

## INTERVIEWING HINTS

1. Most employers decide within **2 minutes** whether they will hire you or not. You must make an *immediate* good impression by the way you dress, groom, walk, posture, smell, speak, shake hands, and make eye contact. Your expression must be pleasant, and you must seem self-confident.
2. Before you even open your mouth to answer any interview question, think to yourself, “Why is this employer asking me this particular question? What does s/he **really** want to find out about me? What does **s/he** want to hear?”
3. **All** your answers must be **positive** and **work related**. Never talk about personal or health problems, especially if they affected your previous work experiences. *Never* say anything negative about yourself or any person for whom you have worked in the past. Take some time to formulate appropriate answers to the interview questions you will receive today. These are the most common questions asked by employers.
4. The felony question usually will not be asked at the beginning of an interview; therefore, you have a good opportunity to create an excellent impression before it comes up if you follow the rules above and are well prepared to answer the questions listed on your next handout. **When the felony question comes up, remember not to change your expression or posture. Remain composed even if the word “felony” triggers negative emotions in your head. Interviewers will be looking for a reaction; don’t give it to them. Accept responsibility for the situation and answer very matter-of-factly that you have been convicted and tell them the technical or legal title of the offense. Do not stop talking until you have turned the answer in a positive direction by telling all the positive things you have accomplished since your conviction. Be sure to include any school or training that you were enrolled in and any work that you did while incarcerated. This will end the question on a positive note, reflecting to the employer that you have indeed changed. It takes great courage to do this, but it will create an excellent impression of you. Employers are not used to this approach, they are used to denial or whiney answers from ex-offenders. You will be amazed at the results.**  
Take a few minutes now to formulate your felony answer using the guide on the back of this page.