

## How to Join the 1% - 5 Tips

The **Confidence** and **Persistence** of 1% Elite Professionals is the Guide to Getting a Good Job

The following is paraphrased from The Economist article “How to join the 1%” based on the book *Pedigree: How Elite Students Get Elite Jobs*. Here are 5 tips to join the top 1% professionals:

**Tip #1: Make a connection with the interviewer.** The most important tip is to look at who is doing the recruiting. Most of the time, technical personnel or managers rather than human-resources decide who to hire. So try to find out who the supervisor or interviewer is. Hang on their every word. Be lively. Provide relief from the tedium of their routine. Turn the interviewer into your champion. Emphasize any similarities between the two of you. If the interviewer sees a little bit of themselves in you, they will make sure you make the shortlist. Exploit any outside-of-work connections. Send a Thank you note and be smart yet persistent with follow ups.

**Tip #2: Make sure they know the key facts.** The interviewer seldom spends more than a minute reviewing the application form. If you have the exact qualifications and experience the job posting outlines, highlight it (briefly) in your cover letter or email. The typical interview routine is starting with chit chat, asking you about yourself and then setting a work-related problem. If you have something important to convey, make sure you communicate it.

**Tip #3: Be easy going.** The most important quality recruiters look for is “fit”. Look and dress the part, and be technically proficient, but avoid coming across as eccentric, arrogant, or too nerdy. They would sooner choose an easy going person. While it is ok to appear nerdy for IT or tech positions, try to also show you are well-rounded e.g. by mentioning team sports if the opportunity arises. They look for someone who could be their friend as well as colleague.

**Tip #4: Swot up on the company.** Speak to any friend-of-a-friend on the inside. Try to get an idea of the internal culture (shared values, goals, attitudes and practices) and reflect that in your persona.

**Tip #5: Upsell overcoming challenges in your life:** Coming from an underprivileged background can actually be a plus, if sold well. Recruiters love to hear stories about gritty candidates triumphing against the odds. Don't overdo it though - revealing that you have a sick mother or demanding child may not work in your favor.

Does style then speak more than substance? The most prized possession is not brainpower, but **self-confidence**. The “**cognitive elite**” is really just a “**confidence elite**”.

Management consultants, investment banks, technology and law firms make up the top tier of elite careers and recruit upto 1/3 of graduates from Ivy League universities, offering starting salaries in excess of \$100K. However, they also reject the vast majority of students they interview, so even the elite need to know how to “game the system”. Follow these tips and you could be on your way to join the 1% elite.