

Interviewing Guidelines

The interview is an opportunity for you and the employer to decide if you meet each other's needs. It is an important step in the hiring process because it is the last chance for the employer to learn why you are the best-qualified candidate for the position. Remember to be positive, enthusiastic, and most importantly: yourself!

Before the Interview

- 1) Analyze Your:
 - a. Strengths/weaknesses
 - b. Academic performance
 - c. Achievements outside the classroom
 - d. Personal attributes
 - e. Work/internship experience
 - f. Career goals

Be prepared to offer an explanation for problem areas in your record. Balance any negative comments with a positive outcome.

- 2) Research the Employer
 - a. Know the major products/services provided by the organization
 - b. Is the company public, private, or a subsidiary of another company?
 - c. What are the latest trends/issues in this field?
 - d. What are the organization's goals?
 - e. How can your skills fit with the stated goals of the organization?
 - f. Know salary ranges for the desired position and other locations.
 - g. What is the company's reputation in the community?
 - h. Learn who the key people are in the organization.

Demonstrating your knowledge about the company will allow more time to discuss the specific details about the position. It also shows your interest in the company and helps you create meaningful questions to ask the employer.

- 3) Prepare Yourself
 - a. Know the name, role and level of responsibility of each individual with whom you are to meet.
 - b. Know how to get to the organization, and be prepared to arrive early and stay late.
 - c. Gather additional materials to take to the interview, such as: copies of your resume, a list of references and samples of your work.
 - d. Dress appropriately to display confidence and success.
 - e. Go with your own agenda in mind: key points you want to communicate about yourself and questions you have formulated, etc.

During the Interview

1) Initial Impression/Building Rapport

- a. Attitude
 - Think positively! If you don't think you are the best candidate, then how can you prove that you are?
- b. Non-verbal Behaviors
 - Facial expressions: smile, add or detract from what you are saying
 - Hands: have a firm handshake, use for animation/communication
 - Eye Contact: be open and direct
 - Posture: well-balanced, relaxed, forward facing, open
 - Voice tone: warm, relaxed, well modulated
 - Timing: use of silence and comfort with pauses
 - Active listening: communicates interest and affects how you respond
- c. Verbal Behaviors
 - How you communicate verbally involves your ability to:
 1. Use active verbs
 2. Give concrete examples
 3. Be concise and complete
 4. Summarize and make transitions
 5. Be positive and confident and "own" what you have done
 - Create a dialogue by:
 1. Asking questions related to the current topic
 2. Requesting more information when you are asked a vague question
 3. Avoiding yes/no answers that close the conversation

2) Answering Questions

Interview questions (include link here to [Common Interview Questions](#)) are designed to assess your ability to handle yourself, communicate effectively and identify your interests. There is seldom a right answer to the questions asked in the interview.

- a. Be open and honest in the interview
- b. Use the STAR technique in preparing your response.
(S: situation, T: task, A: action, R: results)
- c. Talk confidently about your achievements
- d. Show enthusiasm
- e. Relate your work, volunteer, and internship experience to the position
- f. Highlight your strengths and your desire to grow

3) Closing

- a. Interviewer will summarize the selection process, and will let you know when you will be notified. (Ask if this information is not provided.)
- b. Reaffirm your interest in this position
- c. Exit the interview with the same confidence and poise as you began the interview

After the Interview

- Consider the interview a learning experience, and take notes on what you would like to improve.
- Assess your performance by asking yourself:
 - Did I provide sufficient information and examples?
 - Was I concise and focused in my responses?
 - How could I have better illustrated my teamwork and organizational skills?
 - Was I confident in my desire to work for the organization?
- Send a typed, business letter thanking the interviewer and reiterating your interest in the position and your qualifications.
- If you are given an email address, a brief “thank you” is okay, but make sure to still follow up with a letter.

[Interview Questions](#)

[Behavioral Interviewing](#)