

Interviewing Basics

UCN Centre for Career & Work-Integrated Learning



University College of the North
Centre for Career & Work-Integrated Learning

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Interview Basics

Source:

University of Toronto Scarborough Management Co-op. *Co-op Preparation Course*. Retrieved from:
<https://www.utsc.utoronto.ca/mgmt/sites/utsc.utoronto.ca/mgmt/files/docs/StudentManual.pdf>

What is an Interview?

An interview is a method of evaluation used by employers as part of the candidate selection process. Through an interview, the employer hopes to assess whether or not a particular candidate is the right person for the job.

Interviews usually involved asking the candidate a series of questions.

Who Conducts an Interview?

The interview is normally conducted by a panel of representatives in conjunction with the Human Resources department.

Types of Questions

Interview questions can range from the following types:

Open Ended Questions

These questions require the interviewee to elaborate on information. They require more than a yes or no answer.

Strategy: Target your answer to the skills the employer is seeking. This is a great opportunity to let the employer know what makes you unique and what sets you apart from your competition!

Closed Ended Questions

This type of question is typically used to verify or confirm information.

Strategy: Use a simple yes or no answer but also expand on your answer. Add extra information.

Situational Questions

These questions are used by employers to determine how you would handle a specific situation. The interviewer is trying to determine if you have the desired qualities and behaviors desirable for the position.

Using the STAR Method

The STAR method is a structured manner of responding to a behavioral-based interview question by discussing the specific situation, task, action, and result of the situation you are describing.

Strategy: Use the STAR method to answer these questions. Think of a specific situation that is suitable for the question. It is important that you try to be as specific as possible, so that you can demonstrate your skills and knowledge to the interviewer. Using the STAR method, go through your example:

S- Situation

T- Task

A- Action

R- Result

Situation: Describe the situation that you were in or the task that you needed to accomplish. You must describe a specific event or situation, not a generalized description of what you have done in the past. Be sure to give enough detail for the interviewer to understand. This situation can be from a previous job, from a volunteer experience, or any relevant event.

Task: What goal were you working toward?

Action: Describe the actions you took to address the situation with an appropriate amount of detail and keep the focus on YOU. What specific steps did you take and what was your particular contribution? Be careful that you

don't describe what the team or group did when talking about a project, but what you actually did. Use the word "I," not "we" when describing actions.

Result: Describe the outcome of your actions and don't be shy about taking credit for your behavior. What happened? How did the event end? What did you accomplish? What did you learn? Make sure your answer contains multiple positive results.

Behavioral Questions

This technique is used by interviewers where they ask the candidate for a situation in which certain traits were demonstrated (ie. Teamwork, initiative, stress/time management, organization skills, analytical skills). These questions usually start with "tell me about a time" "give me an example" "Describe a situation".

Strategy: when formulating a response for a behavior based question, use the START method.

Case and Technical Questions

These questions are used to assess the candidate's quantitative, analytical and problem solving skills. Usually the case is presented orally but sometimes will involve a handout, slides or a written exercise.

Strategy: when presented with a case, take notes. Listen carefully and take your time. Clearly explain your thought process. Organize your ideas when answering the question.

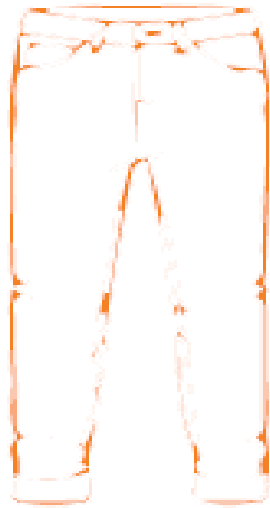
Professional attire

Source: Ryerson University. (2018). *Career Compass*. Retrieved from:

<https://www.ryerson.ca/careercompass/CareerCompass/html5/index.html?page=1&noflash>

Style Tips for Job Interviews & the Workplace

Dress for the job you want, not the job you have or the job you are interviewing for - a golden rule for professionals going to a job interview or starting a new job. Before you go to an interview or your first day at work, research and / or reach out to the organization to learn if their dress code is formal, business casual or casual. Here are some additional tips to take with you to your next job interview and your first day on the job.



Dressing for a Casual Environment

First, be certain that the work environment is casual, and always wear clothes that fit properly.

For an interview, dress in at least business casual style.

In the workplace, dark denim jeans and t-shirts or polo shirts are usually okay. However, avoid wearing shirts with slogans, logos or images that could be considered offensive.

For women, avoid wearing skirts or dresses shorter than 2 inches above the knee, and blouses that are too low in the front.

Unless the work environment is very casual or trendy, flip-flops, running shoes, tank or crop tops, torn or ripped clothing are not items to wear to interview or to work - ever!



Dressing for a Formal Work Environment

A formal environment is most likely to also be conservative in nature.

For a formal workplace, and interview, include:

- suit (pants and jackets) made of good quality and natural fabric blends in a neutral colour and pattern
- clean closed toed formal shoes in a neutral colour such as black or brown
- long sleeve button down shirts/blouses in light colours/patterns

Women: a good rule of thumb, if you want to wear a skirt or dress with your suit jacket, remember to keep the length to one to two inches above the knee.

Men: In most formal environments, a tie is a must for a job interview. Once you are on the job, take a look at your colleagues and managers to learn if it's a must for the workplace too.

Some formal environments, have 'casual Fridays.' In this scenario, as a new professional your aim will be somewhere between a business casual and formal style of dress.



Source: Ryerson University. (2018). *Career Compass*. Retrieved from:
<https://www.ryerson.ca/careercompass/CareerCompass/html5/index.html?page=1&noflashed>



Dressing for a Business Casual Environment

In this environment, the same rule applies: always wear clothes that fit properly.

For interviews and the workplace, you have the opportunity to mix and match your pants, suit jackets, shirts, cardigans, sweaters, skirts and or dresses.

Jackets are optional for this work environment but are a good idea for dressing up any outfit you worry may be too casual, or for an important meeting.

For women:

- pair a sleeveless top or dress with a cardigan, sweater or jacket for the office
- skirts and dresses should be at least knee length
- open toe shoes are debatable for a job interview and the workplace - err on the safe side and wear only closed toed shoes with heels no more than mid-height (one to two inches) to interviews. Observe your supervisor and leader for on the job attire.

For men:

- ties are not necessary in the business casual workplace
- a clean, crisp, and belted pant, with a collared shirt is good
- for extra polish, add a pullover sweater or sports coat
- aim for clean, relaxed shoes

Interviewing for a job at a trendy or creative company? Good news - you have discretion to inject some colour into your footwear and clothing.

More Tips for All

Reduce Your Interview Anxiety

Choose one interview outfit you are most confident and comfortable in. Two days ahead of your interview, be sure to put your outfit on to make sure it still fits and set it aside.

Save Money on the New Suit

There are organizations that help students and new professionals find interview and work appropriate clothes for free. Examples include Suit Up for Success and Dress for Success.

Alternatively:

- visit a thrift store, discount store or outlet store to find suitable attire
- drop a few hints with family that you really need to go shopping for a tailored suit or quality dress shoes for upcoming job interviews :)

Play Nice with Colour and Pattern

Choose a neutral colour of black, grey, blue, beige or brown for suits, jackets, pants and or skirts. Add coordinating light colours and or patterns in your shirt, blouse, sweater or tie.

Bright, neon, or fluorescent colours act as a distraction. Avoid these colours when going to a job interview and the workplace.

Entering a creative environment? Working with creative clients/customers? The 'rules' of colour are more relaxed; however, be sure that you select colours and patterns that coordinate and don't distract.

Easy on the Jewelry and Accessories

Don't be a distraction at your job interview, or at meetings, do a check before you leave the house. Remove any jewelry or accessories that make noise with the movement of your body or limbs.

Carry one bag / tote that will fit your personal items, extra flat shoes, and or your portfolio.

Smell So Fresh & So Clean

Use good hygiene and go scent free to your job interview and workplace. Too much cologne or perfume, and a strong body odor, can negatively impact your employer, colleagues, and clients' impressions of you.

Keep your breath minty fresh and maintain your oral hygiene. Drink water and avoid coffee, smoking, and foods including onions and garlic.

If you are a smoker, know that the smell of cigarettes clings to fabric and often lingers long after you've left a room. Keep in mind: no lighting up before your interview or meeting, or when in your interview clothes. Do otherwise and you risk leaving a lasting negative impression.

If It Doesn't Fit, You Must Resist.

Ill fitting clothes reflects on you poorly as a professional. Properly fitted clothes will boost your confidence and sharpen your appearance.

Before the Interview

Always do your research before a job interview. You want to come as prepared as possible! Know who the company is, what type of candidate they want to hire and how you match the role!

- ▶ Do your research!
 - ▶ The company culture and philosophy
 - ▶ The nature of the business
 - ▶ Current projects the organization is working on
 - ▶ The dress code - see the Professional Dress section page
 - ▶ The management style
 - ▶ The name(s) of the interviewer(s) and their background
 - ▶ The workplace-the physical setting

During the Interview

Make a good first impression

- ▶ Research the location and how to get there .
- ▶ Arrive 15 minutes early to give yourself time to settle down and relax.
- ▶ Call if you will be detained despite your best efforts.
- ▶ Be professional and courteous with everyone you meet in the office, from the intern to the receptionist to the head of the company. The interview begins from the moment you enter the building.

What to bring to interview:

- ▶ The name(s) of the interviewer(s) and their job titles
- ▶ The company address and phone number, directions to get there
- ▶ Enough copies of your resume for everyone on the interview panel.
- ▶ Make sure it's the same version you submitted with your application
- ▶ If unsure how many people are on the panel, three copies is a good rule of thumb
- ▶ A pen and notebook to take notes during the interview
- ▶ A portfolio or samples of your work (if applicable)



Source: Ryerson University. (2018). *Career Compass*. Retrieved from: <https://www.ryerson.ca/careercompass/CareerCompass/html5/index.html?page=1&noflash>



Part 2: During the interview

Introduction and First Impressions

- Many employers will base how they feel about a candidate within the first few moments of meeting them. **To make a great first impression remember:**
- **Professional and firm handshake** - not too soft, not too hard, just right
- **SMILE!** And do so before you even enter the office. You will sound friendlier and more confident.
- **Positive attitude and confidence** - even if it's a bad day, it's a good day to be interviewed
- **Wait** to be asked to be seated, don't presume.
- **Enthusiasm and good posture.** Avoid crossing your arms (which may signify boredom or defensiveness) or sitting too casually (which could indicate a lack of care or interest in the role).

3 ways in which we communicate: It's not just the answers that matter.

1) What is said: Be precise. Make sure your answers are detailed, but not overbearing. A good length (depending on the question) is 1-2 minutes. You want to be prepared, but not have the answers memorized so much so that they seem "robotic".

Be positive. Don't make negative comments about previous employers. If asked about a project that didn't go to plan, talk about what you learned from this experience and how you would handle it differently next time.

2) How it is said: Clarity - 38% of a person's first impression is determined by tone of voice.

Speak clearly and pause for breath. Take your time answering. Avoid monotones and use the gestures you would in a normal conversation. This is a dialogue between yourself and the employer.

Always remain professional in your responses, don't let a friendly and casual environment lull you into a false sense of security.

Bring a pen and notebook with you to take notes on the questions being asked. And don't be afraid to ask for a question to be clarified or repeated. Better than to give the wrong answer!

3) How you act - Body language: Remember to always smile and maintain eye contact with each member of the panel, this is the easiest and best way to create a connection. Avoid fidgeting and excessive movement, but relax, be yourself!

Preparing for Interview Questions

Many of the questions asked will be 'behavioural' and 'situational' type questions. Employers will be looking for your responses to include a specific example from your

First Impressions & Body Language



STUDIES SHOW THAT FIRST IMPRESSIONS ARE FORMED WITHIN JUST 7 TO 17 SECONDS OF MEETING SOMEONE. MAKE YOUR'S COUNT.



STUDIES HAVE SHOWN THAT AS MUCH AS 93% OF PEOPLE'S JUDGMENTS OF OTHERS ARE BASED ON NON-VERBAL INPUT LIKE BODY LANGUAGE.

Source: Ryerson University. (2018). *Career Compass*. Retrieved from: <https://www.ryerson.ca/careercompass/CareerCompass/html5/index.html?page=1&noflash>

own experience to demonstrate how you would address a certain situation or responsibility within the role.

To prepare for this, ahead of the interview, outline four to six examples of how your experience fits the role. This will help you recognize the skills and expertise you bring to the table and help you to be more comfortable answering 'on the spot' at interview.

It will also avoid you using the same one to two examples throughout the interview. As this can create the impression of limited experiences.

You may also use the examples from your resume and application. Don't assume the employer will have had read these in-depth.

To help frame your examples and match them to the employer's needs, the S.T.A.R. method is a helpful tool:

S - Situation: Describe a specific situation, can be paid or volunteer work or school projects

T - Task: Why did you have to do this, what were you hoping to achieve

A - Action: What did you specifically do

R - Result: What was the outcome of your action. Mention accomplishments or improvements resulting from your action.

Remember to quantify your stories. Instead of saying "I lead a team" try "I lead a team of four". Numbers matter, they provide a fuller picture of you, the candidate and how you fit with the role.

Closing the Interview:

"Do you have any questions for me?"

At the end of the interview, the employer will normally ask if you have any questions for them.

Always have questions. Having no questions ready demonstrates both a lack of preparation and a lack of interest, neither of which is the impression you want to leave.

Often times, a number of questions you wanted to ask, will have been answered throughout the course of the interview, as the employer speaks. That's why it's **best to prepare about six questions**, expecting 2-4 to be answered during the interview. It can be difficult to remember all you wanted to ask, so type your questions out beforehand and bring them with you.

It is not advisable to ask about salary until the employer brings it up, as this can be misinterpreted as being focused on getting just any job versus this specific job.

Sample questions for the interviewer(s):

- What would be a typical day in this position?
- What are your expectations for the successful candidate in their first three (or six) months in the role?

- Could you describe recent projects on which a person in my position has worked?
- Where does the company see itself in three years' time?
- How would you describe the work environment?
- What attracted you to this organization? / What do you enjoy most about your role?
- What are the next steps in the recruitment process?

And finally, take this as an opportunity to reiterate your interest in the job and the organization, and how your experience will benefit the role.

Part 3: The After

The interview is not over once you shake hands and leave the employer. There is still a very important part, the follow-up. The majority of candidates don't perform a form of follow-up. By doing follow-up you can:

Why Follow-Up?

- **Differentiate yourself** from other candidates
- **Reiterate your skills** and interest in the job
- **Show appreciation** for the interview
- **Mention** anything relevant that you forgot to state during the interview

The typical form of follow-up is a thank you email. It should be in the hands/inbox of the employer no later than 48 hours after the interview.

Thank you email format - four paragraphs:

1. Thanking them for the interview
2. Specifically mentioning why you are a good fit
3. Specifically mentioning why you want to work for them
4. Closing positively mentioning how you look forward to joining their team/company

To follow-up phone call or not to follow-up phone call?

One suggestion is to ask the employer if that is acceptable during your questions to them and follow what they say.

By taking the time to understand and prepare yourself for the interview, you will not only feel more confident in your presentation, but you can also show the employer of why you should be taken as a serious candidate.

After the Interview

Lessons Learned As soon as you are able to after the interview, take down notes of what was discussed. What questions were asked, where you felt you could improve on your responses. This will both assist you with interview prep for a second interview and for interviews for future roles.

Asking for Feedback With large companies, feedback may not be provided as part of company policy or it may be very general. However, always ask for feedback as sometimes it can be extremely helpful. Remember to view each interview as an experience to perfect your skills and get you one step closer to the right role.

Best Questions to Ask in a Job Interview- Article

Best Questions to Ask in a Job Interview

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BY ALISON DOYLE

Updated August 05, 2018

It's your turn! As your job interview comes to a close, one of the final questions you may be asked is, "What can I answer for you?" Your interviewer will expect you to have some inquiries. Not asking any questions could make you seem unprepared or disinterested, so take the time to have some questions of your own ready to ask the hiring manager.

Asking questions can also give you the opportunity to further highlight some of your qualities, skills, and experience. Asking very [specific questions when you respond](#) will allow you to impress your potential employer with your knowledge and interest in the industry while also determining if this is the right job for you.

Make a List of Questions to Ask at the Interview

Plan ahead and have interview questions of your own ready to ask. You aren't simply trying to get this job - you are also interviewing the employer to assess whether this company and the position are a [good fit](#) for you.

Asking questions is a great way to dig into the [company culture](#) and the specific day-to-day responsibilities of the job so that, should you be hired, your first week or so in the position won't be accompanied by any major surprises.

Best Questions to Ask the Interviewer

Here's a list of suggested questions to ask the interviewer so you can ensure the company is a good match for your qualifications and interests.



- How would you describe the responsibilities of the position?
- How would you describe a typical day in this position?

- Is this a new position? If not, what did the previous employee go on to do?
 - What is the company's management style?
 - Who does this position report to? If I am offered the position, can I meet him or her before making my final acceptance decision?
 - Why is this position available?
 - How many people work in this office/department?
 - How much travel is expected?
 - Is relocation a possibility?
 - What is the typical work week? Is overtime expected?
-
- What are the prospects for growth and advancement?
 - How does one advance in the company?
 - Are there any examples of a career path beginning with this position?
 - Would you like a list of references?
 - If I am extended a job offer, how soon would you like me to start?
 - What can I clarify for you about my qualifications?
 - When can I expect to hear from you?
 - Are there any other questions I can answer for you?
 - Do you have any reservations about my qualifications?
 - Do you have a policy for helping new members of the team get on board?
-
- What are the biggest challenges of this job?
 - What's the most important thing I should accomplish in the first ninety days?
 - How would you describe this company's values?
 - How has the company changed over the last few years?
 - What are the company's plans for growth and development?
 - What are the biggest rewards of the job and working for this company?
 - What is the best part of working for this company?
 - What's your least favorite part of working here?
 - What type of background do you feel would be best suited for success in this position?

General Guidelines for Asking Questions in an Interview

Avoid "Me" Questions

"Me" questions are those that put yourself ahead of the employer. These include questions about salary, health insurance, vacation time, work hours per week, and other concessions. During an interview, you are trying to demonstrate to the employer how you can benefit the company, not the other way around. Once you are offered a position, you can begin to ask what the company can do for you.

Ask One Question at a Time

Avoid multi-part questions; they will only overwhelm the employer. Each question should have one specific point.

Avoid "Yes" or "No" Questions

Most questions with a "yes," "no," or another one-word answer could likely be answered by searching the company's website. Instead, stick to questions that will create a dialogue between yourself and the employer.

Ask Questions About Multiple Topics

Avoid asking questions about just one subject. For example, if you only ask questions about your manager and his managerial style, the interviewer may assume you have an issue with authority figures.

Ask questions about a variety of topics to demonstrate your curiosity and interest in all aspects of the position.

Don't Ask Anything too Personal

While it is a good idea to try to establish a rapport with your interviewer, do not ask personal questions that are not public information. For example, if you see a college banner on the employer's wall, you can certainly ask if he went to that college. However, avoid overly personal questions about the interviewer's family, race, gender, etc.

Questions NOT to Ask at a Job Interview

There are some questions that you should avoid asking, since they won't present you in a positive light.

- What does this company do? *(Do your research ahead of time!)*
- If I get the job, when can I take time off for vacation? *(Wait until you get the offer to mention prior commitments.)*
- Can I change my schedule if I get the job? *(If you need to figure out the logistics of getting to work, don't mention it now.)*
- Did I get the job? *(Don't be impatient. They'll let you know.)*

Here are more [questions not to ask an employer](#) during an interview, plus tips on how to avoid asking questions that could cost you the job.

Questions to Ask the Interviewer Listed By Type of Job

Depending on the type of job for which you're interviewing, there are specific questions you may want to ask your interviewer.

- [Administrative / Office](#)
- [Phone Interview](#)
- [Second Interview](#)
- [Part-Time Job](#)
- [Retail](#)
- [Sales](#)
- [Teacher](#)



- [Work-at-Home Job](#)

Interview Questions You Will Be Asked

In addition to preparing a list of questions to ask the [hiring manager](#), it's also important to review the most common [interview questions you'll likely be asked](#) so you can think about how you will answer.

Interview Questions Employers Should Not Ask

There are some interview questions, typically known as [illegal interview questions](#), that employers should not ask during a job interview. Asking about your race, age, or any disability are some examples of questions that are illegal for potential employers to ask you.

Interviewing Prep: Job Interview Checklist for Job-Seekers

by LiveCareer Staff Writer

by Katharine Hansen, Ph.D., and Randall S. Hansen, Ph.D.

Are you going on a job interview soon? Use this thorough checklist to guide you through the interview-preparation process and move you closer to successfully attaining the job you seek.

Job Interview Checklist for Jobseekers: Have You?

1. Thoroughly researched the organization I'm interviewing with, the industry, my interviewer, and the job itself.
2. Conducted research so I know all interview logistics, such as parking, office location, paperwork, attire, and the type of interview that will be conducted. I have called to confirm the interview time.
3. Prepared and practiced for the interview without memorizing or over-rehearsing my answers. I've reviewed the questions I think I may be asked in the interview, as well as my planned responses to them. I have composed my responses in writing (see our article [Promising Interview-Prep Technique: Composing Written Responses to Interview Questions](#) and our [practice interview questions database](#)).
4. Enlisted a friend or family member to do a mock interview with me.
5. Visualized myself going through the full interview experience and performing magnificently. I imagine myself confidently sailing through the interview.
6. Asked for good directions and/or searched for a map/directions from an Internet map site, such as [Mapquest](#), [Google Maps](#), or [Yahoo Maps](#).
7. Taken a practice run to the location where I'm having the interview — or otherwise made sure I know exactly where it is and how long it takes to get there.
8. Gotten a good night's sleep. Brushed my teeth and used mouthwash. Bathed or showered. Used deodorant soap and put on deodorant. For confidence, spritzed on a tiny bit of cologne without overdoing it.
9. Planned interview attire that is appropriate for the job, the company, and the industry. I have prepared every element of the outfit, including shoes, jewelry, hose, tie, accessories. Inspected each element carefully. I have ensured that my outfit is clean and neatly pressed. I've checked for spots and removed them. I've checked for rips or tears and sewn them or chosen another outfit. I've checked for runs in my hose. I've ensured that my shoes are clean and polished. I have a Plan B for attire if I come across any disasters. (Read our article, [When Job-Hunting: Dress for Success.](#))



10. Packed emergency-repair items I might need: small sewing kit, extra pair of pantyhose, spot-remover wipes, tissues, comb and brush, hairspray or gel, makeup for touchups, breath mints, an umbrella, extra [copies of my resume](#) in case I have more than one interviewer, and my career portfolio.

Job Interview Checklist for Jobseekers: You Will

1. Plan to arrive about 10 minutes early since late arrival for a job interview is never excusable. If I'm running late, I'll phone the company.
2. Greet the receptionist or assistant with courtesy and respect and make a good first impression.
3. Not chew gum during the interview.
4. If presented with a job application, fill it out neatly, completely, and accurately.
5. Bring extra resumes to the interview. (Even better, if I have a job skills portfolio, also bring that with me to the interview.)
6. Not rely on my application or resume to do the selling for me; I know I need to sell myself to the interviewer.
7. Greet the interviewer with a big smile and call him or her by his or her title (Ms., Mr., Dr.) and last name. I'll confirm the pronunciation of the interviewer's name (if questionable) with the receptionist before going into the interview.
8. Shake hands firmly and avoid a limp or clammy handshake!
9. Wait until I am offered a chair before sitting. I will be aware of my body language and posture at all times; I will sit upright and look alert and interested at all times. I will avoid fidgeting or slouching.
10. Avoid telling jokes during the interview.
11. Make good eye contact with the interviewer(s).
12. Show enthusiasm about the position and the company.
13. Avoid smoking, even if the interviewer does and offers me a cigarette. I'll avoid smoking beforehand so I don't smell like smoke. Whether or not I smoke, I will brush my teeth, use mouthwash, or have a breath mint before the interview.
14. Avoid using poor language, slang, and pause words (such as "like," "uh," "you know," and "um").
15. Speak with a strong, forceful voice to project confidence.
16. Maintain a high confidence and energy level, but avoid being overly aggressive or cocky.
17. Avoid acting as though I would take any job or am desperate for employment.

19. Refrain from saying anything negative about former colleagues, supervisors, or employers.
20. Ensure that my strong points come across to the interviewer in a factual, sincere manner.
21. Never lie. I will answer questions truthfully, frankly, and succinctly and not over-answer them.
22. Stress my achievements and avoid offering any negative information about myself.
23. Avoid answering questions with a simple "yes" or "no;" instead, I will explain and give examples whenever possible. I will describe those things about myself that showcase my talents, skills, and determination.
24. Show off the research I have done on the company and industry when responding to questions.
25. Refrain from bringing up or discussing personal issues or family problems.
26. Remember that the interview is also an important time to evaluate the interviewer and the company he or she represents.
27. Realize that a short pause before responding to a question to collect my thoughts is OK, but avoid long pauses. Repeating the question aloud or asking for the question to be repeated to buy some time to think is OK.
28. Conduct myself in a way that demonstrates my determination to land the job I am discussing. Avoid closing the door on an opportunity until I am sure about it.
29. Refrain from answering cell-phone calls during the interview; in fact, turn my cell phone off (or set to silent ring).
30. Show what I can do for the company rather than demand what the company can do for me.
31. Postpone inquiring about salary, vacations, bonuses, retirement, or other benefits until after I've received an offer. I will be prepared for a question about salary requirements but will try to delay salary talk until I have an offer. (Visit our [salary tutorial](#) for more tips and strategies.)
32. Ask intelligent questions about the job, company, or industry, knowing that if I don't ask any questions, I'll be indicating a lack of interest.
33. Close the interview by telling the interviewer(s) that I want the job and asking about the next step in the process. (Some experts even recommend closing the interview by asking for the job.)
34. Request business cards from each person I interviewed with — or at least ask the correct spelling of their first and last names. I'll avoid making assumptions about simple names (was it Jon or John?); I'll get the spelling.
35. Immediately write down notes after the interview concludes so I don't forget crucial details.
36. Write thank-you letters within 24 hours to each person who interviewed me. (See some [sample thank-you letters](#).) I will follow all the rules of following up after the interview.

Questions about some of the terminology used in this article? Get more information (definitions and links) on key college, career, and job-search terms by going to our [Job-Seeker's Glossary of Job-Hunting Terms](#).

Don't forget to take advantage of all the job-interview-related articles, tutorials, and more in this section of Quintessential Careers: [Guide to Job Interviewing Resources](#).

Katharine Hansen, Ph.D., creative director and associate publisher of Quintessential Careers, is an educator, author, and blogger who provides content for Quintessential Careers, edits [QuintZine](#), an electronic newsletter for jobseekers, and blogs about storytelling in the job search at [A Storied Career](#). Katharine, who earned her PhD in organizational behavior from Union Institute & University, Cincinnati, OH, is author of Dynamic Cover Letters for New Graduates and A Foot in the Door: Networking Your Way into the Hidden Job Market (both published by Ten Speed Press), as well as Top Notch Executive Resumes (Career Press); and with Randall S. Hansen, Ph.D., Dynamic Cover Letters, Write Your Way to a Higher GPA (Ten Speed), and The Complete Idiot's Guide to Study Skills (Alpha).



Sample Questions for Practice

Using the STAR Method outlined in this workbook, put your interview skills to practice. Complete each question below, using the STAR Method.

Question 1: Teamwork

We cannot stress enough the importance of being able to work with others and be a team player. In most work environments, especially Law Enforcement, team work is critical.

“Can you tell us of a time, at work, school, or volunteering, when you have been part of a team”

S- What was the situation and when?

T- What was the task your team was involved in?

A- What was your involvement; your actions in the situation?

R- Please share the result of this experience.

Question 2: Continuous Learning

Employers want to have staff on their team who will continue to learn and grow as an employee and as a person.

Can you tell us of a recent, maybe even a memorable experience where you were involved in learning something new?

S- What was the situation and when?

T- What was the task?

A- What was your action in the situation?

R- Please share the result of this experience

Tell us about a time when you were able to express your opinions maturely in spite of disagreements or objections.

S- What was the situation? Who was involved?

T- What was your point of view? What was the opinion of the other person?

A- How did you handle this situation?

R- What was the outcome?

Question 4: Problem Solving

Describe how you approached a particularly challenging or difficult problem that you had to solve.

S- What are the details of situation?

T-What did you do?

A- What solutions did you implement to solve the problem

R-What was the outcome?

Question 5: Initiative and leadership

Tell me about a time when you had to go above and beyond the call of duty in order to get a job done.

S- Describe the situation

T- what was your task, what is that you had to get done?

A- what action did you take?

R-what was the result of your action? What was the outcome?

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