



Interviewing Quick Guide

Interviewing

The interview process allows employers to better understand your professional experience, skills and accomplishments, while providing you, the candidate, with an opportunity to learn more about the organization. Types of possible interview formats include telephone, in-person and Skype.

Interviewing Basics:

- Dress business professional for interviews. It is better to be overdressed than underdressed.
- Prepare to answer interview questions and have questions prepared to ask the interviewer(s).
- Bring copies of your resume.
- Arrive on time.

A typical employment interview structure includes:

- Introductions
- General interview questions
- Behavioral interview questions
- Opportunity for the candidate to ask questions
- Follow-up: employers expect to receive a personal note of thanks from each candidate (either hand-written or via e-mail) as a part of interview etiquette, written within 24 hours of the interview or next business day.

PRACTICE!

Career counselors are available to conduct mock interviews to practice general and behavioral interview questions for employment positions in a safe environment. Mock interviews can be conducted over the telephone or in-person; in-person mock interviews can be recorded for individuals to review after the appointment.

Interview Preparation: Recommended Videos *[right click to open video links]*

- Vault: [Do's and Don't's](#)
- Dressing for an Interview:
 - [Women](#)
 - [Men](#)
- Howdini: [Job Interview Tips](#)
- AG Careers: [Selling Yourself](#)

How to Prepare for a Behavioral Interview

Most human resources recruiters and hiring managers ask behavioral-based questions during the interview process, as past behavior is a good indicator of future behavior. Not only are they evaluating your behavior by the examples provided, but also the content and completion of the question(s) asked.

Begin preparing effective behavioral stories relevant to the positions listed, key qualities and competencies by using the **STAR** method.

Situation or Task	Describe a situation you were in and the task that you needed to complete from a current position, previous job, volunteer experience, or any relevant event. Be specific to give enough detail for the interviewer to understand.
Action YOU Took	Articulate the action YOU took, even if you are discussing a group situation or task. An interviewer is interested in your actions, not the efforts of the group.
Results YOU Achieved	How did the situation or task end? What did YOU achieve as a result? What did YOU learn?

Sample Behavioral Interview Questions:

- Describe a situation when you were able to strengthen a relationship by communicating effectively. What made your communication effective?
- Give a specific example of a time when you had to address an angry customer. What was the problem, your role, and what was the outcome?
- Tell me about a situation where attention to detail was important in accomplishing an assigned task.
- Give me an example of a time when you had to go above and beyond the call of duty in order to get a job done.
- Everyone makes mistakes. Provide an example of a time when you made a mistake.
- Describe a time when you were asked to keep information confidential.
- How do you decide what gets top priority when scheduling your work tasks/projects? What do you do when your schedule is suddenly interrupted? Give an example.
- Give an example of a situation where you had difficulties with a team member. What, if anything, did you do to resolve the difficulties?
- Give an example of a problem you faced on any job that you have had and tell how you went about solving it.
- Please give your best example of working cooperatively as a team member to accomplish an important goal. What was the goal of the team, your role, and the result?

Sample General Interview Questions

- Tell me about yourself.
- Why are you interested in this position and the company? What are your top 3 strengths?
- What is a weakness that you have?
- What has been your biggest accomplishment in the past year?
- In what ways can you add value to our company?
- Do you prefer to work independently or on a team?
- What are your short-term career goals, in the next 3-5 years?
- Where do you see your career in 10 years?
- Describe your ideal supervisor and his/her managerial characteristics that would work well with your preferred management style.
- Why are you the best candidate for this position?

10 Questions NEVER to Ask in an Interview

from U.S. News, Money, On Careers 11.9.11 by Alison Green

1. What does your company do?
2. What benefits do you offer?
3. Can I leave at 3:30 pm on Thursdays?
4. Do you drug test?
5. What I am able to play a role in (something unrelated to the job you are applying for)?
6. Do employees get a discount on your product?
7. Do you check references?
8. How long do you get for lunch?
9. Why should I take this job?
10. How did I do?

Sample Questions to Ask in an Interview

Prepare to ask 2-3 thoughtful questions at the end of the interview. If you are interviewing with multiple individuals, ask different questions in each interview as the interviewing team is likely to meet after your interview to compare notes.

- How would you describe the company culture?
- Can you tell me more about how this role fits into the department and organization?
- If I were hired, can you tell me about the training that would be provided in this role?
- What are some of the skills and abilities necessary for someone to succeed in this job?
- How is this position evaluated? And how often?
- What kind of work can I expect to be doing in the first year?
- What is your timeline for the recruiting and hiring process for this role? Would it be appropriate to follow-up with you in a few days or should I wait to be contacted?
- If I think of questions after our time together, could I please have your business card to contact you? *[Use this information to send a personal thank you note, too!]*