



Ten Tips:

Art of the Nanny Job Interview

1. Be Prepared

It is expected that you have done some pre-screening, either via telephone, email, or the agency family information form. Before you ever show up for the job interview, you should have some idea of the scope of work involved, the general range of compensation offered, days and hours of work and benefits (if any). A nanny job interview is an investment of time (yours and the family's) and sometimes expense. Approach this wisely.

2. Have Your Act Together

Experts recommend that you prepare a Nanny Portfolio before you begin any interviewing. Your portfolio should include your updated resume (CV) with your work history and educational experience, an introductory letter, copies of any letters of recommendation, information on certifications and training related to childcare, and some artwork and photos of you and/or your charges engaged in activities that you are especially proud of. This may include the day you played pirates, complete with pirate hats and cardboard swords, or the impromptu picnic on a rainy day under the kitchen table. Your portfolio is intended to make a lasting impression on the hiring family.

3. Be Safe

If you and the family are not previously acquainted, we encourage you to plan your initial meeting in a well trafficked public place. A coffee shop or a family restaurant with a play land are good ideas. Make sure you provide a friend or family member with the details of your interview, including family name, phone number, where you are meeting, and the schedule. You want your friend to know when they should expect to hear back from you - and make sure you phone them!

4. Etiquette

Be on time. Respect the hiring family's time and create a professional first impression. If you are not good with directions, do a dry run past the interview site before the interview date. Be polite. Offer to shake hands upon introductions. Express pleasure at the meeting. Wash your hands before holding a baby, after diaper changes, or when working with food. Thank the family for their time at the end of the interview. SMILE! OFTEN!

5. Grooming

Dress appropriately! Clothing should be clean, conservative, and kid friendly - think GAP, not Victoria's Secret. You will want to be comfortable. Choose something a baby could burp on and that will keep you modestly covered if you get on the floor to play with the children.

6. Have a List of Questions Ready

A nanny job interview is a two-way conversation. Make sure you remember to cover all the essentials. Include hours, duties, pay and tax details, etc. See our companion tip sheet, [Questions Nannies Should Ask](#).

7. Work Agreement & Paperwork

Bring a copy of your preferred sample work agreement. Have your driver's license and Social Security Card (or other identifying document) for employment authorization. Print off a current, blank Form W-4 (IRS) and I-9 (DHS). You will be surprised how many families have not thought to get this together. You will immediately demonstrate your professionalism.

8. Interact with the Children

Many families have their children present in the nanny job interview as a "test" of your comfort around children and your ability to interact with or establish a connection to their children. If the baby is present, ask if you may hold him (wash hands first!). For toddlers and preschoolers, some professional nannies bring a small "bag of tricks" including a picture book, puzzle, or some other item that you can use to connect with the child.

9. Communicate

Don't be afraid to ask questions. Give responsive answers. Use this opportunity to demonstrate your previously acquired skills (working on potty training, working with a colicky baby, etc.). Resist the urge to compare this family or these children with your prior families; rather link the requirements of this job and family with your previously acquired experience.

10. After the Interview

Make good on your commitments. If you promised to get copies of certifications to the family - do it. If you promised to phone back in three days - do it. Many career coaches recommend that you write the family a brief thank you letter. A handwritten note is best, an e-mail is better than no follow-up. The thank you letter is more than a nice way of saying, "Thank you for your time." It's another chance to sell your strengths and land that job.

FINAL TIP: Waiting can be hard. It often takes a family longer to make a decision than they expect. They may have trouble reaching references, or be waiting on a background check. Judging when it is time for YOU to make the call is both difficult and subjective. We advise at a minimum you wait out the family's follow-up period. If the family suggested they would call you on Monday, don't call them until Tuesday. You will want to know two things - 1) what is the status of the position? and 2) are you still being considered? The family will understand that you need this information and should be prepared to answer these questions. You are advised to continue your job search as you are waiting. Similarly, you are advised once you accept a position to let any other families you were talking with know that you are no longer available.

Other Helpful Resources

- ▶ [Questions Nannies Should Ask](#)
- ▶ [The Nanny Work Agreement](#)
- ▶ [Sample Nanny Job Application](#)
- ▶ [Sample Nanny Work Agreements](#)