it was with. If you spoke, met, Skyped, or chatted with someone at a hiring organization, you must send them a thank you.

- **Use your notes** – Good notes will give you plenty of anecdotes to relate personally to each person you met with. And yes, you need to write everyone individually. Pick out a few topics that stood out to you during your conversations and work that into a brief paragraph that illustrates how you appreciated the insight, or how it resonated with you professionally or even personally.
- **Keep it short** – A physical thank you note should be no more than about half a page, or a small thank you card, and an email should never go before the fold. That means you need to get right to the point, so get everything on paper first, then edit down until you've weeded out all the extraneous information.



- **Set expectations** – Chances are you'll have to follow up with your interviewer for an update, so here's your chance to let them know when you're going to reach out. Tell them straight up that you'll be contacting them in a week to check in, then make sure you do that (see step #3).
- **Do it quickly** – Just about everyone has an opinion on how soon you should send your thank you notes, so keep this in mind: your interviewer is meeting with multiple candidates. The sooner you can respond (with a more thoughtful response than the rest) the better. Within 12-24 hours will give you the best positioning. Anything after that risks being trumped by another candidate.

### Step 3: Follow up

This is probably everyone's least favorite part of the process. You're in the awkward position of having to reach out to your interviewer for news, when they may not be ready—or willing—to provide any. Don't let that discourage you.

- **Wait 1 week** – Since you've already set the expectation in your thank you note, this will come as no surprise. If you haven't heard a peep in over a week, it's time to follow up.
- **Be polite** – Obvious right? It's worth reminding because after one week of agonizing waiting, you might be feeling a bit frustrated. Don't let that get to you, and make sure your communication is polite and to the point.
- **Keep it short** – Seeing a trend here? Your interviewers are busy people, so save them the time and get right to the point. Tell them you're following up and would love to get an update on the status of the position.
- **Be interesting** – When you follow up, you'll likely be feeling like you're just sending the same note over and over. Don't do that. Write something unique each time, and find a way to relate to your interviewer. Find a piece of news that's relevant, or a personal topic you discussed in your interview. Anything that would be valuable or interesting to your recipient works.
- **Don't overdo it** – Following up is a necessary evil, but it can get out of hand pretty easily. The general consensus is that you should follow up no more than once per week for about a month, then every two to three weeks after that. You want your interviewer to know you're still interested, but not a stalker.

### Step 4: Keep looking

This is probably the hardest step. You've just endured an entire cycle of the interview process and you're probably eager for it to be over. But unless you get

an offer immediately, it's in your best interest to keep looking while you're waiting for an offer—you never know what other opportunities might pop up in the meantime.