The A, B, Cs of Successful Interviews

A. Getting Your Stuff Together

I. Do your homework
   a. Learn some significant things about the person interviewing you.
   b. Ditto for the position for which you are applying.
   c. Come in with three important points to bring up.
   d. Bring in appropriate questions.

II. Dress appropriately
   a. Do not distract the interviewer by:
      i. Overdressing.
      ii. Underdressing (sloppy or bad taste).
      iii. Showing too much skin.
      iv. Wearing perfumes, after shaves, or colognes.
      v. Bad grooming (nails, hair)
      vi. Displaying tattoos or body piercings other than earlobes (preferably one per side)

B. Show Time

III. Greeting
   a. Walk in with a confident air.
   b. Make eye contact (and lock in).
   c. Smile.
   d. Extend your hand.
   e. Shake, web space to web space.
      i. Do not use both hands, except to slide interviewer’s hand into your web space (do this quickly and gracefully—a power move).
      ii. Do not pump.
   f. Offer to give your calling card, if appropriate.

IV. The interview
   a. Sit down only when invited to.
      i. Look comfortable but attentive.
      ii. Don’t get slouchy.
      iii. Arrange clothes as necessary so as to avoid distracting.
   b. Do not fidget.
   c. Lean forward for emphasis.
   d. Ask if it’s OK before starting to take notes.
   e. Think before you speak.
   f. Slow down your pattern of speech.
   g. Avoid annoying interjections: “like”, “you know”, “totally”.
C. That’s Not All, Folks

V. Saying goodbye
   a. The interviewer will tell you when it’s over.
   b. Stand up and walk towards the interviewer.
   c. Handshake with eye contact, smile, and a warm “thank you”—all at the same time.
   d. Leave them with something special—“Thank you for explaining your (fill in the blank); that really speaks to my area of interest, etc…”

VI. Jot down some pretty complete notes (if you haven’t already)
   a. Do this while everything is still fresh in your mind.
   b. If you don’t do this, pretty soon most interviews will seem more or less the same.

VII. Thank-you notes
   a. Email a Thank-you immediately after the interview.
   b. Send out a *hand-written* Thank-you note within 24 hours.
   c. Use personalized stationery if possible.
   d. Write legibly.
   e. Tell them what was especially significant in what they said to you.
   f. Say how you will put this information to good use.
   g. Indicate that you want the job, if you do.
   h. Additional Tips for Thank-you Notes:
      1) Thank you for meeting (or talking) with me.
      2) I really want this job.
      3) Quick plug about why you are perfect for it.
      4) Leave out salary and benefits questions.
      5) Tell what you learned from interview.
      6) Thank people who might have referred you to the interview.