Transcript: Interview Ready

In order to prepare for an interview it's important to research in three areas. First area that you want to research is you. You want to research yourself basically a summary of your qualifications, your relevant qualifications, you want to ask yourself how you can meet the employer’s needs, what you bring to the table and how you can add value.

Then you also want to make sure that you research the position you want to have a clear understanding of what an XYZ does okay, again meeting the needs of the position you also want to research the employer, so they may say why do you want to work for us, what do you know about us, who's the CEO history products services competitors etc.

And then finally I would say that you want to research the industry as well so you the position the organization and the industry.

You want to make sure that you've prepared a series of short relevant stories okay about yourself it's something called the Show and Tell method.

So you don't just want to say like these are my skills, you want to be able to demonstrate to have short relevant stories that have a beginning, a middle and an end. I would recommend that you practice, at the very least lock yourself in a room with a mirror and practice responses to commonly asked questions.

You don't want to script it you're not an actress you want it to be conversational but you want to hear yourself say these responses out loud and if possible. I would recommend that you set up a mock interview with a professional career counsellor.

You want to make sure that you arrive on time I generally say arrive 30 minutes in the vicinity, but about 10 to 15 minutes to announce yourself in the reception area. Then once you meet your interviewer first impressions matter, and studies say it takes about seven seconds a prospective employer is immediately sizing you up. He or she is deciding do they like you, are you intelligent, are you kind okay, you want to have good eye contact, you want to have a nice strong handshake.

And basically want to be positive confident and upbeat so watch your energy level. You want to be authentic and genuine but most people need to turn up the volume slightly. There are basically three types of interviews. Some common interviews are now behavioural interviews. They begin with questions like tell me about a time when. Tell me about a time when you were in a team and things went really well, or things didn't go so well.

You might have a technical interview this might be perhaps you're going for a software engineering position. You might walk into the interview and they say don't sit down and they direct you to a whiteboard give you a marker and they want you to solve some algorithms.

Perhaps you will have a case interview if you're interviewing with consulting firms, so you want to be well-prepared for those in terms of practicing case questions.

Telephone and Skype interviews are becoming more and more common particularly for initial interviews. With a telephone interview, if you can get a landline that's best, if not make sure everything is charged up. You also want to make sure that you're in a quiet environment and that no one is going to disturb you. So the advantage is you don't have to worry about what you're wearing or what you look like and you can have lots of notes, but you want to be organized, you want to make sure that you pace yourself, the tone your articulation, that the energy comes forth within the telephone call.

With a Skype interview again, you want to test your equipment, make sure everything is working properly. You need to think about what you're wearing because you're going to be on camera. Have something colourful, watch the whites the blacks, the patterns etc. Watch the lighting in terms of like a fluorescent lighting with a Skype interview. And even though it might be your natural inclination to look at the screen, it's important to look at the camera. That's how you'll be making eye contact. And then finally with a Skype interview, I would watch your background. Be very much aware of your background.

So at the end of the interview, I would recommend that you establish next steps. Some employers will tell you what the next steps are, but it they don't it's perfectly fine to ask what are the next steps. I would also recommend that you have a closing statement at the end of the interview to let the interviewer know that you're very interested in the position and why you would be a great fit and match.

Then in terms of once the interview is over of course, you want to send some type of thank-you. It's probably going to be an email but depending upon your audience, could be a short thank-you note. In your thank-you, you want to make sure of course that you thank the interviewer for their time, but also it's an opportunity to reiterate your interest and your qualifications and I recommend that you send the thank you within 24 to 48 hours.