

FREE REPORT

**TEN VITAL TIPS FOR TEACHING
INTERVIEW SUCCESS**

By

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TEN VITAL TIPS FOR TEACHING INTERVIEW SUCCESS

There are few professions on earth where it is necessary to go through such a long and rigorous process to finally get on the ladder than teaching. From the moment when you decide to become a teacher – late in High School or in the middle of college seems to be the most typical point – to the moment where you step into the classroom to deliver your first lesson as a salaried professional, it takes years to get to where you want to be. After college you have the requirement of teacher training to satisfy, and once you have that diploma it's just a small matter of application and a selection process.

By the time you are called for interview, the likelihood is that you will have devoted several years to achieving your goal, and given the standard length of teaching interviews it is worth noting that the work of these several years has boiled down into how you perform and satisfy the criteria laid down by the interviewing panel in the course of what may be less than an hour. Once you have had the interview, there may yet be more steps to go through – but no-one would deny that the teaching interview is absolutely pivotal in securing a job.

So, when all those years come down to this one interview, you sit in a chair across from an interviewer or a selection panel, it is fair to say that there can be some pressure on your shoulders. Getting a teaching job is difficult. People say that once you're in, you're in for as long as you want to be – but the fact that there is a relatively low turnover of staff in teaching positions simply underlines the fact that teaching jobs are tricky to find. You will need to prove your worth to the selection panel and when you only have a short space of time to do that, it means that you need to be impressive in the interview.

Teachers put up with this, because teaching is what they want to do. In many ways it is more of a vocation than a job. Getting employed as a teacher marks a passing on of a torch in many ways – you have been considered fit to teach an important subject to young minds in need of nourishment. It is fair that the selection process is rigorous, because education is one of those things that requires the right people to do it, and its importance in all societies is based on the requirement of a good education to really get ahead in life.

This does not change the fact that passing the interview stage in the selection process for a teaching job will be hard. It will make demands of you. No matter how well-educated and well-qualified you are, by the time you get to the interview stage all of that becomes less relevant. Many of the people in the field of candidates will be just as qualified, and some more so. What you need to do is convince the selection panel that regardless of educational achievement, you are the right person to inspire and facilitate the educational successes of the future.

The interview process is difficult – but it is not impossible. For many people, the most testing part of the whole process is the anticipation and preparation. And therefore it is important to ensure that you make your preparation as effective as possible. The following are a few tips which should make it easier to get through a teaching interview and stand ahead of the field at the end of the race.

TIPS TO FOLLOW

- 1. Don't Let The Little Details Let You Down.** In any teaching interview it goes without saying that you want to convince the selection panel of your educational credentials. You have qualified as a teacher. You are driven by the desire to ensure that children today get the highest quality of education, and feel that you are equipped to deliver that. Wouldn't it be a shame if all of that went by the by because you turned up a few minutes late or in a stained shirt? Make sure you have all of the details under control.
- 2. Practise, Practise, Practise.** The more you go through the interview questions you may be asked in an interview, the more complete an answer you can form in your mind. Don't think for a second that you have to rehearse your answers down to the comma until you're word perfect. If you do, then the answers you give in the interview will sound insincere and as though they came from a book. By practising you can ensure that you have the right information in mind, and deliver it from the heart.
- 3. Smile.** It's a really simple tip, and it sounds trite to even say it. However, there is no getting away from the fact that a warm smile when you walk into the interview room, and a pleasant character during the interview, will do a lot to convince the panel that you are a good candidate for the job. If you come across as severe and businesslike, they may well wonder what effect you would have on a classroom. Yes, they'd trust you to maintain discipline, but people are more receptive when they feel at ease.
- 4. Justify Your Answers.** Say for example that one of the questions is "What convinced you that teaching was the job for you?". We all have a certain point when we decide to do a certain job, but this question is not about a date, a moment and a place. The question is more about what made your mind up. What you should say here is more in-depth than "After my sophomore year in college, I decided that I wanted to be a teacher.". Something more defined, like "I have always believed that education is one of the most vital things in a person's life. I think it is important that the right people do it, and I think I am one of those people."
- 5. Plan In Advance.** There is no point in putting on your "game face" a few hours before the interview and expecting that to get you through. There is so much that can go wrong on the day that you have to be ready for it. This is not said to scare you, because you can deal with anything that goes wrong as long as you are sufficiently prepared. This means getting an early night the night before so you don't oversleep, setting off with time to spare so that you do not turn up late or just before the interview, and more. Make sure you have things under control.
- 6. Err On The Conservative Side.** Not politically, but in terms of how you dress and present yourself. This does not mean that you should dress like an undertaker – that is very far towards the extreme of conservatism. You want to be closer to the middle line, but on the conservative side of it. That means no Homer Simpson ties, no overly ornate earrings, no nose studs and, if you can avoid it, no shock-colored hair. The school may have a relaxed dress code and be rather liberal – but it is best to be too cautious and relax than be too relaxed and have to make up ground.
- 7. There Are Right And Wrong Answers.** But not in the traditional way – there is nothing written on the papers that the selection panel are looking at that says you *have to* answer a certain way. The right answers are ones which show that you have the interests of pupils at heart and can deliver them in a way which fits within school policy. The wrong answers are ones which suggest that you have somehow fallen into teaching because you didn't know what else to do, because your parents were teachers or because it looked like a steady job you could do for a few years before going into the City. If your parents were teachers you may of course say so, but make sure it is followed with "...and they instilled in me that education is a massively important thing – something I absolutely agree with today.

8. **Don't Let A Faux Pas Become A Crisis.** We all occasionally mispronounce words, or lose the thread of what we are saying, or indeed forget a specific word at an inopportune time. Getting in a muddle over this will be completely pointless, and if you let it dictate the direction of the interview going forward, it *will* ruin things. If you can react to it in a positive way by bouncing back, acknowledging it in a cheerful way and then delivering a great answer anyway, you'll have at least one ally in that room, and probably a panel full of them. Even if you have just said "edu-ma-cation".
9. **Know Where You Are.** There is probably no tidier way of summing it up in a sentence than that. It is important to be fully aware of your surroundings. The interview room itself is, of course, likely to be somewhere completely new to you. The school doesn't have to be, though. You can pay it a visit, walk the halls a bit and get a feel for the place so that it doesn't feel all-new to you when you are in the interview. Reading what you can about the school's history and its present-day curricular and sporting achievements also helps – it demonstrates that you're a good researcher.
10. **Give Your Answer, Not What You Think Theirs Is.** If you can demonstrate that your response to a question comes from a logical and well-justified thought process, it is much better to give an answer you really believe than one which sounds like it ticks all the boxes. After all, if you get the job you will be doing the teaching, it won't be some book standing in front of the class. The panel wants to know that you can reason, clarify and explain, and if you can do this in delivering an answer that they haven't heard before you stand a good chance.

The ten tips above are ones which have been agreed on by numerous successful teaching job applicants. It would be possible to list another ten agreed on by the same teachers or others, but one thing that everyone agrees upon is that if you keep the ten tips above as your commandments for teaching interview preparation you will be on the right track. These tips, in combination with your qualifications, education and personality, are the tools you will need to convince an interview panel that you have what it takes to become a teacher in their school.

Good Luck, and Thank You for reading!

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