**TONY PODCAST**

# Interviewing With Confidence

*Stop Trying to Impress Them*

Tony, I want to talk today about interviewing with confidence.

And I want to start by getting rid of one of the biggest myths about interviewing.

Confidence does not mean walking into the room like you own the place.

It doesn't mean having the perfect handshake, memorizing clever answers, or convincing yourself in the parking lot that you're wonderful.

Real confidence comes from knowing what you've done, knowing what problems you can solve, and being able to explain that clearly when somebody asks.

In other words:

## Confidence is evidence remembered on demand.

That's an important distinction because most people go into an interview hoping to be liked.

**That's a lousy strategy.**

You're not there to win a personality contest. You're not there to give the interviewer your autobiography. And you're certainly not there to sit on the other side of the desk hoping they decide you're worthy.

An interview is a business meeting.

**More specifically, it's a risk-reduction meeting.**

The employer already thinks you might be able to do the job. That's why you're there.

Now they're trying to figure out something much more important:

## Can I trust this person to do what we need done without creating a bigger problem?

That's the interview.

And once you understand that, interviewing becomes a whole lot easier.

The first thing you've got to do is get your own head straight.

Before you walk into that meeting, you need to be able to answer four questions for yourself:

> Why am I leaving?
> Why this job?
> Why this company?
> And why now?

If you're simply trying to escape your current boss, your current company, or some miserable situation at work, it'll leak out.

You want your story pointing forward.

Strong candidates are being pulled toward an opportunity, not merely running away from something they don't like.

The second thing you've got to know is what you actually bring to the table.

And please don't tell me you're hardworking.

Don't tell me you're passionate.

Don't tell me you're a people person.

Everybody says that.

**Give me proof.**

Where did you increase revenue?
Where did you save money?
Where did you shorten a process?
Where did you fix something that was broken?
Where did you inherit chaos and create order?
Where did you improve a team?
Where did you rescue a client relationship?
Where did you take something from A to B?

That's your ammunition.

Before an important interview, I want you to sit down and build what I call a proof bank.

Eight, ten, twelve examples from your career where something was measurably or observably better because you were there.

**That's where confidence starts.**

Then you've got to research the company.

And Tony, going to the company's website and reading the About Us page is not research.

**That's brochure consumption.**

You want to understand what's actually happening inside the business.

Are they growing?
Are they restructuring?
Did they just lose a major customer?
Are they moving into a new market?
Did somebody leave?
Is the department underperforming?
Is this a brand-new position?

What is happening in that company that caused somebody to say, "We need to hire somebody."

Because jobs don't exist in isolation.

**There's usually a business problem sitting underneath the job description.**

Your job is to figure out what that problem probably is.

Then walk into the interview thinking like somebody who already has the job.

That's one of the biggest differences between an applicant and what we teach people at JobHackers.Global to become: an operator.

> Applicants answer questions.
> **Operators understand problems.**
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> Applicants talk about responsibilities.
> **Operators talk about outcomes.**
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> Applicants say, "I was involved in..."
> **Operators say:**
> **"I built."**
> **"I fixed."**
> **"I reduced."**
> **"I increased."**
> **"I reorganized."**
> **"I introduced."**
> **"I led."**

Listen to the difference.

"I was involved in improving the sales process."

Versus:

**"I rebuilt the sales process, introduced weekly pipeline reviews, and shortened the average sales cycle."**

One sounds like somebody who stood near the work.

**The other sounds like somebody who did the work.**

That's confidence.

And there's another mistake I see constantly.

**Candidates talk too much.**

They start answering a question and five minutes later they're still building the clock when all the interviewer wanted to know was what time it was.

**Start with the business answer.**

Give them enough to understand what you did and why it mattered.

If they want to go deeper, they'll ask.

You don't have to empty the entire contents of your career onto the conference-room table every time somebody asks a question.

And here's something else people forget.

**You're interviewing them too.**

The questions you ask can substantially change how they see you.

Don't waste that opportunity with questions you could answer on Google.

Ask things like:

> What business problem is this hire really expected to solve?
> If we were sitting here twelve months from now and you told me this hire had been a home run, what would have happened?
> What has made this role difficult in the past?
> Where is the greatest pressure on the business right now?
> If I joined, where would you want me focused first?

Now something interesting happens.

**The interviewer has to start imagining you in the job.**

And that's precisely where you want them.

Finally, close the interview.

Don't simply stand up, shake hands and wander into the parking lot wondering what happened.

**If you want the job, say so.**

You don't need to grovel.

You don't need to give them a closing argument worthy of a courtroom drama.

Just be clear.

Say something like:

> *"Based on what I've heard today, I'm even more interested than I was coming in. The problems you're trying to solve line up very well with the work I've done before, and I'd definitely like to continue the conversation."*

That's enough.

You're telling them you're interested without sounding desperate.

And that's really the whole lesson.

Interview confidence doesn't come from pretending you're fearless.

It comes from preparation.

It comes from understanding the company.

It comes from knowing your proof.

It comes from having examples ready.

It comes from asking intelligent questions.

And it comes from walking into the meeting understanding that you are not there asking somebody to give you a job.

**You're two businesspeople trying to determine whether there's a problem you can solve together.**

And Tony, if somebody listening wants one exercise they can do before their next interview, here's the one I'd give them.

Take out a sheet of paper.

**Write down the five biggest reasons an employer might hesitate to hire you.**

Maybe you've been unemployed for six months.
Maybe you're changing industries.
Maybe they think you're too senior.
Maybe you've never managed a team that large.
Maybe your technical background is different.

Whatever it is, write it down.

Then underneath each concern, write one piece of evidence from your career that reduces that fear.

Now you're preparing for the interview the way the employer is actually thinking about it.

Because remember:

The best interview isn't the one where the employer walks away saying, "What an impressive person."

It's the one where they walk away saying:

**"I can see this person doing the job."**

That's confidence.

Job seekers hope they survive the interview.
Job hunters prepare for it.
**Job hackers walk in having already reduced the employer's fear.**