

IX. Job Interviews

I. How to Prepare for a Job Interview

The common feature of the interview is the task to question as many participants as possible to clear up their opinions. The following rules should be observed:

- All the necessary information about the man being interviewed should be specified beforehand;
- ‘‘Who, What, Where, When, Why, How’’ questions are planned;
- Try to ask original questions but the interviewee should be able to respond;
- The inquirer shouldn’t reveal particular external interest and express his personal attitude;
- If the interviewee doesn’t understand the question, it should be asked once more. The question should be reformulated and specified;
- The last question should summarise the interview.

I. Research the Company and the Position - The more you know about the company and the job you are applying for, the better you will appear in the interview. An interviewer will be impressed by your interest and motivation, and you will be able to explain what you can do for the company. Find out as much key information as you can about the company, its products and its customers. If possible, talk to people who work at the company. There may be other sources of information on the Web, especially if the company is publicly traded.

II. Be Prepared

- a. Practice your answers to common questions
 1. Tell me about yourself
 2. Why do you want to work here? or What about our company interests you?
 3. Why did you leave your last job?
 4. What are your best skills?
 5. What is your major weakness?
 6. Do you prefer to work by yourself or with others?
 7. What are your career goals? Or, What are your future plans?
 8. What are your hobbies? And, Do you play any sports?
 9. What salary are you expecting?
 10. What have I forgotten to ask?
- b. Rehearse your interview with a friend.
- c. Prepare your interview materials before you leave, d. Dress professionally and comfortably.

For women:

- 1) A straightforward business suit is best.
- 2) Wear sensible pumps.
- 3) Be moderate with make-up and perfume.
- 4) Wear simple jewelry.
- 5) Hair and fingernails should be well groomed.

For men:

- 1) A clean, ironed shirt and conservative tie are a must.
- 2) A simple jacket or business suit is a good idea as well.
- 3) Shoes should be polished.
- 4) Face should be clean-shaven; facial hair should be neatly trimmed.
- 5) Hair and fingernails should be well groomed.
- 6) Use cologne or after-shave sparingly.

e. Bring pen and notepad to jot down any information you may need to remember (but don't take notes during the interview).

III. Making a Good Impression Before the Interview

- Be on time or early
 - Be positive and try to make others feel comfortable.
 - Show openness by leaning into a greeting with a firm handshake and smile.
 - Relax!! During the Interview
 - Be self-confidence.
 - Make eye contact with the interviewer and answer his questions in a clear voice.
 - Work to establish a rapport with the interviewer.
1. Build "common ground" between the both of you.
 2. It is important to listen and be sensitive to the interviewer's style. This can make communication easier and the whole interview more comfortable.
 3. Listen closely to the interviewer for cues on how you should act. Is he being formal or informal? How loudly is he speaking? What sort of information is he trying to solicit: general, professional, or personal? Once you've determined where the interviewer is 'coming from,' you can follow his or her lead.
 4. Try to speak with the same rhythm and tone of voice as the interviewer.
 5. Make some friendly observations about your surroundings.
 6. If the interview is conversational, make small talk about your interests, hobbies, or what you did last weekend.
 7. Be positive and upbeat.

8. It's important to appear open and friendly.
 - Reflect before answering a difficult question
 - Don't make negative comments about current or former employers.
 - When it is your turn, ask the questions you have prepared in advance
 - Do not ask questions that raise red flags
 - Show you want the job
 - Avoid negative body language:
 1. Frequently touching your mouth
 2. Faking a cough to think about the answer to a question
 3. Gnawing on your lip
 4. Tight or forced smiles
 5. Swinging your foot or leg
 6. Folding or crossing your arms
 7. Slouching
 8. Avoiding eye contact
 9. Picking at invisible bits of lint

IV. After the Interview

- a. End the interview with a handshake and thank the interviewer for his or her time;
- b. Reiterate your interest in the position and your qualifications;
- c. Ask if you can telephone in a few days to check on the status of your application;
- d. If they offer to contact you, politely ask when you should expect the call;
- e. Follow up with a phone call if you are not contacted within a week of when the interviewer indicated you would be.

V. Questions NOT to Ask of an Interviewer

1. What does your company do?
2. What are your psychiatric benefits?
3. Are you (the interviewer) married?
4. Can you guarantee me that I will still have a job a year from now?
5. The job description mentions weekend work. Would I really have to do that?
6. How can you determine my qualifications in a short interview?
7. Do I get to keep the frequent flyer miles from my trips?
8. Would anyone notice if I came in late and left early?
9. How am I as a candidate?
10. What is the zodiac sign of your company's president?
11. How many (particular ethnic group) do you have working here?

12. What does this company consider a good absenteeism record?
13. What do you mean by “relocate”?
14. Be wary of asking any question relating to benefits or salary unless prompted by the interviewer.

VI. Common Job Interview Mistakes

1. Arrive late for the interview.
2. Indicate you are late because the directions you were given were not good.
3. Look disheveled and inappropriately dressed.
4. Slouch in your seat.
5. Don’t maintain good eye contact with the interviewer.
6. Do your company research at the interview by asking, “What do you guys do here?”
7. Don’t make a connection between your skills and the needs of the employer.
8. Brag about how great you are, but neglect to cite evidence of your accomplishments.
9. Respond in an unfocused, disorganized, and rambling manner.
10. Remain low-key and display no enthusiasm for the job.
11. Answer most questions with simple “yes” and “no” answers.
12. Appear desperate for a job--any job.
13. Call the interviewer by his or her first name, or use the wrong name.
14. Give memorized responses, forgetting parts in the process.
15. Badmouth your current or former employer.
16. Ask “How am I doing? Are you going to hire me?”
17. Blurt out, “I need to make at least \$35,000. I hope this job pays at least that much,” near the beginning of the interview.
18. When asked “Do you have any questions?”, reply “No.”

Action Words

The following is a list of some action words that you may want to incorporate into your resume. If you are writing about an activity, which occurred in the past, use the simple past tense (e.g. budgeted). If the activity is occurring now, use the simple present tense (e.g. budget).

achieved	acquired	adapted	addressed	administered	analyzed
anticipated	assembled	assisted	audited	budgeted	built
calculated	centralized	chaired	changed	coached	collaborated
collected	composed	condensed	conducted	constructed	contracted
converted	coordinated	counseled	created	cultivated	demonstrated
designed	developed	devised	directed	discovered	doubled

drafted	earned	edited	eliminated	enforced	established
evaluated	examined	expanded	explained	forecasted	formed
founded	generated	guided	helped	hired	implemented
improved	increased	informed	insured	interpreted	interviewed
introduced	investigated	launched	led	maintained	managed
marketed	minimized	motivated	negotiated	observed	obtained
operated	organized	originated	oversaw	performed	persuaded
planned	presented	prevented	produced	promoted	provided
publicized	published	recruited	reorganized	reported	researched
resolved	reviewed	revised	saved	scheduled	selected
separated	set up	simplified	sold	solved	spoke
started	surveyed	staffed	supervised	taught	tested
trained	translated	utilized	wrote		

VII. Business Communications – Resume Writing. Career Exploration

Collecting information regarding the required skills and qualifications of occupations which interest you is an extremely important step. This information will help you decide if and how these requirements relate to your own skills and goals. Use hooks, newspapers, the internet and people within the industry you have selected for your career to prepare yourself for your future career.

The following exercises will help you identify some things about yourself, which you may want to express in your resume: Skills and abilities, Salary, Geographic location, Environment

1. List at least 10 job related skills, which you have developed in each of the following areas:

Education/Work/Internships or Volunteer/Extracurricular. Use action words to develop one-line summaries

2. List talents (i.e., languages) you possess that you would help you get a job.

3. Circle each of the skills noted in part 1 that you would like to use in your employment.

4. Now rank these skills in order of those you most want to use.

VIII. Writing The Resume

As you organize your resume, keep in mind the needs of the employer who will be reading it. Consider what s/he is looking for in a candidate and

make it easy for the reader to pick out those skills by prioritizing and categorizing your work experience, education and skills appropriately.

Keep in mind the following suggestions as you begin developing your resume:

1. Sell yourself. Create a good first impression by highlighting skills and abilities appropriate to the position

2. Use action words. Articulate marketable skills acquired through your experience. Emphasize your abilities and accomplishments more than past duties. You may also want to indicate how well you performed

Example:

- Assist clients and recommend gift items, develop and promote special marketing events, train new employees, and monitor cash.

- Increased store revenue in sales by 7 percent within 6 month period.

3. Present information in reverse chronological order within categories. List education and work experiences starting with the most recent first.

4. Check for grammar. Spelling mistakes and poorly constructed sentences communicate negative impressions about a candidate.

5. Be consistent. Choose a pattern of spacing, an order of information or a format of highlighting

6. Ensure that your resume is neat and visually appealing. Choose high quality paper in white, off-white or other conservative colors. Have the final version professionally reproduced.

7. When constructing a rough draft, do not be concerned with length. Remember, categories may be omitted or added in later revisions.

8. Be creative. There is no absolute correct way to organize your resume.

IX. Resume Must Have

A. Name, Address and Telephone – Present yourself with the name you use in your personal and business life (nicknames should be avoided). If you have a campus address that does not apply during vacations or after graduation, you should present both a college and permanent address. Use your parents' home address, a post office box, or someone who will know where to contact you at all times. Always include phone numbers with area codes. If you have an e-mail address, you might want to include that as well

B. Objective – The objective is one of the most important parts of a resume and should not be overlooked. It informs potential employers that you are moving in a certain direction, relates your work preference(s), and serves as a focal point from which to review and analyze your resume. It should be brief, clearly stated, and consistent with the accomplishments and demonstrated skills as documented on your resume. If you are considering more than

one professional goal, you should consider developing more than one resume, each presenting a different objective.

Examples:

- Position teaching science and/or math at the secondary school level.
- Position within a financial institution requiring strong analytical and organizational skills.

C. Education – This category is particularly important if you have not had a great deal of work experience. Remember, your most recent educational experience should be listed first.

Include:

Your degree

Major (specialty)

Institution(s) attended

Date of graduation

Minors or concentrations

Any special workshops, seminars, related coursework or senior projects.

D. Work Experience – Many students have limited paid work experience, but have been involved in volunteer, internship, practicum or student teaching work experiences. The important point to the employer is your skills and capabilities. Be sure to include all significant work experience in reverse chronological order

Include:

Title of your position

Name of organization

Location of work (town, state)

Dates employed (ex Summer 1994; 1994-95 academic year)

Job description (USE ACTION WORDS)

E. In place of Related Experience (Experience) you might wish to indicate your field of experience in the category heading.

F. Additional Information – This category is useful for displaying information that doesn't fit in any other category.

G. Interests – This is sometimes used to evaluate your suitability to a geographic area or to understand your "personality type".

Include:

Social or civic activities

Health and fitness or sports activities

Hobbies

H. Computer Knowledge – If using computers is a necessary skill for the job you are seeking, be sure to highlight your knowledge in this section.

Example: Microsoft Word, Excel, Real World Accounting

I. Activities, Honors, and Leadership are also important categories to include. If the activities involved work responsibility, note it in some detail. The employer is interested in the skills you have developed whether through volunteer or paid experiences. If you were elected to offices or committees, mention it. Recognition and demonstration of leadership roles are valuable.

Develop your own categories to highlight your special relevant experiences and skills

Examples:

Student Teaching Experience Certificates

Related Experience Travel

Experience With Children Leadership

Related Courses Accomplishments

Community Volunteer Work Professional Memberships

Workshops & Conferences Attended Military Experience

Technical Skills Language Proficiencies

Special Skills Additional Information

J. References – Be sure to ask individuals if they would be willing to be a reference for you prior to mentioning their names to prospective employers. Names of individuals are not usually listed on the resume (unless there is space available at the end), but you should prepare a typed list of three references to provide at the interview. This list should include name, title, employer, address, business and home telephone number. You may also state at the bottom of your resume "References furnished upon request."

Cover Letter Guide

Your Name

Your Present Address

City, State, ZIP Code

Phone Numbers

Email Address

Date

Person's Name

Title

Employer Name

Street Address

City, State, ZIP Code

Dear (Mr, Ms., Dr , etc.)

(First Paragraph) – Capture the employer's attention – create enough interest in your opening that the employer feels compelled to continue reading.

1. Refer to a mutual contact who referred you for the position

2. Present a reason (e.g., qualities and skills) that the employer should consider you the "right fit" for the organization.
 3. Indicate
 - a. The reason for writing
 - b. The specific position for which you are applying
 - c. The source from which you learned of the job and the date it was posted
 - d. If you are inquiring about jobs in general and no opening was advertised, indicate your interest in career opportunities in your field.
- (Second Paragraph) – The body of your cover letter
1. Highlight your experiences and accomplishments
 2. Focus on the needs of the employer to whom you are writing
 3. You want the reader to believe that hiring you will mean improved services, innovative ideas, greater efficiency, or increased productivity
 4. Mention why you are interested in the position or organization and its products or services
 5. Relate your academic or work background to the position for which you are applying – how are you qualified for the position"
 6. Point out your practical work experience, specific achievements, and unique qualifications
 7. Mention information other than what is on your resume. (Final Paragraph) – Your closing
 8. Briefly summarize the body of the letter
 9. Refer the reader to your enclosed resume,
 10. Mention how an employer can obtain your references or credentials
 11. Refer to your interest in a personal interview. You may suggest several dates or indicate your flexibility as to the time and place.
 12. Restate your interest and indicate your eagerness to meet personally to learn more about the position.
 13. If the vacancy notice included the employer's phone number, indicate that you will call within seven to ten days to find out if an interview can be arranged.
 14. If you indicate you will call, follow through!
 15. Thank the employer for taking the time to read your letter and resume.
- Sincerely,
YOUR HANDWRITTEN SIGNATURE
Your typed name
Enclosure(s)

Sample Cover Letter

Catherine E. Rothchild
206 Summit Avenue
Oakdale, Indiana 4625
(713) 555-1212

April 8, 1999

Ms. Kathleen Hamilton, R.N. Nurse Recruiter General Medical Hospital
1505 Washington Avenue Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15205

Dear Ms. Hamilton:

Innovative, caring, and trustworthy. These are the qualities that characterize General Medical Hospital and its employees. As my resume shows, these are also qualities I possess and hope to demonstrate as a Registered Nurse with General Medical

I have completed clinical rotations in Psychiatric-Mental Health, Emergency Room and Intensive Care Units. Each rotation has enabled me to work both independently and interdependently with people and health care team members in a hospital setting. My clinical experiences have provided me with opportunities to assist RNs (registered nurse) in administering direct patient care and helping patients perform daily living activities.

The staff development programs that I participated in while working as a Student Nurse Aide broadened my awareness of current trends and breakthroughs in the field of medicine and nursing

In May I will graduate from Ball State University with a Bachelor of Science degree in Nursing. I am confident that my practical experience and knowledge of nursing procedures will allow me to make immediate contributions to your hospital. I look forward to meeting you soon to discuss how my skills can meet General Medical's needs. I will call you the week of April 15 to arrange an interview.

Sincerely,

HANDWRITTEN SIGNATURE

Catherine E. Rothchild

Enclosures