

## **IMMIGRATION EDUCATION FOR EVERYONE**

**What: IMMIGRATION TIPS AND ADVICE**

**WHAT: INTERVIEWING TIPS**

**By Leslie I. Snyder – How to Prepare for an Interview in Florida**

After twenty years practicing immigration law in Miami, I thought it might be time to take the advice of my friends and clients and to begin to impart information which I hope will become useful to my readers. I know that the immigration and tax laws and regulations are among the most complex and the immigration laws are the subject of the most intensely emotional debates these days amongst individuals as well as members of congress and politicians. This merry-go-round of ideas and proposed legislation does not appear to be stopping right now, as one side wishes to legalize the individuals who are underground in the U.S., and the other side fears the implementation of another amnesty. So, what should one do in the meantime? For example, many individuals approach their interview or court date with some fear and distrust. What is the answer to obtaining a good result in this climate? The best approach involves excellent preparation of the case, using tabs and indexes of documents, with extra copies of all documents and applications ready in case they are required, and careful updating of all documents, especially financial information. Attention to detail cannot be overemphasized, and early submission of all documents requested to the lawyer should allow your busy representative adequate time to prepare the case in its most attractive manner. I prefer to have a face to face meeting a few days prior to the meeting as well, to review the documents and information again, so that the information is fresh. And finally, remember that the immigration examiner, airport official, or immigration judge may have a direct effect on your future if you are applying for an immigration benefit, and that it is in your best interest to make a positive impression on that government official.

A common misunderstanding is that an interview which is set for a particular time will be punctual. Generally, if an appointment or court appearance is scheduled for say, 2:00, depending on the volume of applicants scheduled for that day, you even could have to wait for one or two hours until your case is called. At the interview, you should be certain to bring an interpreter in addition to your attorney if you do not speak English, however, in court; interpreters are provided by the Court. Assuming that all the background checks are in order, a final decision could be made by the individual interviewing you on a specific date, so it is very important to be polite, patient, and helpful. Finally, if a decision is not rendered on a specific date, you would be well advised to follow up with that interviewer after a few weeks, or request an appointment through the info pass system on the immigration website at [www.uscis.gov](http://www.uscis.gov). You may hire an attorney at any stage of the proceedings should you need assistance, although it is not required to be represented by an attorney in immigration proceedings, since they are considered to be “civil” or non-criminal in nature.

