

PURPOSE OF AN INTERVIEW

The organization liked your cover letter and resume and now they would like to meet you. The interview helps the organization make a decision as to who they will hire for a specific position.

To do this, there are three basic questions that the interviewer is trying to determine about the candidate.

1. Can you actually do the job? Is your experience, training, education, aptitude and interest sufficient so you would be productive for me?
2. Who are you? What are you like? What characteristics and traits do you possess?
3. Will you fit in with the others in the profession? Will you be part of a problem or part of a solution? Are you a liability? Risk to the profession?

Depending on the organization, they may decide to complete the interview in person, digitally, or by telephone. Each type of interview has its own tips and tricks for success.

TRADITIONAL INTERVIEW (FACE-TO-FACE)

In the traditional face-face interview, there could be one or more interviewers. During this interview, the candidate wants to demonstrate ability to listen to questions and respond to questions with specific examples and information. There is also an opportunity for the candidate to ask questions.

Face-Face Interview Tips

- Have good eye contact with all interviewers.
- Arrive at least 10 minutes early. Give yourself time to “get ready” for the interview.
- Be prepared to offer an handshake.
- Listen to how the interviewer has setup the interview.
- Ask for clarification if you are unsure of a question.
- Be prepared to ask questions at the end of your interview.

DIGITAL INTERVIEWS

Digital interviews can consist of the interviewer using Skype, Google Duo, and etc to conduct the interview by distance. Organizations will choose to complete a digital interview when it is more cost effective and also when they still want the “feel” of an in-person interview.

Student Career Services have also had organizations use digital software that asks the questions and the student uses their webcam to record their answers. The organization will review this interview at their own time.

Digital interview Tips

If using your laptop, try to have your web cam positioned so that it is level with your nose/eyes. This will help with having a better angle for your webcam. You don't want to be looking down into your webcam and you also don't want to be looking up into webcam. Find the natural location that feels like you are looking a person during an in-person interview.

- Have a professional looking background behind you. Good lighting.
- Be prepared for delays with the digital software.
- Practice looking and listening to yourself using digital software.
- Dress for the part. When you dress up your interview, confidence and professionalism also increases.

TELEPHONE INTERVIEW

Some employers like conducting interviews via a telephone. Telephone interviews tend to be more difficult as candidates and interviewers do not have the in-person ques.

Telephone Interview Tips

- Ensure your battery is charged on your cell phone. Landlines tend to have better quality than a cell phone.
- Find a quiet place to conduct your interview.
- Pick something in the room that you can focus on while you are answering questions. Pretend this thing is your interviewer. This will help keep engaged during the call.
- Speak slower and with a smile.
- Be comfortable with silence. Watch your sighs.
- Have verbal cues that signal to the interviewer that you have finished your answer.
- If you are using cheat notes, have them taped to something at eye level. You don't want to bend your neck to look down at your notes. The interviewer will know as your voice will change.

GROUP INTERVIEW

One- two interviewers interviewing multiple candidates at the same time. During this interview, the interviewers will share how the group interview will flow. A group interview is a way for the interviewers to learn how you function within a group. Be prepared to talk and to also listen to the other candidates.

Group Interview Tips

- Don't talk too much or too little. Find a balance.
- If you disagree with another candidate's answer, respectfully disagree.
- Don't interrupt someone as they are talking.

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Behaviour-Based Interview Questions

Candidates will be asked questions to test their initiative, problem-solving and communication. There are no wrong answers but need to provide a specific example in your answers. Example of questions:

- Tell me about a time you had to make a difficult decision
- Tell me about a time you had a difficulty of learning something new

For behavioral based questions, answer using the STAR-L method. Tell the interviewer the situation, tasks and actions that you had to do, results and learning. This type of answer will force the candidate to talk at least two or more minutes. Remember to be specific with answers. Candidates need to provide enough detail that the interviewer can follow the story. Remember to use "I" to refer to yourself.

Case-Based Interview Questions

Questions are designed to test a candidates problem-solving skills. In this case, a scenario will be presented to you and you will be asked how you will deal with the particular situation.

PRE-INTERVIEW PREPARATIONS

- Review the job ad, resume, and research the company.
- When reading the job ad, look at the qualifications section. The qualifications that the employer indicated in the job ad, can be turned into interview questions. For example, if the job ad stated, "looking for a team player who can solve problems"; this could be turned into the following questions: Tell me about a time when you were in a group where you were unable to complete the task that was assigned to the group. OR Give me an example of a time when you had to find a creative solution to a problem.
- Practice a variety of interview questions. Get comfortable with your answers.
- Discover your nervous tendencies (i.e turning red in face, fidgeting, and etc). We all get nervous at various times. Interviews can be stressful. Knowing who you

- are, researching the role and company, and practicing interview questions will help make an interview less stressful. By knowing your nervous tendencies you can have strategies in place that may reduce your nervous tendencies.

DURING THE INTERVIEW

- First impression is very important. So business attire is the most appropriate outfit to wear for an interview.
- Practice wearing your outfit a few times before the interview so that it feels comfortable. Check buttons to ensure they are sewed on properly.
- Arrive ten minutes early so that you can relax and feel comfortable with the surroundings.
- Greet the interviewer with a firm handshake. Make eye contact and smile.
- Think positive and interact with confidence - be careful not to appear arrogant
- Be an active participant but don't take over the interview
- If you do not understand a question, ask the interviewer to be more specific or rephrase (ask for clarification)
- Identify your strong skill areas/personal qualities with specific examples of how you have demonstrated these skills/personal qualities in the past
- Show your enthusiasm and potential for becoming a valued member of the team
- At the end of the interview, ask questions about the training program, professional development seminars, conferences, promotions practices, workplace culture
- Do not ask questions about salary. This will be discussed when a job offer is made
- Thank the interviewers for their consideration and information

AFTER THE INTERVIEW

- Consider each interview as a learning experience upon which you build your skills in preparation for the next one.
- Always send a formal thank-you in a timely manner (within 24 hours).