

## I Got the Interview!! (OK, Now what?)

So you scored that big interview. Congratulations!! What's next? There is so much to do. It's stressful, and you only have one opportunity to make a great first impression. For pilots looking to move up the ladder, the bar to entry is high. Interviewers are industry vets with serious time under their belts. They work in a culture with tough standards. How do you put your best foot forward and stand out from the crowd?

The answer is twofold: 1) have a strong work history with solid resume, and 2) make a memorable first impression. Consider not only your wardrobe and grooming, but also how you convey, in subtle ways, that you are a serious, detailed oriented professional, and you want this job. Just envision those poor, tired interview board members, sitting through countless meetings with shiny-eyed candidates. How do you stand out?

Here is a collection of our suggestions:

1. Get your logbook entries updated and scrub them. Review entries with a fine-tooth comb. Consider having your logbook professionally audited (it is difficult to see your own errors). Be sure all numbers total up to avoid embarrassing explanations later.
2. Now is not the time to save money with a DIY logbook solution. If you are not already using a commercial program, consider migrating to one. There are companies that can assist with paper-to-digital transcription as well as software migration. Take a look at LogTen Pro, Logbook Pro, Crew Lounge, MCC Pilot, MyFlightBook, ZuluLog, and SafeLog, among others). While some pilots grumble about ongoing software subscription fees, remember--you're a professional--and you need professional tools. Logbook software is a tool that makes your life easier and will pay for itself many times over.
3. Generate a solid resume (limit to 1 page). If you are not a great writer, hire someone. Remove fluff and only include what's important. (Does the review board really care that you are a bocce ball enthusiast or part-time surfer?) Focus on critical "need to know" information.
4. Use the highest quality paper you can afford when printing resumes. Watch your formatting. Studies show that "good old boring" Times Roman is the easiest font to read on printed paper, while Arial is easier to read on an electronic screen. Mixing two fonts in a resume adds polish but don't overdo it. Arial for headings and Times Roman for body text is enough, and a win-win combo. Avoid clever fonts that detract and shout to the world that your 14-year old helped you. Bring extra copies of your resume (at least two more than you think you will need).
5. Have business cards printed. This may seem like an unnecessary detail but imagine the impression you'll make. You've signaled that you're a pro, you understand the game and recognize the importance of details.
6. Bring a logbook you will be proud to display! It showcases your flight career and polished presentation materials are a huge confidence builder. Disarm even the grumpiest interviewer. ("Wow, that's a nice package you brought. You sure are organized.") Organize it. Tab it. Avoid post-its and other hand-written temporary tools. Use printed labels instead.
7. Consolidate your logbook entries into one logbook when possible. Transcribe your paper logbooks or have a pro do that for you. Bring one cumulative logbook containing all your flight time. Include copies of your certificates and endorsements in the main logbook under a tab. Print some nice summary documents. Bring your paper logs with you but leave them in your briefcase. Explain that your logbook is cumulative, contains all your flight history, and that you included copies of your original endorsements/certificates for their convenience. With this level of polish, it is unlikely they will ask to see your old books, but you will have them, just in case.
8. Note that we said "briefcase" in #7. We strongly recommend a briefcase, computer bag or zippered portfolio. Do not bring a backpack or (heaven forbid) bags to carry materials to an interview (yes, one of our successful FedEx candidates really saw a pilot-candidate with his logbook in a Wal-Mart bag).
9. Interviewers are people. Make their job easier by including summaries, charts and graphs. Commercial software programs can generate scores of these reports. Find those that best showcase your career and skills. For pie charts and graphs, print in color. Use organizer tabs to divide your logbook report from the summary reports. Organization and presentation is key here.
10. As you assess the costs of the upcoming interview-- the prep courses, logbook software, new clothes, business cards, logbook binders, tabs, printing, and more, keep the goal line in sight. Every dollar spent is an investment in a career worth millions of dollars in future earnings.

11. Remember interviewers have been through and survived this same process, so they usually have empathy for nervous candidates. A strong one-page resume and presentation package will empower you and may mitigate any small missteps along the way.

12. Think about how much you'll enjoy hearing "You're hired!" Good luck with your new career!

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