

## Interview Checklist

Post and read this checklist one week before the interview to remind yourself what you need to do. Reread it the night before the interview. Place a check mark beside each item as you complete it.

### When the Interview Is Scheduled

- Research the company, if you have not already done so.
- Prepare a card with the time and place of the interview and the name of the interviewer. Mark the date and time in your calendar.
- Get directions to the interview location. A practice run may be helpful.

### Day Before the Interview

- ◆ Gather the following supplies in your Employment Portfolio or briefcase:
  - Two pens and two pencils for filling out forms at the interview
  - Money for parking, lunch, etc.
  - Resume
  - Completed employment application from Step 3. Use it as a reference when completing the company's employment application.
  - Samples of your work (keyboarding samples, diagrams, etc.)
  - Military records
  - Social Security number

- Diplomas and special training certificates
- Licenses—driver's license or other special licenses
- Reference letters or list
- Other papers or materials that will help you obtain employment
- ◆ Plan your appearance:
  - Check to see if you need a haircut.
  - Lay out clothes you are to wear. Check that they are clean, mended, pressed, and an appropriate style.
  - Polish shoes

### Day of the Interview

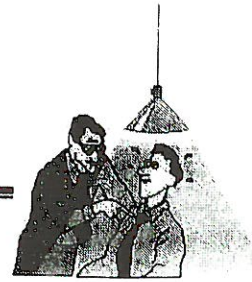
- ◆ Check your appearance:
  - Hair is washed and styled
  - Body is bathed; deodorant is used
  - Make-up, jewelry, and perfume or after-shave lotion is not used excessively
  - Fingernails are trimmed and clean
  - Teeth are clean; breath is fresh

### Going to the Interview

- Leave for the interview early. Take the card with the directions and phone number with you.
- Go to the interview alone.
- Be polite in the outer office.
- Know the name(s) and title(s) of the person(s) who will interview you.
- Allow enough time for the interview.

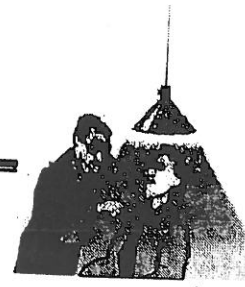
## Job Interview Dos

---



- Get a good night's rest the night before.
- Dress appropriately for the industry; err on the side of being conservative to show you take the interview seriously. Your personal grooming and cleanliness should be impeccable.
- Know the exact time and location of your interview; know how long it takes to get there, park, find a restroom to freshen up, etc.
- Arrive early; 15-20 minutes prior to interview start time will allow you time to fill out an application form if necessary.
- Treat other people you encounter with courtesy and respect. Their opinions of you might be solicited during hiring decisions.
- Offer a firm handshake, make eye contact, and have a friendly expression when you are greeted by your interviewer. *Be courteous and introduce yourself.*
- Listen to be sure you understand your interviewer's name and the correct pronunciation.
- Even when your interviewer gives you a first and last name, address your interviewer by title (Mrs., Mr., Dr., etc.) and last name, until invited to do so otherwise. Use the interviewer's name throughout the interview.
- Maintain good eye contact during the interview.
- Sit still in your seat; avoid fidgeting and slouching.
- Watch your gestures and facial expressions. *use proper grammar. Avoid slang.*
- Respond to questions and back up your statements about yourself with specific examples whenever possible. *Allow the interviewer to lead.*
- Ask for clarification if you don't understand a question.
- Be thorough in your responses, while being concise in your wording.
- Be honest and be yourself. Dishonesty gets discovered. You want a good match between yourself and your employer. If you get hired by acting like someone other than yourself, you and your employer will both be unhappy.
- Treat the interview seriously and as though you are truly interested in the employer and the opportunity presented.
- Exhibit a positive attitude. The interviewer is evaluating you as a potential co-worker. Behave like someone you would want to work with.
- Have intelligent questions prepared to ask the interviewer. Having done your research about the employer in advance, ask questions which you did not find answered in your research.
- Evaluate the interviewer and the organization he or she represents. An interview is a two-way street. Conduct yourself cordially and respectfully, while thinking critically about the way you are treated and the values and priorities of the organization.
- Make sure you understand the employer's next step in the hiring process; know when and from whom you should expect to hear next. Know what action you are expected to take next, if any. *Take any examination requested.*
- When the interviewer concludes the interview, offer a firm handshake and make eye contact. Depart gracefully. *Be sure to leave a copy of your resume.*
- After the interview, make notes right away so you don't forget critical details.
- Write a thank you letter to your interviewer promptly.

## Job Interview Don'ts



- ❑ Don't be late for the interview!
- ❑ Don't sit until invited to do so.
- ❑ Don't lean on the interviewer's desk.
- ❑ Don't wear your coat during the interview or put your purse/briefcase on your lap. (or the interviewer's desk)
- ❑ Don't make excuses. Take responsibility for your decisions and your actions.
- ❑ Don't make negative comments about previous employers.
- ❑ Don't falsify any materials or answers to interview questions.
- ❑ Don't treat the interview casually, as if you are just shopping around or doing the interview for practice. This is an insult to the interviewer and to the organization.
- ❑ Don't give the impression that you are only interested in an organization because of its geographic location.
- ❑ Don't give the impression you are only interested in salary; don't ask about salary and benefits until the subject is brought up by your interviewer.
- ❑ Don't act as though you would take any job or are desperate for employment.
- ❑ Don't make the interviewer guess what type of work you are interested in; it is not the interviewer's job to act as a career adviser to you.
- ❑ Don't be unprepared for typical interview questions. You may not be asked all of them in every interview, but being unprepared looks foolish.
- ❑ A job search can be hard work and involve frustrations; don't exhibit frustrations or a negative attitude in an interview.
- ❑ Don't go to extremes with your posture; don't slouch, and don't sit rigidly on the edge of your chair.
- ❑ Don't chew gum or smell like smoke.
- ❑ Don't take cell phone calls during an interview. If you carry a cell phone, turn it off during the interview to be sure it doesn't ring.
- ❑ Don't demonstrate your nervousness by tapping your fingers, swinging your legs, or playing with your hands. Don't play with your tie, rings, hair, etc.
- ❑ Don't appear to eavesdrop on any phone calls the interviewer receives in your presence.
- ❑ Don't tell jokes.
- ❑ Don't dominate the conversation.
- ❑ Don't interrupt the interviewer. Don't answer a question before it is completely asked.
- ❑ Don't mumble
- ❑ Don't try to impress the interviewer by bragging.
- ❑ Don't lie!
- ❑ Don't show anger or irritation during the interview. Don't argue.
- ❑ Don't glance at your watch.
- ❑ Don't rely on your application or resume to do the selling for you. No matter how qualified you are for the position, you will need to sell yourself to the interviewer.
- ❑ Don't bring up or discuss personal issues or family problems.

## **Common Interview Mistakes It Could Cost You A Job!**

---

- Poor personal appearance
- Lack of interest and enthusiasm; indifferent
- Over emphasis on money
- Bad-mouthing previous employers
- Poor eye contact
- Limp, fishy handshake
- Unwillingness to relocate
- Not punctual – late to interview
- Failure to express appreciation for interviewer's time
- Asks no questions about the job
- Indefinite response to questions
- Overbearing, over aggressive, conceited, know-it-all attitude; oversell
- Undersell; didn't emphasize related skills
- Inability to express self clearly; poor voice diction, grammar
- Lack of planning for career; no purpose and goals
- Lack of confidence and poise; nervous
- Failure to participate in activities
- Unwilling to start at the bottom; expects too much too soon
- Makes excuses, evasive, hedges on unfavorable factors in record
- Lack of tact; lack of honesty
- Lack of courtesy and respect; ill-mannered
- Lack of maturity
- Lack of vitality
- Indecisive
- Sloppy application blank
- Merely shopping around
- Wants job for short time
- No interest in company or industry; lack of preparation
- Low moral standards
- Cynical
- Lazy
- Intolerant, strong prejudices
- Narrow interests
- Inability to take criticism
- Lack of enthusiasm
- High pressure type
- Negative attitude





# Questions Asked By Employers

## Personal

1. Tell me about yourself.
2. What are your hobbies? What do you do to relax after work?
3. Why do you want to work as a...? Why did you choose this career?
4. What qualifications do you have? What can you offer us?
5. In what ways do you think you can make a contribution to our company?
6. What do you know about our company?
7. How did you learn about us?
8. What do you know about our organization (products or services)?
9. Tell me about some of your recent goals and what you did to achieve them?
10. Do you handle conflict well?
11. Do you handle pressure well?
12. Have you ever had difficulty getting along with a former professor/supervisor/co-worker and how did you handle it?
13. Describe a time when you figured out how to do something on your own or taught yourself a skill.
14. What has been your greatest accomplishment? What did you learn from it?
15. Of which three accomplishments are you most proud?
16. What do you consider to be your greatest strengths?
17. Can you name some weaknesses?
18. Define success. Failure.
19. Have you ever had a failure? What did you learn from it?
20. What situations put you under the most stress?
21. Have you ever spoken/are you comfortable speaking in front of a group of people? How large?
22. What motivates you to do a good job?
23. Who are your role models? Why?
24. Where do you want to be in five years? Ten years?
25. Do you plan to return to school for further education?
26. Why should we hire you rather than another candidate?
27. Give me two reasons why I should NOT hire you.

## Education

28. Tell me about your education or training?
29. Why did you choose your major?
30. Why did you choose to attend your college or university?
31. Did you enjoy school? Why?
32. Do you think you received a good education? In what ways?
33. In which campus activities did you participate?
34. What have you learned from participating in extracurricular activities?
35. Which classes in your major did you like best? Least? Why?
36. Which course(s) did you find most difficult? Why?
37. If you were to start over, what would you change about your education?
38. Do your grades accurately reflect your ability? Why or why not?
39. How many days of work ( or school ) did you miss? How many days were you late?
40. What would your teachers/counselors tell me about you?
41. If I were to ask one of your fellow classmates/teachers to describe you what would he or she say?

## **Experience**

42. What job-related skills have you developed?
43. How does your college education, or work experience, relate to this job?
44. Have you ever done any volunteer work? What kind?
45. Tell me about your current (or last) job.
46. Why are you leaving that job? Why are you changing careers?
47. What did you like most about your last job? Least? What did you learn?
48. How do you think a former supervisor would describe your work?
49. When your work is criticized, how do you react?
50. How do you handle juggling multiple tasks?
51. Have you ever disagreed with a coworker? How did you handle the problem?
52. How would you handle an abusive/angry customer?
53. What do you think good customer service involves?
54. What would you do if you were going to be late for work?
55. What would you do if you were sick and you were scheduled to work?
56. How many employers have you worked for during the last five years?
57. You seem to switch jobs a lot. Why?
58. You appear to have a gap in your employment history. Tell me about that.
59. Have you ever quit a job? Why?
60. Have you been fired from a job?
61. What was the basis of your promotion from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_?

## **Behavioral Interview**

62. Describe how in a previous job or school situation you worked as a member of a team and how you were specifically able to contribute to a project's success.
63. Give an example of a situation in which you provided a solution to an employer.
64. Describe a time when you came up with a way to save your department/company money.
65. Describe a time when you figured out a more efficient way to do a work procedure.
66. Describe a time when you were able to mediate a dispute (among co-workers, etc.)
67. Describe a time when you found a way to work with some that others avoided because he or she was so difficult.
68. Describe a time when you were able to convince other members of your team to try an unlikely course of action that worked.
69. Describe a time when you undertook an assignment that no one else volunteered for.
70. Tell me about a situation on a past job where you were able to identify a problem. Then explain what you did about it.
71. Describe a time when you took initiative, that is, did something that you were not expected or asked to do, and how your boss reacted.
72. Give me an example of how you were able to meet a deadline.
73. We all occasionally miss deadlines. I'm interested in hearing about a time when this happened to you. What happened and how did you handle the fallout?
74. Things can get stressful around here as they do in most businesses. Can you give me an example of how you were able to work successfully when things got very stressful on your current or past job?
75. Describe a situation when you were faced with conflicting priorities. How did you determine what was important and the order in which you would get each done?
76. What would you do if a supervisor told you to do something now and another supervisor told you to do it later?

77. We are all sometimes faced with tough choices when a boss expects us to do something and it conflicts with plans or demands in our personal lives. Can you describe a time on a previous job when you had to make a choice and what you learned from it?
78. We all have to work with people (bosses, coworkers, or customers) who are difficult. Would you describe for me one of the most difficult people or situations you've had to deal with, and specifically, how you handled that person or situation?
79. Tell me about a time when you were criticized by your boss. Did you think it was fair? How did you handle it?

### **Career Goals**

80. Describe your ideal job.
81. What do you think it takes to be successful in this career?
82. In what kind of work environment are you most comfortable?
83. Would you be successful working with a team?
84. Are you at your best when working alone or in a group?
85. Are you able to work on several assignments at once?
86. Would you rather be in charge of a project or work as part of a team? Why?
87. Do you prefer larger or small organizations? Why?
88. What kind of boss do you prefer?
89. Describe the relationship that should exist between the supervisor and those reporting to him or her.
90. How do you feel about travel?
91. Do you have any location preferences? How do you feel about the possibility of relocation?
92. Are you willing to work flextime?
93. Are you available to work overtime, weekends, holidays, and evenings?
94. How long do you plan to work here.
95. What salary are you expecting?
96. What salary do you expect to be earning five years from now?
97. What goals do your career? How do you plan to achieve these goals?
98. What two or three things are most important to you in your job?
99. What are the most important rewards you expect in your career?
100. What criteria are you using to evaluate the company for which you hope to work.
101. Do you have any questions about the company or the job?

# Questions To Ask Employers

1. Why is this position open?
2. Is this a new position or am I replacing someone?
3. What would you like done differently by the next person who fills this job?
4. What would the first assignment of the person taking this job be? What kinds of assignments might I expect the first six months on the job?
5. What do think are the three major strengths a person needs to succeed in this job?
6. What are the three biggest challenges the person who is hired is going to face?
7. How would you measure whether or not the person you hired was a good match?
8. How are employees evaluated in your company? How is success measured and determined?
9. What are the most important traits you look for in employees?
10. What characteristics do the achievers in this company seem to share?
11. Would I be working alone or as part of a team?
12. Who are the people I'd be working with and what do they do?
13. Would you describe a typical workday and the things I'd be doing?
14. How would I be trained or introduced to the job?
15. Does your company encourage further education?
16. How do the prospects look for the future of the company? What significant changes do you foresee in the near future?
17. Do you have plans for expansion?
18. Where do you see the company going in the next few years?
19. How has this department contributed to the company's growth in the past few years?
20. Do you see the size of this department increasing or decreasing in the next year or two?
21. What are the biggest challenges facing the department at this time?
22. How would you describe the staff morale of your employees? How do you (how does the company) promote staff morale?
23. What kind of turnover occurs in this position/department/company/business?
24. Is your company environmentally conscious? In what ways?
25. In what ways is a career with your company better than one with your competitors?
26. Do you typically fill positions from the outside or promote from within first?
27. Has the company had a layoff in the last three years? If so, how long was the layoff and was everyone recalled?
28. How much travel, if any, is involved in this position?
29. How would you describe your management style?
30. How do you like people to communicate with you? (Orally, in writing, e-mail, informally, in meetings, only when necessary, etc.?)
31. Does your company offer either single or dual career-track programs?
32. Do you offer flextime?
33. What do you like best about your job/company?
34. Could you give me a brief tour? Is someone available to give me a brief tour?
35. What is the next course of action? When should I expect to hear from you or should I contact you?