

# GET THE JOB

## What to Do After a Bad Interview

### How to Bounce Back and Stay in the Game for Your Career

Everyone has an off day — and sometimes, that day lands on an interview. Whether you stumbled on a question, forgot to mention key experience or just didn't click with the interviewer, a rough performance doesn't have to end your chances. With the right approach, you can recover gracefully and learn from the experience.

#### **DON'T PANIC, REFLECT**

It's natural to replay the conversation in your head, but don't let it spiral. Instead, take a few minutes to calmly reflect. What went wrong? Was it nerves, a confusing question or a lack of preparation? Pinpointing the issue helps you grow and avoid the same mistake next time.

Keep in mind that your impression may not have been as bad as you think. Interviewers understand that candidates can be nervous. One awkward moment rarely defines the whole experience.

#### **FOLLOW UP THOUGHTFULLY**

A well-written thank-you email can help smooth over minor missteps. If you fumbled an answer, use the message to briefly clarify your



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point or share an example you forgot to mention. Keep your tone professional, not apologetic, and focus on your enthusiasm for the role.

Something like, "I've been thinking more about your question on cross-functional projects and wanted to high-

light a recent example..." allows you to correct course without calling attention to the stumble.

Even if you're no longer in the running, a strong follow-up leaves a better final impression — and might open doors later.

#### **USE IT AS A LEARNING OPPORTUNITY**

Every interview is practice for the next. Take notes on what worked and what didn't. If you're consistently struggling in a certain area, consider doing a mock interview with a friend or mentor.

A bad interview can feel discouraging, but it's not the end of your search. Keep your momentum, stay professional and positive and apply what you've learned. The next opportunity might be a better fit — and a better performance.