

Interview Tips

Before The Interview

- Research the employer: major products/services, mission, size, financial indicators, location, culture, history, industry
- Understand the Job Description: Activities/responsibilities, skills/education/experience required, paths within the career field, market-based salary range, benefits
- Review yourself: strengths, weaknesses, skills, knowledge base, goals (WHY you want to do this kind of work and where you want it to lead you in your career), salary expectations. Think of examples from your history to illustrate your qualifications. Make the connection between what you are all about and what the position and the company are all about.
- Prepare and write down your questions for the interviewer. Remember, your questions to the employer can create just as strong an impression of you as your answers.
- Meet with a counselor for a practice interview if you think it would help.

Interview Day

- Know where you are going - how to get there, how long it will take, and with whom you are meeting (name and title).
- Dress professionally- wear a clean, pressed suit and dress shoes; be conservative in style and accessories- be well groomed and look great!
- Bring a briefcase or portfolio, and extra copies of your resume.
- Shake hands firmly- be careful your hands are not sweating! Test your handshake with someone before your interview.
- Do not take coffee or tea if offered. It can be hot and difficult to drink. Water is fine.
- Arrive about 10 minutes early (in time to get settled, observe the environment and complete any paperwork; not so early that you get nervous waiting).
- Treat everyone you meet with respect.
- Sit up straight, look and be engaged in a 2-way conversation, express your enthusiasm, maintain good (but not constant) eye contact, smile!
- Listen carefully and don't be afraid of silence - take time to think before you answer.
- Speak clearly and not too quickly.
- Don't take notes during interview; don't look at your watch.
- Be ready for a mix of informal and formal/structured conversation
- Be positive as you describe your skills, experiences and accomplishments- speaking negatively about an experience or person can be the "kiss of death" in an interview.
- Use a 2-part answer style- provide the basic answer to the question and then use an example or explanation to support it.
- Ask the interviewer for a business card before you leave.
- Write a thank you note within 24 hours of the interview.
- Never leave the interview without knowing what will happen next in the interview process and how you can follow up.

Typical Questions Asked by an Interviewer

- Tell me about yourself.
- How would you describe your ideal job?
- Why did you choose this career? What goals do you have in your career?
- How do you plan to achieve these goals?
- How do you evaluate success?
- Describe a situation in which you were successful.
- What accomplishments have given you the most satisfaction in your life?
- Would you rather work with individually or with people? Are you a team player?
- What motivates you?
- Why should I hire you?
- Tell me about some of your recent goals and what you did to achieve them.
- What is your long-range objective? What do you see yourself doing five years from now?
- How do you handle conflict? How do you handle pressure?
- Have you ever had a conflict with a boss or professor? How did you resolve it?
- What major problem have you had to deal with recently?
- What is your greatest strength? What is your greatest weakness?
- If I were to ask one of your professors to describe you, what would he or she say?
- Why did you choose to attend your college? Do you have any plans for further education?
- What were your favorite classes and who were your favorite professors? Why?
- Do you have any plans for further education?
- What qualities do you feel a successful manager should have?
- Why do you want to work in the _____ industry?

Good Questions to Ask at an Interview

- What about my background has interested you?
- What type of person you are seeking?
- What can you tell me more about the department and its challenges and goals?
- Who is the manager I would be working for and what is their management style?
- May I have a copy of the written job description?
- What would a typical working day be in this position?
- How would you describe your company culture?
- How are work assignments made?
- Why is this position open? Is this job opening due to growth or replacement? If replacement: What happened to the previous person in the position?
- With whom will I be working most closely with and what are their functions/roles?
- How will I be evaluated and by whom?
- How is information communicated in this department/organization?
- What is the typical career path for this position?
- What type of internal and external training do you provide?
- How are performance appraisals conducted within your organization?
- What is your organization's commitment to diversity?
- What is your next step for consideration?
- When will you be making a decision on this position?