

The *Interview*

BEFORE

- Research the company
(things to consider: position description, basic functions of the company, products and services offered, mission statement)
- Dress professionally. Wear a suit
- PRACTICE talking through positive examples of your work experience
(this will help reduce nervousness and increase confidence)
- In an unfamiliar place, drive there the night before to plan route and parking
- Prepare 5 questions to ask the employer. You will likely ask 2-3
- Get excited!

DURING

- Arrive 5-10 minutes early
- Greet employer professionally; smile and shake hands
- Use examples in your answers (STAR method)
- Display a positive attitude
- Ask for a business card so you can keep in touch
- Be enthusiastic!

AFTER

- Send a thank you note/email within 24 hours
- Stay in touch with the employer; call/email once per week until hiring decision is made

Common questions YOU should ask an employer

1. What would a typical day-in-the-life be like in this position?
2. What are 3 characteristics in an ideal candidate for this position? (this is a great question because you can respond by addressing how you fulfill those characteristics!)
3. How would you describe the culture of the office?
4. What is your favorite aspect of working for this company?
5. What training do you typically provide for new employees?

Interview Questions

Typically, a wide variety of questions can be used to gain information about a candidate's job skills. Use these questions to practice so you will be able to market specific job skills effectively in the interview. You probably won't be able to anticipate every question they will ask, but practicing will help you recall skills and experiences you can use when forming your responses.

Answer Questions Using S.T.A.R.

To ensure a complete and effective response, include the following information:

Situation – What were the circumstances?

Task – What was the task/project/assignment?

Action – What did you do?

Result – What was the outcome?

1. Describe a time on any job which you've held in which you were faced with problems or stresses which tested your coping skills. What did you do?
2. Give an example of a time in which you had to keep from speaking or not finish a task because you did not have enough information to come to a good decision.
3. Give an example of a time in which you had to be relatively quick in coming to a decision.
4. Tell me about a time in which you had to use your spoken communication skills in order to get a point across that was important to you.
5. Can you tell me about a job experience in which you had to speak up in order to be sure that other people knew what you thought or felt?
6. Give me an example of a time in which you felt you were able to build motivation in your co-workers or subordinates at work.
7. Give me an example of a specific occasion in which you conformed to a policy with which you did not agree.
8. Describe a situation in which you felt it necessary to be very attentive and vigilant to your environment.
9. Give an example of a time in which you had to use your fact finding skills to gain information for solving a problem - then tell me how you analyzed the information to come to a decision.
10. Give me an example of an important goal which you had set in the past and tell me about your success in reaching it.
11. Describe the most significant written document/report/presentation which you have had to complete.
12. Give me an example of a time when you had to go above and beyond the call of duty in order to get a job done.
13. Give me an example of a time when you were able to successfully communicate with another person, even when that individual may not have personally liked you.
14. Describe a situation in which you were able to effectively "read" another person and guide your actions by your understanding of their individual needs or values.
15. What did you do in your last job in order to be effective with your organization and planning? Be specific.
16. Describe the most creative work related project which you have carried out.
17. Describe a time in which you felt it was necessary to modify or change your actions in order to respond to the needs of another person.
18. Give me an example of a time when you had to carefully analyze another person or a situation in order to be effective in guiding your action or decision.
19. What did you do in your last job to contribute toward a teamwork environment? Be specific.

For a list of more questions or to schedule an appointment for a practice interview, contact the Career Development Center at 218.477.2131.

Interview Attire

WHAT TO WEAR



WHAT NOT TO WEAR



Thanks to LSU Baton Rouge, LA for this Graphic.

Interview *Tips*

Adapted from "Secrets to Interview Success" by Tanya Misner Letourneau in *Job Choices 2011: For Business & Liberal Arts Students*

Do Your Homework: Learn as much about the employer and industry as you can (their competition, products and services, number of employees, possible growth for the industry, and more). Review common interview questions and rehearse your response.

Make a Good First Impression: Be on time and dress appropriately. Wear a dark or gray suit and keep jewelry and cologne to a minimum. Shake the interviewer's hand and make eye contact. Balance your speaking and listening, and speak at an appropriate speed. Be specific and support your answers with examples or descriptions.

Show an Interest: Be enthusiastic. Ask appropriate questions (How would you describe the atmosphere of your department? What challenges will the person in this position be likely to encounter?) After the interview, write a note to thank the interviewer for their time.

How good are your *interview* skills?

EXCELLENT

★ First Impressions

Your appearance is professional; you're wearing a business suit. You greet and shake hands with your interviewer correctly. Your conversation is enthusiastic and engaging.

★ Interview Content

You are knowledgeable about the organization and position. You display poise and confidence. You relate your skills to the job very well

★ Interview Skills/Techniques

You have excellent eye contact with your interviewer (without staring). Your language and grammar are appropriate (No use of "um"!) You speak at the correct speed.

★ Closing

You successfully convey your interest in the position. You ask appropriate questions. You thank the interviewer.

★You get a job offer!

AVERAGE

• First Impressions

You look nice, but do not wear a suit. Your greeting is appropriate, but you forget to shake hands with your interviewer. Your conversation is enthusiastic and engaging.

• Interview Content

You are knowledgeable about the position, but not about the organization. You display adequate confidence in your answers. You state your skills, but do not adequately relate them to the job.

• Interview Skills/Techniques

You have adequate eye contact with your interviewer. Your language and grammar are adequate; you use "um" and other inappropriate terms a few times, but not enough to disrupt the interview. You speak a little too quickly or too slowly.

• Closing

You convey some interest in the position. You are not prepared to ask questions. You thank the interviewer.

You could get called back, but it is not certain.

NEEDS

IMPROVEMENT

⊙ First Impressions

Your attire is unprofessional: You wear jeans or shorts to the interview. You do not greet or shake hands with your interviewer. Your conversation is not energetic.

⊙ Interview Content

You are not knowledgeable about the position or the organization. You are not confident in answering questions about yourself. You do not state the skills you have to do the job.

⊙ Interview Skills/Techniques

You look at the floor or ceiling when speaking. Your language and grammar are inappropriate. You speak too quickly or too slowly.

⊙ Closing

You do not show any interest in the position. You do not ask any questions. You do not thank the interviewer.

⊙ You did not get this job.