

INTERVIEWING

Preparation is the key to reducing stress during an interview. Do research to find out what the company does and what qualities it looks for in its employees. Rehearse tough questions and know in advance what questions to ask. Most importantly, come up with a list of information you want the interviewer to know about you, and then relate them as you see fit during the interview. Keep in mind that the interviewer's main objective is to determine how well your skills match the employer's needs. With proper preparation, you will be able to instill confidence that you are the ideal candidate for the job.

DO'S

- Be confident
- Arrive on time
- Give a firm handshake
- Dress appropriately
- Maintain eye contact
- Remain interested
- Ask appropriate questions

DON'TS

- Show excessive nervousness
- Display lack of self confidence
- Be overbearing
- Be pessimistic
- Be unprofessional
- Show lack of interest in the company or the position
- Seem insincere
- Show inability to maintain a conversation
- Condemn past employers
- Fail to ask questions
- Show lack of preparation
- Lack eye contact
- Be late for the interview
- Display poor personal appearance
- Overemphasise money
- Give vague responses
- Show lack of maturity

THINGS TO BRING

- C.V. (5-6 copies)
- Cover letter
- Certifications (if applicable)
- Referee names
- Directions
- Map

- Contact personnel, office location and phone number(s)
- Pens (make sure they work!)
- Notepad
- Sample applications filled in with dates
- Portfolio - samples of past work (if applicable)
- Reference letters (offered only if asked)
- Folder or small briefcase
- Facts about prospective employer (clippings, company brochure, annual report)
- List of questions to ask the interviewer
- List of questions to expect

QUESTIONS TO EXPECT

General

- Tell me about yourself.
- How would a family member describe you?
- How would a friend describe you?
- Describe something about you that one cannot know from reading your C.V..
- Describe a past failure.
- Who has the greatest influence on your life?
- What questions that were not asked during this interview that you anticipated?
- Do you have any questions?
- List your single most important achievement in life.
- Rate yourself on a scale from 1 to 10.
- What changes you have made in your life that you are most proud of?

Values

- Name the 5 most important things in your life.
- How important is money to you?
- How do you measure success?

Company

- Do you like working with small or large companies? Why?
- Are you willing to relocate? Where?
- How far are you willing to commute?
- What do you look for in a company?
- What do you know about this company?
- Why would you want to work with this company?
- What kinds of companies are you interviewing with and for what types of positions?

Work Environment

- Describe your ideal work environment.
- Describe an environment that makes you unproductive.
- Do you prefer working on a team or independently?

- Do you like working in a competitive environment?
- Do you think people on a team should help one another?
- Is being recognised for a job well done important to you?
- Are you willing to ask for help when you need it?
- Are you a team leader or a follower?
- Do you motivate others?
- How do you handle monotonous tasks?
- Do you work well under tight deadlines?
- How do you handle them?
- Are you willing to work long hours?
- Do you prefer a stress-free environment?
- What kind of hours are you used to working?

Work Experience

- Why are you looking to leave your current job?
- What did you do at your last job?
- What did you learn at your last job?
- List a past work-related accomplishment you are most proud of.
- How would a past supervisor were to describe you? A past colleague?
- Describe your last work environment.
- What kinds of skills do you have to offer for the position you are applying?
- Why are you qualified for the position you are applying?
- What interests you about this position?
- Why should we hire you?
- How is your experience relevant to this job?
- What skills do you think are important to this job?
- What skills would you like to develop in this job?
- How do you rate yourself compared to others in your field?
- Describe your day-to-day routines at your last job.
- Have you received any merit-based promotions?
- How many days were you out in your last job? Why?
- Did you have to deal with difficult customers? If so, how did you handle them?
- If you were given a chance, what things would you do differently at your last job?
- Give an example of when you thrived under pressure.
- How did you manage stress in your daily work?
- Are you detail oriented? If so, provide some examples.
- Describe your relationship with your previous bosses and colleagues.
- How do you tackle a major project?
- What were some greatest problems you faced in your last job?
- Provide an example of when you did more than what was expected of you.
- Describe a project in which you were unhappy with your own performance.
- Describe a project in which your boss was unhappy with your performance.
- What did you like most about your last job? Least?
- Have you ever been fired? If so, why?

- Why have you changed jobs so frequently?
- Why did you stay so long at your last job?
- What have you done that shows initiative?
- Which out of your past employment gave you the most satisfaction?

Education

- Were your grades a good indicator of the amount of effort you devoted to studying?
- Why didn't you do better in school?
- What was your favorite subject? Why?
- What was your least favorite subject? Why?
- List some extracurricular activities that you participated.
- Describe a school-related accomplishment you are most proud of.
- What did you learn most in school?

Skills

- What are your greatest strengths?
- What are your weaknesses?
- What are your key skills?
- What job-related skills do you possess?
- List some skills unrelated to your job.
- How are your computer skills?
- How good are your verbal skills? Writing skills?
- Do you speak any foreign languages?
- Are you hardworking?
- Describe an event in which you were creative in resolving the situation.
- Are you technical? Logical? Analytical? Provide some examples.
- How do you usually go about solving a problem?
- Do you consider yourself assertive? Why or why not?
- What can you do for us that someone else can't?
- How long would it take for you to make a meaningful contribution?

Interpersonal Skills

- What makes a manager effective? Ineffective?
- What things impress you in a colleague?
- What things repel you in a colleague?
- Do you enjoy helping others?
- How good are your interpersonal skills?
- What do you do when you and your boss disagree on a major issue?
- How do you handle criticisms of your work?
- Have you ever had a conflict with a colleague? If so, explain.
- How well did you get along with your colleagues? Your boss?

Motivation

- Are you ambitious?
- What do you think you will be doing a year from now? Five years? Ten years?
- How do you keep your job-related skills current?
- Do you believe in the end justify the means?
- Do you believe that if you work hard, you can always achieve your goals?
- What motivates you to work?
- When did you first discover your interest in your chosen field?
- Have your career motivations changed over the past few years?
- Why do you want to work in this field?
- Describe your ideal career.
- What kinds of work do you find challenging?
- Are you content with your progress in this field?
- Why are you looking to change careers?
- How does this position fit into your career plan?
- What other positions are you considering?

Salary

- How much are you looking to make?
- What is your current salary? Base pay? Commission?
- Would you consider less?

Hobbies

- What are your hobbies?
- Which activities do you engage in to reduce stress?
- What are some of your favorite books? Magazines? Movies?
- What do you do in your spare time?
- Do you consider your life well balanced?
- What activities outside of work complement your work interests?
- Do you take part in your community activities?
- Describe an activity that taught you discipline.
- Describe an activity that taught you teamwork.

References

- Who are your referees?
- What made you select them?

QUESTIONS TO ASK

About the Company

- Does the company reimburse for continuing education?
- What qualities in an employee does the company look for?
- What kind of people are most successful at your company?
- How does this company determine success?

About the Department

- How many people are there in this department?
- What are some projects that this department is currently working on?
- What are the major responsibilities of the department?
- What are some of your long-term objectives for this department?
- Do you have plans for expansion?
- What is the biggest problem your department faces currently?
- How would you describe the work environment here?

About the Position

- How much travel would normally be expected?
- What type of training programs does a new employee receive?
- How often are performance reviews given and how are they conducted?
- What are career advancement opportunities?
- What are the major responsibilities of the job?
- What would the new employee be expected to have accomplished in the first 6 months on the job? The 1st year?
- Could you describe a typical work day for this position?
- How much interaction is there with supervisors? Colleagues? Customers?
- Is this a new position, or am I replacing someone?
- What do you think is the best thing and worst thing about this position?
- What do you consider ideal experience for this job?
- How do you think I fit the position?
- What are some of your long-term objectives for this position?
- Who will be my direct supervisor?
- How is one evaluated in this position?
- Are there opportunities to work with people from other departments?
- What are the greatest challenges in this position?

About the Interviewer

- How long have you been with the company?

About the Next Step

- When may I expect a decision?
- What is the next step in this process?
- May I have one of your business cards?