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The Interview Series: (9) Take a Proactive Approach: Follow Up

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You survived your interview, and thanks to your diligent preparation, you walk away from the prospective employer's office feeling confident that your meeting was a success. Now what? To continue to enhance your image and increase your chances to get hired, you must be proactive and make follow-up a strategic part of the interview process. Your post-interview task list should include the three steps outlined below.

- 1. Take written and mental notes.** As soon as you are able to, sit down and review the notes you took during the interview. You do not want to forget important information, especially if you are interviewing at multiple companies at the same time. Your notes should include a wide variety of items:
 - Details about the position
 - Insights on the company, its management team, its future
 - Answers to the questions you asked
 - What the interviewer/s looked like
 - Any personal information about the interviewer/s

- 2. Send thank you letters.** Promptly sending thank you notes to everyone you have spoken with gives you that extra edge to help further distinguish yourself from other candidates. A thank you note is another opportunity to further win the company over. It is also an excellent way to demonstrate your writing skills and attention to detail.
 - Send a thank you note to each interviewer within two business days.
 - Even if you are no longer interested in the position, you should still send a note; you never know when you may cross paths with that company again and you don't want to burn any bridges.
 - If this is your second or even third time being interviewed, you should still send another thank you.
 - If travel arrangements were made for you, write the person who made those arrangements a note as well.
 - If you were interviewed by more than one person, try to vary each letter in case recipients should compare notes.
 - Although a handwritten note is a much more personal approach, don't be afraid to use email, especially if you sense the company's culture is extremely email oriented. If you have bad penmanship, ask a friend to handwrite the letter for you.
 - Use the correct title and names of all interviewers; ideally, you should have obtained a business card from each of them.
 - Show appreciation for the employer's interest in you.
 - Reiterate your enthusiasm and desire for the position.
 - Remind the employer of your qualifications for the job.



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- Proofread! Proofread! Proofread! There should be absolutely no misspellings or incorrect grammar usage in your letter.
- If you can offer solutions to some of the issues that might have been discussed during the interview, do so. This demonstrates how you could immediately impact their organization and proves that you are a self-motivated problem-solver.

3. Continue to follow up. The adage the squeaky wheel gets the grease holds true in this situation. While you don't want to become a pest to the employer, you do want to make sure that you stand out from other candidates by demonstrating your interest, building rapport and increasing your name recognition.

- Your first follow-up phone call should be a week to ten days after your interview or sooner if the interviewer indicated a shorter timetable for the position.
- You should follow up with the person who coordinated your interview, asking them the status of the position.
- Further sell your strengths and reiterate your desire for the position.
- Ask when it is appropriate for you to follow up again.
- Use other job offers as leverage in your follow-up.