

Lesson #18

“Handling Nervousness”

Feeling nervous before and during an interview is entirely normal. However, there are several strategies you can use to manage and even alleviate nervousness:

- 1. Preparation:** The more you prepare for the interview, the more confident you'll feel. Research the company, practice common interview questions, and rehearse your answers.
- 2. Mock Interviews:** Conduct mock interviews with a friend or career coach. This can help you get comfortable with the interview format and receive constructive feedback.
- 3. Deep Breathing:** Practice deep breathing exercises to calm your nerves. Inhale deeply through your nose for a count of four, hold for a count of four, and then exhale slowly through your mouth for a count of four. Repeat as needed.
- 4. Visualization:** Visualize a successful interview. Imagine yourself confidently answering questions and leaving a positive impression.
- 5. Positive Self-Talk:** Replace negative thoughts with positive affirmations. Remind yourself of your qualifications and that you've prepared for the interview.
- 6. Physical Activity:** Engage in physical activity before the interview to reduce stress. A short walk or quick workout can help clear your mind and boost your mood.
- 7. Arrive Early:** Aim to arrive at the interview location with plenty of time to spare. Rushing can exacerbate nervousness.
- 8. Dress Comfortably:** Wear clothing that makes you feel confident and comfortable. This can have a positive impact on your self-assurance.
- 9. Bring Supportive Materials:** Bring a folder with extra copies of your resume, a list of questions for the interviewer, and any notes you've prepared.
- 10. Focus on the Interviewer:** Shift your focus from your nervousness to the interviewer. Listen attentively to their questions and engage in the conversation.
- 11. Be Yourself:** Remember that the interviewer is interested in getting to know you. Be authentic and genuine in your responses.
- 12. Be Mindful of Body Language:** Maintain good posture and use open, confident body language to convey self-assurance. Avoid fidgeting.
- 13. Practice Beforehand:** Rehearse your answers to common interview questions until you feel more confident in your responses.

14. Accept Nervousness: Understand that some level of nervousness is normal and can even enhance your performance. Channel it into positive energy and enthusiasm.

15. Smile: A genuine smile not only makes you appear more approachable but can also help improve your mood and reduce nervousness.

16. Ask for Clarification: If you don't understand a question, it's perfectly acceptable to ask the interviewer to clarify or repeat it. This can give you a moment to collect your thoughts.

17. Use the STAR Method: When answering behavioral questions, use the STAR method (Situation, Task, Action, Result) to structure your responses. It provides a clear and organized way to answer questions.

18. Practice Active Listening: Actively listen to the interviewer's questions and respond directly to what they're asking.

19. Follow Up: Send a thank-you note or email after the interview to express gratitude and reinforce your interest in the position. This can leave a positive lasting impression.

Remember that nervousness is a common experience, and it often diminishes as the interview progresses. With practice, you can improve your ability to manage and control your nervousness during interviews.