

Mastering the Interview

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Purpose of the Interview

Your Goals

- To communicate ability and motivation to do the job
- To gain more information about the job and employer to make sure it is a fit
- To determine if it is a place you want to work and a job you want to do
- To sell yourself to the job if it seems right to you.

Employer Goals

- To see how you fit with company
- To evaluate your personality and how you will get along with everyone
- Assess your skills and abilities for the job
- To promote employer and attract the best possible candidates

Preparing for Interviews

- Research the organization and position
- Assess your skills, interests and values so you can develop examples during your interview
- Prepare and rehearse answers to interview questions. Use the task, action, result method
- Be sure to have 4-5 questions ready when you are asked if you have any questions
- Do a mock interview with me to practice, practice, practice.

Interview Types

- Phone Interview—More and more of these so companies can save money.
- Screening Interview-- First round interview
- On-site Interview– Usually second or third interview
- Behavioral Interview– Specific types of questions (Tell me about a time when you had too much on your plate?)
- Case Interview– Specific interview generally used in consulting and financial world
- Stress Interview– Give you difficult scenarios to accomplish
- Group Interview—Bring candidates together to see how they will interact.
- Video Interview- Also becoming popular to save money.

Interview Stages

- Ice breaking conversation (2-5 minutes)—Be ready with solid handshake good eye contact and positive talk about your trip or day so far.
- Interviewer's questions (20-40 minutes)—Use examples of skills
- Your questions: Have at least 4-5 ready
- Closing remarks: Thank the interviewer for their time and show your interest if it still remains.

How to Answer Questions

- Prepare stories that illustrate your strengths and positive personal qualities
- Show your skills and actions with specific examples (i.e., Remember Task, Action, and Result)
- Link your answers to the job at hand. Be creative with your transferable skills
- Watch your tone and posture. 80% of communication is non-verbal
- Be yourself
- Silence is golden and take your time

Success Is In Your Hands

- Be punctual, arrive early. Give yourself time to freshen up in restroom.
- Suit up. Dress professionally.
- Practice good communication skills in all situations from now on out (80% of communication is non-verbal)
- Bring extra copies of your resume/cover letter and anything else they might ask for (i.e., References)
- Never discuss compensation in first interview

Your Questions

- Why is this position available?
- What kind of supervision will I be working under?
- What type of training will I receive for this position?
- What is the most critical agenda item in the first year?
- What is your assessment of the company culture?
- What are the three most important attributes you are looking for?
- How is the office structured?
- What are the next steps in the process?

Reasons for Rejection

- Lack of enthusiasm
- Not informed about the company, career field, or the position
- Poor personal appearance
- Arrogant and over-aggressive attitude
- No questions to ask which conveys little interest
- Too nervous or bad communication skills
- Lack of skills for the position (But this is usually trainable, so you can overcome if confident)

Follow-Up

- Immediately write and send a thank you letter to everyone you spoke with during interview. Be sure to write down everyone's name and ask to clarify spelling if needed.
- A follow-up phone call within 10 days of interview to inquire about status of decision
- If you do not get the offer, you might ask them a few questions about what they were looking for or what was missing.