

# ICMA ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2018

## Interviewing Do's and Don'ts

- **Know what you applying for** – *research the position – make sure you know how the position functions in the particular agency; titles and duties vary from agency to agency.*
- **Get a good night's sleep** – *refrain from late night partying/drinking, etc.*
- **Know where and when to report** -*nothing is more telling when an applicant calls to ask where the interviews are being held 10 minutes prior to their appointment.*
- **Arrive 5-10 minutes early for the appointment** – *don't forget to leave time for unexpected traffic or congested parking.*
- **If you fall ill** – *demonstrate your concern for others, call in to see if you can have a phone interview or reschedule.*
- **Know your audience and dress appropriately for the type of position you are applying for** *sworn Police and Fire: business suits are common, maintenance industry: slacks and a collared shirt. If possible be aware of who the interviewers are and formulate your responses accordingly. (see "Use acronyms or jargon" under "Don't" below)*
- **Be aware of your body language** - *Give a solid handshake, make eye contact with all interviewers, sit up straight in the chair, beware of nervous ticks*
- **Pay attention to your personal grooming** - *Brush your hair, brush your teeth, consider not smoking immediately prior to your appointment, no chewing tobacco, be mindful of fragrances – all of these can be distracting.*
- **Have a semi-prepared 2-3 minute opening and closing statement** *that you can edit based on the questions and tone of the interview. Almost all interviews start out with a question to break the ice and end with an opportunity for you to wrap it up. Be mindful not to repeat yourself. Include information you want the panel to know about you/your experience, particularly if the questions did not provide a natural place for you to highlight the information.*
- **Exhibit a positive attitude** - *no one wants to spend 30 minutes to an hour with a complainer. Demonstrate to the interviewer what skills and talents you can bring to the organization.*

### DON'T

- **Read from your resume** – *If you have handouts you would like to give to panel, keep them to a minimum, they most likely will not have time to read through them. Summarize the documents and point out only the most critical items.*
- **Overanalyze the questions** – *Most interview questions are not intended to trick you. Ask to have the question repeated.*
- **Speak poorly of your current or former employers** - *This shows poor judgment, instead if you have had a difficult experience with an employer, describe what you learned from the situation and how it will benefit you and the new employer in the future.*
- **Use profanity** - *Profanity is never appropriate in an interview.*
- **Use acronyms or jargon** - *You could alienate your panel or potential supervisor if they are unfamiliar with the phrases.*
- **Embellish your role** - *While you want to describe how your role in the agency or project was important, do not over or understate what you actually did for the agency/project. For promotional opportunities, do not assume the interviewer knows you or your role in the agency.*
- **Delve too deeply into your personal life** - *unless the lesson or experience directly relates to the job or the work-related point you are trying to make.*

**Remember: Every interaction you have with that employer could be a potential interview. Be polite and professional with everyone you come in contact with from the receptionist to the manager.**  
**You never know who could be assessing you.**