



# The real secret to interview success

**M**ost of us who have been part of the hiring process have at one time or another been surprised and disappointed to select someone who delivered a great interview, but couldn't deliver great job performance. How could a person who so confidently delivered such clear and informative responses to our questions fail to be a superlative employee?

Years ago a great U.S.C. professor, Dr. Leonard Murdy, revealed the one great interview advantage. It's preparation that includes researching the job, polishing up on key principles, practicing good grooming, arriving on time, and practice. Murdy said, "The people who give the best interviews are the ones who interview most."

The secret to a great interview is rehearsing cohesive and meaningful answers to the questions you expect to be asked. Most applicants for superintendent positions have rich backgrounds in education. Unfortunately, many of them have little experience as the interviewee. They probably don't realize that, even with a wealth of knowledge and experience, extemporaneously delivering a succinct and meaningful response in a stressful situation is extremely difficult for almost anyone. So why take the chance? If the job is a great one, take the time to mentally archive great answers!

The legitimacy of this advice will be very clear when you take time to actually articulate specific responses to the bathroom mirror, to a partner, or to a trusted colleague kind enough to critique them. Most likely you will be surprised to discover how tricky it is to pull together what you know and communicate it clearly and succinctly on the spot.

Rehearsing will enhance your confidence and self-assurance and make it possible for you to relax and perhaps even enjoy the interview!

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- Give us a brief review of your background.
- Tell us about yourself and why you are a good candidate for this position.
- Why are you interested in this job?
- What knowledge and experience do you have to prepare you for this position?
- Please describe your leadership style.
- What is your greatest weakness? Strength?
- How would those who have worked with you describe you?
- What part do you prefer to play in union negotiations?
- What strategies do you use to deal with under-performing schools?
- How would you improve district relationships with our community?
- Please share your experiences with budgeting.
- With the fiscal crisis, staff morale has become an issue. What will you do to improve it?
- What strategies do you use to supervise and evaluate your staff?
- Describe how you see the board and the superintendent roles in managing the district.