



# 10 JOB INTERVIEW TIPS FOR STUDENTS

Your first job interviews are likely to be exciting and a little stressful at the same time. Preparation and practice go a long way to help you make a good impression and calm your nerves.

Here are some tips that will set you up to ace your first Cat® dealer interview.

## **ARRIVE FOR YOUR INTERVIEW ABOUT 15 MINUTES AHEAD OF YOUR SCHEDULED TIME.**

If you're unfamiliar with the location, do a test drive and scouting run. Some dealerships have multiple buildings so you'll want to know the address of your interview location, where you can park and the appropriate entrance to use. Showing up on time is totally within your control and demonstrates that you are a punctual and responsible individual.

## **LOOK LIKE THE PERSON SOMEONE WOULD WANT TO HIRE.**

Clothing and grooming are the first things people will notice about you. From a young age, we're taught "not to judge a book by its cover." That said, your appearance provides strangers with insights into who you might be as a person. Dressing your best could only help you make a good first impression on your initial interview.

At most dealerships, business casual is acceptable. In general, that means looking clean and neat from head to toe. Stay away from excesses in scents, makeup or jewelry.

**Men:** Nice, holeless pants and a clean shirt. If you're comfortable in a tie, wear one. If not, you might choose a collared shirt and jacket.

**Women:** Nice, holeless pants or a skirt with a blouse, or a blouse and jacket combination.

## **BRING A NOTEPAD, FOLIO OR FOLDER.**

These resources give you the chance to take notes, prepopulate the pages with points you want to raise and jot down questions you want to ask. If you are interviewing with a team of people, notepads allow you to write down the interviewers' names so you can easily remember them during the course of your interview, for a follow-up meeting or for a thank you note afterward. Folders and folios are also great holders for any items that the interviewer has asked you to bring, such as resumes, applications or transcripts.

## **EVERYONE IS EVALUATING YOU.**

From the moment you step out of your car, your presence makes an impression on every person you encounter at the dealership.



A receptionist, a salesperson or other staff member may speak with you before your interview. After you leave, the interviewer might ask any of those personnel what they thought of you. With this in mind, it's always a best practice to acknowledge everyone you encounter with eye contact and a smile. Politely ask questions and thank anyone who assists you. If masks are required, eye contact and clear speech are essential.

### **MAKE NOTE OF THE INTERVIEWER'S NAME AND USE IT DURING THE INTERVIEW.**

It's an acknowledgement of respect and shows that you are actively listening. While you don't want to overuse their name in a way that feels forced, if you naturally can refer to them by name during the meeting, feel free to do so. The best strategy is to call them by the name with which they introduced themselves. If they referred to themselves by their first name, use that. If they referred to themselves as Mr./Mrs./Ms., then follow their lead and call them by their preferred title and last name.

### **YOUR CELL PHONE SHOULD BE OFF.**

If your phone presents itself as a possible distraction, dealers will be concerned about your ability to focus on your work should you be employed there. Even a phone set to vibrate is distracting for both you and the interviewer. Initial interviews typically last less than an hour, so your best strategy is to turn off your device completely for the duration of the meeting.

### **DEMONSTRATE POSITIVE ENERGY, A SENSE OF FITNESS AND WELL-BEING.**

Non-verbal behavior also communicates things about you. Rather than slouching, sit up straight to reflect your confidence and attitude. Maintain a positive tone with your facial expressions and answers. If you periodically lean forward to listen, this indicates you have a genuine interest in what the interviewer has to say.

### **IDENTIFY TWO OF YOUR STRENGTHS AND BE PREPARED TO PROVIDE EXAMPLES BEFORE YOUR INTERVIEW.**

Be sure to review the job description and choose strong skills of yours that you would be able to apply to the position. Identify

examples where you achieved positive results through the use of those skills. Remember, your examples don't necessarily have to be job experiences, particularly if you're a recent graduate. Your interviewer could gain a valuable understanding of your character through your experience with in-school endeavors, extracurricular activities, athletics or volunteer efforts. Also, consider including what you learned from those experiences to show that you are willing to grow and improve as an employee of the dealership.

### **KNOW WHY YOU WANT THE JOB.**

Whatever attracts you to the job — whether it be hands-on work, the use of technology, opportunities to operate earthmoving equipment or something else entirely — you should have a clear idea of what drew you to the position. Make sure you're prepared to explain why you would be a perfect fit for the dealer and why the dealership would be ideal for you. The higher your interest in the job, the more likely you are to get an offer.

### **HAVE AT LEAST ONE QUESTION TO ASK THE INTERVIEWER.**

You might ask about the industries, the customers they serve, the tools available, the training and education that the job entails, or something else entirely. Be genuine and authentic in your interest, and make sure your questions relate to the position for which you're interviewing.

### **AFTER YOUR INTERVIEW, FOLLOW UP WITH AN EMAIL, LETTER OR CARD OFFERING THANKS AND APPRECIATION.**

Your note should thank them for giving you the opportunity to sit for an interview. In addition, a mention of something specific that was discussed during your interview is recommended. Be sure to send the note the day after your interview, so your conversation remains fresh in their memory. It is always helpful for the interviewer to be reminded of your positive qualities as they move forward in their hiring process.