

Interview Basics

Before walking into a professional interview, you want to feel confident and well-prepared. You only get one chance to make your first impression, so we've compiled our best interviewing tips here for you to increase your chances of a successful interview! Follow this step-by-step guide to best demonstrate how you are uniquely qualified for the position and company.

Before the Interview

Research the company. Be familiar with the information on the job description and on the company's website. Use websites like [LinkedIn](#), [Glassdoor](#), [Google](#), and different social media platforms to conduct additional research. Review the company's mission statement, and identify qualities about the company and its culture you find admirable. This research will provide the context you need to be successful. It will demonstrate your understanding of the organization and can be helpful in pre-preparing insightful questions.

Personal Preparation.

- ✓ **Dress for Success:** Assess company culture to determine appropriate dress.
- ✓ **Materials:** Prepare copies of your resume and references to bring to the interview.
- ✓ **Common Questions:** Familiarize yourself with the questions below (page 2) to show up prepared and confident.

Practice, Practice, Practice! A career coach in the Career Development Center is available to help you with interview preparation. Consider scheduling a mock interview where a career coach will guide you through common interview questions and how to present quality responses and improve your overall performance.

During the Interview

- If you have a traditional in-person interview, make sure you arrive at least 10-15 minutes early and dress appropriately. You may be meeting with one or more people during your scheduled interview, so make sure you have the name of the person you've been corresponding with when you arrive.
- Bring a pen and paper if you like to take notes or to keep track of who you meet.
- When answering questions, make sure to make eye contact with everyone equally. Use body language to show interest and listen attentively.

After the Interview

- Be sure to thank the interviewer(s) and follow up with thank you notes or emails. Sending a "thank you" shows a potential employer that you appreciate their time and your continued interest in the position.
- If you haven't heard anything after two weeks or after the timeline that was established during the interview, follow up appropriately via phone call or email to remind them of your interest in the position.

Interviewing can be a scary experience, and we want to help you prepare as much as you can. Here is a list of sample questions to practice in advance. Practicing answers to these questions can help prepare you for many types of questions that are common in an interview. **Pro Tip:** use the *S.T.A.R. method* to help craft responses to behavioral questions.

Personal

- Tell me about yourself.
- What are your greatest strengths? Weaknesses?
- What's an accomplishment you are most proud of?
- Why should I hire you?

Professional

- What are your long-term goals? What are your short-term goals?
- How do you plan to meet these goals?
- How would a former employer, supervisor or professor describe you?
- What did you like the most/least about your last job? (Be strategic. Do not whine or be negative.)
- How do you determine success?

Behavioral

- Do you consider yourself a leader? Why?
- Tell me about a time you had to work on a team.
- Tell me about a time you had to work on a project with someone you did not like or did not respect.
- Tell me about a time you were involved in conflict resolution.

Academic

- What led you to choose your major?
- What courses did you like the most/least?
- How has your education prepared you for this position?

Company-Specific

- Why did you apply for a position with us?
- What personal characteristics do you have to match our organization needs?
- What are your salary expectations? (Present a flexible range.)

SITUATION:
Set the scene and give the necessary details of your example.

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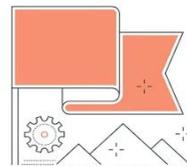


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TASK:
Describe what your responsibility was in that situation.

ACTION:
Explain exactly what steps you took to address it.

A



R

RESULT:
Share what outcomes your actions achieved.

Sample Questions for the Employer

- How long have you (interviewer) been employed at xyz organization?
- Why do you enjoy working here?
- What are the three most important expectations or goals for my position during my first year?
- What career advancement tracks are there for this position?
- What are the organization's plan for the year and the next five years?
- Is there any material or information I can provide that will help you make the decision on whom to hire?
- How do you see me spending my first 90 days?
- What are the opportunities to be more competitive? What is the plan?
- Is there room for growth within the organization?
- What is the next step in the interview process? Ask them if they have a hiring timeline.
- Ask some questions pertinent to industry trends.