Twelve Steps for a Successful Interview

1. Smile, make eye contact, and shake hands when you greet the interviewer. Don't be afraid to "break the ice" at the beginning of the interview. BE YOURSELF. They are more interested in hiring somebody that is happy and has a positive attitude over someone that is skilled. You can teach skills, but you can't teach happiness.

2. Come into the interview with two things that you'd like to share (e.g. an achievement, a goal that you've met, a "light bulb" moment) and look for opportunities in the interview to speak about them.

3. Don't talk too much or overstate "your case." If the interviewer asks you to give one example, don't give three.

4. Mentally familiarize yourself with two patients for whom you have cared. The first should be a patient with whom you made an emotional connection. The second should be a patient who was more technically challenging. Use these patients as references when interview questions point to past experiences with patients.

5. KNOW YOURSELF. Come prepared to speak about 3 of yours strengths. Have concrete examples in mind that illustrate them.

6. Research the company you are interviewing with before the interview. Take a few minutes to read their website.

7. Dress conservatively, but with personality. Bring color and dazzle to your outfit with an accessory or two. Wear a colorful or shimmery blouse, scarf, belt, shoes, purse, handkerchief, tie, or wrist watch. Don't be drab, but don't overdo it. Keep your dazzle down to a few items.

8. Polish your shoes - Shiny shoes make shiny future.

9. Bring with you to the interview: two copies of your resume and copies of your letters of recommendation. In addition, bring any other information you have sent to the company.

10. Don't be afraid to ask for clarification if you don't understand a question. Remember, an interview is a conversation, not an interrogation.

11. Send a handwritten thank you note to your interviewer(s). Remember to get business cards before you leave so you will have an address to send it to. Mail it right away. Don't just send a pat thank you note. Think about what you've learned from the interview and how it sparked some new ideas about the job.

12. Even though the market is brutal right now, the worst thing you can do for your career is to take a job that doesn't fit you at all. Not only will you not do your best work, but when jobs are more plentiful, you'll be moving in the wrong direction.