

Previous Lecture

- ❑ Basics of Resumé
- ❑ Basics of CV
- ❑ CV and Resumé Comparison
- ❑ CV and Resumé Guidelines

Interview Skills



About Interview




- Entrevue (French), Interview (English)
- Interaction of views
- To see each other's views
- One-on-One conversation between a job applicant and employer/representatives of employer
- An opportunity for employer to match applicant's qualification and employer's needs



Interview Skills







Interview Types [1/2]

-  • Screening Interview: First meeting with employers, eliminating incompetent candidates, on-campus and job fair interviews
-  • Follow-up Interview: Second interview, identifying finalists for a position after asking specific job related questions by several interviewers
-  • Phone Interview: Alternative for screening and follow-up, used by an employer located distance away, evaluation based on responses, tone, enthusiasm, comfort and adaptability

Interview Skills







Interview Types [2/2]

-  • Selection Interview: Final interview by supervisor/manager alongside others
-  • Search Committee Interview: You are required to respond to questions from each person of a search committee (maintain eye contact)
-  • Group Interview: You are interviewed as a group of several candidates together to evaluate group task, leadership, decision making, flexibility, adaptability, etc.
-  • Breakfast/Lunch/Dinner Interview: Q/A session with the people working in your prospective organization

Interview Skills



Interview Styles

-  • Directive: You are required to provide the answers of raised questions
-  • Non-Directive: You direct the interview by controlling discussion
-  • Stress/Confrontational: To unsettle you, to evaluate how you respond with a challenging, creative answer
-  • Behavioral: To seek responses that may give insights to personality traits and critical skills. Focus is on leadership ability, intellectual competence, personal/team skills, adjustment/flexibility, motivation, communication/administrative/technical skills

Interview Skills









Most Common Interview Mistakes [1/3]

- Arriving late
- Arriving too early
- Wrong dressing
- Dressing in a rush
- Smoking
- Chewing gum
- No Idea about organization/job description
- No preparation

Interview Skills







Most Common Interview Mistakes [2/3]

-  • Not knowing your strength and weaknesses (SWOT Analysis)
-  • Asking too many questions or no questions at all
-  • Inquiring about benefits too early
-  • Revealing your expected salary package
-  • Getting impatient on some inappropriate question
-  • Criticizing your old boss

Interview Skills






Most Common Interview Mistakes [3/3]

-  • Lack of energy/passion
-  • Weak handshake
-  • Glancing at your watch time and again
-  • Playing the role of a savior for the company/organization

Interview Skills







Planning [1/2]

-  • Self-Assessment: Reviewing your skills/abilities, background, values, experience, education, training, and career goals
-  • Understanding Field of Interest: Knowing the field, industries, industry trends, major competitors, future projections, characteristics of working individuals
-  • Employer's Information: Knowledge about products, services, location, previous and projected growth, future prospects

Interview Skills







Planning [2/2]

-  • Awareness of Job Description: To prove that you know you are fit for the post
-  • Prior Knowledge of Interview Format
-  • Preparing for the Anticipated Questions: Mock interviews
-  • Making a List of Questions: In case you are asked to raise questions, shows your interest in the company

Interview Skills



Preparation

-  • In case of your very first interview, you may write out the answers of anticipated questions
-  • Practice saying your responses out loud (in front of a mirror); becoming aware of your facial expressions and gestures
-  • Film or record your responses
-  • Self-assessment and ask for feedback on content, its organization and delivery

Interview Skills










General Instructions [1/4]

- Arriving Early: To avoid traffic problems
- Arriving Prepared: With resume, references and academic transcripts organized in a folio
- Giving a thoughtful and complete answer: avoid one word answers, ask for clarification in confusion, pause to consider answering is acceptable
- Making a Good First Impression: with appearance, behavior and attitude

Interview Skills








General Instructions [2/4]

-  • Take care of your appearance
-  • Dress professionally instead of being overdressed with flashy colors or styles
-  • Use make-up moderately
-  • Making sure that hair/mustache are well trimmed
-  • Don't overdo use of jewelry
-  • Avoiding strong perfumes, colognes, aftershaves, etc.
-  • Shiny shoes/ cleaned fingernails/ cleaned glasses

Interview Skills







General Instructions [3/4]

-  • Take care of your behavior
-  • Firm handshake
-  • Maintain eye contact
-  • Smile and be friendly
-  • Do not overextend the interview

Interview Skills



General Instructions [4/4]

-  • Take care of your attitude
-  • Project confidence and enthusiasm
-  • Sincerity and commitment
-  • Optimism

Interview Skills



Instructions for Specific Interview Types [1/4]



• For a Screening/Video/Phone Interview

- Schedule the interview at an ideal time (when you are fresh) and an ideal place (with quiet and good Wi-Fi)
- Be prepared with a list of points (skills, accomplishments, questions to ask)
- Keep a copy of your resume
- Listen actively and avoid interrupting the interviewer
- Speak clearly and slowly (not too slow)
- Project enthusiasm in your voice

Interview Skills



Instructions for Specific Interview Types [2/4]



• For Phone Interview:

- If possible, stand up to revive energy
- Smile at intervals to have its effects in your voice
- Avoid filters (umm, err, uh) being more noticeable on the phone
- Dress formally to have an interview mindset
- Have the interviewer's website open for reference

Interview Skills



Instructions for Specific Interview Types [3/4]



• For Video Interview:

- Look at the camera instead of the screen for eye contact with the interviewer
- Dress like an in-person interview
- Pick a place with a neutral background
- Get used to technology by running a practice interview with a friend
- Pay attention to body language

Interview Skills



Instructions for Specific Interview Types [4/4]







- For Second Round Interview:

- Review your first interview
- Research the employer to gather more information
- Try to find staff members working in the company (not part of the hiring committee)

Interview Skills






At the Interview

-  • Turn off your cell phone
-  • Be respectful to everyone
-  • Do not put your belongings on the interview desk
-  • Just remember that in case you receive a verbal offer, do not accept or reject it immediately without thinking

Interview Skills



Nature of Interview Questions

-  Traditional Questions: Experience, background, personal qualities
-  Behavioral Questions: Predicting Future behavior from discussing the past events and situations
-  Technical or Case Questions: Field-specific

Interview Skills



Traditional Questions [1/2]

- Tell me about yourself.
- Why are you interested in this position/industry/ organization?
- What do you know about us?
- Why should we hire you? What can you offer us?
- Describe your ideal job.
- What are your greatest strengths and weaknesses?
- Tell me about an accomplishment that you are proud of.
- What have you learned from your failures?
- What motivates you to do good work?

Interview Skills



Traditional Questions [2/2]

- How do you prefer to be supervised?
- How would a former supervisor describe you?
- How about your friends?
- Why did you decide to attend XYZ university?
- Why did you choose your major?
- Which classes did you enjoy most/least and why?
- What do you see yourself doing in five years?
- Do you plan to return to school for further education?
- What other positions are you interviewing for?

Interview Skills



Behavioral Questions [1/8]



• Interpersonal Skills:

- When working on a team project, have you ever dealt with a strong disagreement among team members or a team member who didn't do their part? What did you do?
- Tell me about the most difficult or frustrating individual that you've ever had to work with and how you approached the situation.
- Tell me about a time when you had to be assertive.

Interview Skills



Behavioral Questions [2/8]



• Communication Skills:

- Tell me about a time when you had to present complex information. How did you get your point across?
- Describe a time when you used persuasion to convince someone to see things your way.
- Tell me about a time when you used written communication skills to convey an important point.

Interview Skills



Behavioral Questions [3/8]



• Initiative:

- Provide an example of when you had to go above and beyond the call of duty to get a job done.
- Tell me about a project you initiated.

Interview Skills



Behavioral Questions [4/8]



• Creativity/Innovation:

- Describe a time when you provided a creative solution to a problem.
- What is the most creative thing you have done?

Interview Skills



Behavioral Questions [5/8]



• Leadership:

- Tell me about a time when you influenced the outcome of a project by taking a leadership role.
- Describe your leadership style and provide an example of a situation where you successfully led a group.
- Provide an example that demonstrates your ability to motivate others.

Interview Skills



Behavioral Questions [6/8]



• Planning and Organization:

- Tell me about an important goal of yours. How did you reach it?
- Describe a situation when you had many assignments or projects due at the same time. What steps did you take to finish them?
- Provide an example of what you've done when your time schedule or plan was upset by unforeseen circumstances.

Interview Skills



Behavioral Questions [7/8]



• Flexibility:

- Describe a situation in which you overcame a “personality conflict” in order to get results.
- Describe a time where you were faced with issues that tested your coping skills.
- Describe a time when you received constructive criticism.

Interview Skills



Behavioral Questions [8/8]



• Decision-Making:

- Provide an example of when you had to make a difficult decision. How did you approach it? What kinds of criteria did you use?
- Describe a time when you had to defend your decision.
- Summarize a situation where you had to locate relevant information, define key issues, and determine the steps to get a desired result.

Interview Skills



Strategy for Behavioral Questions



• STAR Formula:

- Situation, Task: To accomplish
- Action: which you took
- Results: which you achieved (quantify where possible)



• CAR Formula:

- Context
- Action
- Results (quantified)

Interview Skills



Example of CAR Formula

Behavioral Questions: How to Say It

Question: Describe a time when you worked in a team. What role did you play?

CONTEXT: Last semester, I was part of a team of five people for a group project in my Introduction to Marketing class. We were given an assignment to develop a marketing strategy for a new line of toys for Mattel. As part of the project, we were required to create a 15-page marketing plan by the end of the last day of class.




ACTION: I was the team leader, in charge of coordinating all of the group meetings and delegating tasks. I took the initiative to create a meeting schedule so that our group met every Wednesday afternoon, emailed the agenda to each group member prior to our meetings, and kept an Excel spreadsheet of all of the tasks. I also worked on making the team cohesive and supportive of each other by mediating conflicts. To do so, I facilitated discussions, listening to each member, and helping them to work towards a compromise.

RESULT: As a result of my efforts, we finished the project one week ahead of schedule and were chosen as the group with the “most innovative” marketing plan. Also, the number of conflicts between members significantly decreased and we were able to agree upon a marketing plan that satisfied everyone.

Interview Skills






Technical Questions

-  • Common in finance, accounting, consulting, engineering, computer science fields
-  • Questions may be related with concepts learned from coursework, industry knowledge, specific skills
-  • Practice and consult other workers and alumni

Interview Skills



Tricky Questions

-  • Tell me about yourself (Reply keeping in view audience and purpose)
-  • What are your greatest strengths and weaknesses? (Be honest and turn it into an opportunity)
-  • What are your salary expectations? (Start with “I am sure you have a range in mind.” and then “What are you willing to offer?” instead of quantifying the answer immediately)

Interview Skills



Strength-Weakness Answer: A Sample

One area that I have been working on is feeling more comfortable with public speaking. While I have given presentations in class on several occasions, I noticed that I do get more nervous than I would like when speaking in front of large groups of people. For this reason, I took the initiative to join the Debate Society at Cal to get more experience with public speaking. I recently participated in a regional debate competition where I helped my team win second place. Because of my experience in the Debate Society I have felt less nervous and more confident about speaking in public and feel that this position would be a good fit for me because I could continue to develop my communication skills.

Interview Skills







Questions for Employer [1/2]

- What kind of training do you offer to new employees?
- When and how are employees evaluated?
- What are the best/most difficult aspects of working in this group/organization?
- What's the biggest challenge facing this group/ organization right now?
- How would you describe the culture of this organization?
- What do you see as unique about your organization compared with your major competitors? What are your plans for expansion in terms of product lines, services, new branches, etc.?
- How would you describe this organization's management style? How are decisions made?

Interview Skills






Questions for Employer [2/2]

-  • What are some typical first-year assignments?
-  • How does this position fit into the overall organizational structure?
-  • May I have your business card?
-  • What are the next steps in the hiring process?

Interview Skills



After Interview

-  • Write a Brief “Thank you note”: Reiterate your interest, state why you are ideal candidate
-  • Evaluate the whole interview process
-  • Follow-up Email: In case of silence from the employer, communicate with them after a wait of week or two to show your continued interest for the position

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- Saint Mary's University of Minnesota. (n.d.). Preparing for the Job Interview. Minnesota, US: Saint Mary's University

Conclusions



- Basics of Interview
- Interview Styles
- Interview Types
- Common Mistakes in Interviews
- General Instructions for Interviews