

The Interview!

Most people are excited AND nervous about upcoming interviews. It is completely normal and understandable if you are a little anxious about this part. Interviews are stressful, and most of us don't love doing them. But, *there is a purpose to it and understanding that purpose will help get you ready for it!*

What is the Purpose of an Interview?

Think of an interview more like a date. It's where your employer gets to know you, and *YOU* get to know them. You know, to see if you're right for each other. They want to know if you really have the skills to do the job and the right personality and character to fit in. *YOU* want to know if their business has a good environment, if there's room to grow, and if you'll be happy there.

In the interview, the employer will ask questions to see if you really have the skills you say you do. Some other things they'll be looking for are...

- How you handle yourself under pressure. Interviews are a great test of that because they're stressful.
- What your personality is like.
- How well you engage, communicate, and speak.
- How professional you act.
- How well you carry yourself. What your body language says. Are you sitting up straight, smiling, making eye contact?

But the interview should also be as much for you as it is for the employer. *It's a great way for you to see if the job, the company, and the culture really are the best fit for you.*

So, Let's Prepare Wisely!

I know you want the interviewer to see how great you are, and there are some small things you can do to help make that happen.

Appearance. One of the most important details is your appearance. Employers want employees who care about it. If you overlook this detail in the interview, then they might wonder what else you don't care about.

Healthy habits. Now is the time to begin getting into healthy habits, such as sleep. You'll interview much better if you're well rested. Other habits to work on are eating healthy and bathing regularly, if you're not already doing this.

Clean up your online appearance. Clean up your social media. Employers look there, so if you've posted drunken party pix or hateful comments, then delete them now, ask friends to untag you from theirs, or set your accounts to private and keep them that way.

Research the Company. Go into the interview knowing a little something about the company. You can look this information up online or on social media. Being able to share some knowledge about the company shows that you care and are eager to work for them.

Practice. Practice, practice. Can I say that again? PRACTICE! This may feel strange, but there is NOTHING better to get ready for an interview than actually practice being in an interview.

The Interview

It's important to have well-prepared answers.

There are generally four types of questions you could be asked: General questions, skill-based questions, behavioral questions, and situational questions. The chart on page 2 helps you answer these types of questions.

Also, be prepared to answer questions about the details of your past employment, such as what your responsibilities were.

What are your strengths? Think about the job you're applying for and the strengths they require. Highlight the strengths you bring to it.

Do these things, and again, practice a lot, and you will be well prepared for the interview!

Interview Style:	General Questions	Skills-based Questions	Behavioral Questions	Situational Questions
Question:	Were you ever fired?	What specific technical skills do you bring to the job?	Share a challenge. What was the challenge and what were the steps you took to complete it?	Explain a time when you resolved an issue with an unhappy customer.
Tip:	Be honest. Explain the reason and explain how you've grown and what you've learned.	Technology touches every job, whether fast food or a desk job. Employers want to know what you are comfortable with.	Employers want employees who don't give up, will tackle a problem, and who will bring them solutions rather than problems.	Problem solving skills are important in any job. Be systematic with your response but brief.
Question:	What was your role in your last job?	If you were hired for this role, what are the top skills you think are needed and why?	Tell me about a time when you set a difficult goal for yourself and how you achieved it.	What would you do if you made a mistake that no one noticed?
Tip:	Employers want to know your experience and how it relates to the job you're applying for.	Employers want to know if you know the job and its requirements for success.	Employers want employees who will strive to achieve and stick to a difficult challenge.	Employers want to know your integrity. Share an actual experience if you have one.
Question:	What are your strengths?	What does customer service mean to you?	How have you handled conflict with another team member in the past?	What would you do if you were blamed by another employee for something you didn't do?
Tip:	You should know what you're good at. Share them.	You will have to interact with customers on some level. How will you treat them?	Employers want employees who can work well together, even when conflict arises.	Employers like employees who can resolve issues with each other.
Question:	What are your weaknesses?	Tell me about your work experience?	Tell me about a time you disagreed with a supervisor. How did you handle it?	Tell me about a time when you've failed. How did you deal with this experience?
Tip:	Share your weakness, but also what you are doing to overcome it.	Employers are really looking for experience as it relates to the job you are applying for.	Employers don't just want "yes" employees. They also don't want to hear you speak poorly about your last boss.	Share what you learned from the experience and be positive.

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