
General Tips on Preparing for an Interview

1. Research the company – impress the interviewer by taking the time to learn about their organization.

Utilize the following resources to research the organization:

- Newspaper and magazine articles
- Recruitment/Employment literature (available in school library or Career Service office)
- Annual Reports
- Internet (visit the companies web site, if they have one)
- Call the company & ask them to send you some company literature prior to your interview
- Talk to others who work for the company
- Company Facebook/Linkedin page

Below are recommendations on the type of information you can research about the organization:

- When was the company founded?
- Where are their corporate offices located?
- What does the organization do?
- What are its products and/or services?
- Has the organization been growing?
- What are some of the organization's latest achievements or awards?

2. Be aware of your skills, qualifications and accomplishments and how they relate to the position for which you are applying.
 - Take time to identify your individual strengths.
 - Write down your strengths and think of examples how these strengths can benefit the company you are applying to.
 - Think of accomplishments in your career to date (or an accomplishment from school) that you are particularly proud of.

3. Be prepared for questions an interviewer might ask. Below are examples of different types of interview questions.

Behavioral-Based Questions

- In your current position, what would be one accomplishment that you are most proud of and why? What specifically did you do to accomplish this? What obstacles did you run into?
- In your current/last position, give me a specific example of how you dealt with a recent customer service issue/complaint? How did the customer react? Was the customer satisfied?
- Tell me about a more challenging team project that you were involved with. What was the project? What was your role? How did the team function? If you had the chance to do it all over again, what would you do differently?

Fact Find Questions

- Tell me more about X?
- What specifically did you do?

4. Prepare a brief list of questions to ask the interviewer about the organization and position which conveys your interest. (Have them written on a piece of paper in a notebook.)

Examples of questions to ask during the interview:

- What are some goals for someone in this position?
- What would you expect one to have accomplished in the first 3 months on the job?
- What are some challenges one might face in this position?
- What computer systems/programs would this person work with daily?

- What is the company culture like?
 - What do you enjoy about working here?
5. Practice, Practice, Practice – role-play interview questions with a friend or conduct a mock interview with a college career service professional, this will help you to become more comfortable in the interview process.
6. Pay attention to appearance when you go for the interview:
- Clothing – dress conservative, a conservative suit is always best. It is better to be over dressed than underdressed.
 - Avoid displaying visible body piercing.
 - Keep your nails neatly trimmed and clean. Avoid flashy nail polish or nail jewelry.
 - If you wear a coat to the interview, hang it up do not wear it during the interview.
 - No chewing gum during the interview.

What hiring Managers are looking for in a candidate

- Verbal and written communication skills
- A willingness to learn new skills (be flexible)
- Evidence of achievement & participation
 - Community Involvement – sports, clubs & organizations
 - Work experience
- Personal qualities
 - Ability to get along with others
 - Positive approach
 - Confidence, neat, professional appearance, motivation
 - Clear & realistic goals, enthusiasm
- Computer Literacy
 - MS Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Access, Email, Internet

Factors which may lead to rejection

- Overbearing, overaggressive
- Too soft spoken, timid, poor grammar/slang, swearing
- Lack of interest/enthusiasm
- Overemphasis on salary, job hopping
- Unwilling to start in entry level position
- Speaks negatively about past employers & supervisors
- Lack of eye contact, late for interview (Things happen. If you are late, explain tardiness upon arrival.)
- Poor personal appearance

General Tips on the Interview Process

1. Arrive for the interview prepared:

- Arrive early for the interview (5-10 minutes)
- Bring extra copies of your resume
- Be prepared to complete an Application for Employment
- Bring a reference sheet/list (make sure it includes names and phone numbers)
- Bring a portfolio (if applicable)

2. Greeting the interviewer:

- Greet the interviewer with a handshake
- Pay attention to your posture
- Show appreciation for them taking the time to meet with you.

3. During the interview:

- Maintain eye contact
- Smile
- Show confidence
- Show enthusiasm and interest for the position
- Take time to think through your response to interview questions asked
- When answering behavioral based interview questions use specific examples, avoid explaining “what you think you would do”
- Avoid using slang or expletives during an interview

4. Closing the interview

- Ask professional questions; what are some challenges for one in this position, expectations for new hires after X months on the job, goals for someone in this position. Also question their management style, and why they like work there, etc..
- Express your interest and excitement about the position
- Ask what the next step will be
- Thank the interviewer for their time

5. After the interview:

- Send a thank you letter to the interviewer expressing your interest in the position and the organization. Take this opportunity to again relate why you feel you are a good fit for this particular position and why they should hire you. Lastly, thank the interviewer again for taking the time to meet with you.

Employment Processes Summarized (May vary depending on the organization)

- Submit Resume/Application completion
- Multiple Interviews
- Behavior-Based Interview Questions
- Reference checks
- Employment offer
- Pre-Employment Tests
- Background checks, Drug Testing