

INTERVIEW TIPS

PREPARE PITCH

Prepare an elevator pitch to explain why you should be chosen. Be prepared to answer the common question, “Tell me about yourself.” Give your name, educational background, including year of graduation, degree, minor (if applicable), a quick experience story while providing your key strengths and why you’d like to work for this particular company. You need to connect the dots for the employer to understand your skillset and why you’re a good fit.

PRACTICE ANSWERS

Practice answering interview questions and practice your responses to the typical job interview questions most employers ask. Be prepared to talk about your strengths and weaknesses (always ending in a positive manner), examples of situations you’ve encountered on the job or in your training, and other behaviorally-based questions (Tell me about a time when... What would you do if...). Practice a mock interview with the Career Center staff!

C – A – R

Develop “Challenge – Action – Result” stories. What challenge did you face? What was the action taken? What was the (positive) result? Think of actual examples to describe your skills. Providing evidence of your successes is a great way to promote your candidacy. PROVE your skills with stories.

RESEARCH COMPANY

What do you know about the company/interviewer? Try to relate what you know about the company when answering questions (mission statement, vision, bottom line, company structure). Go to LinkedIn.com to research the employer. Be familiar with employer to help you connect in casual conversation.

FIVE-FINGER TIP

What five points (skills) do you want to be sure to cover during the interview? Assign each point to a finger so you won’t forget!

GET READY

Make sure your interview attire is neat and appropriate for company culture. Bring a nice portfolio with copies of your cover letter, resumes, and references (at least 5) on resume paper. Include a pen and paper for note taking.

STAY CALM

During the job interview, try to relax and stay as calm as possible. Maintain eye contact with the interviewer and smile. Listen to the entire question before you answer. If you get “stumped”, pause and take a moment to regroup. Default to stories you are comfortable with when you’re unsure of a specific answer.

ASK QUESTIONS

Be prepared at the end of the interview to ask 2 to 3 questions that relate to the position of interest.

FOLLOW UP

Always follow up with a thank you note reiterating your interest in the position and to clear up anything you forgot to share. If you interview with multiple people, send each a thank you note (Get their business cards before departure).

PRACTICE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

- Tell me about yourself.
- Why did you choose this company?
- What do you know about this position?
- What influenced you to choose this career path?
- What is your greatest accomplishment to date?
- What are your 3 greatest strengths/weaknesses?
- Where do you see yourself in 5 years?
- Share a time when you were successful in dealing with a difficult customer.
- Give an example of a time when you were criticized. How did you handle this?
- Give an example of a time in which you had to be relatively quick in coming to a decision.
- Share a time when you had to go above the call of duty in order to get the job done.
- What did you do in your last job to contribute to a teamwork environment? Be specific.
- When is a specific time you've settled a conflict?
- What is the biggest challenge you ever faced?
- What do you think determines a person's progress in a good company?
- Have you ever had a difficult boss?
- Tell me about a time you had a problem with your supervisor. How did you handle it?
- How long would it take you to make a meaningful contribution to our company?
- Would you feel comfortable in your ability to meet the requirements of the job description?
- How do you organize and plan for major projects?
- What is your style of leadership?
- Tell me about the role you usually take in group settings.
- How do you handle pressure?
- Are you willing to relocate for the job?
- How would your supervisor describe you?
- What are some of your interests outside of work?
- What type of person frustrates you?
- Above all the other candidates, why should we hire you?

SAMPLE QUESTIONS TO ASK

- What would a typical day look like?
- How will I be trained or introduced to the job?
- What significant changes do you see in the future?
- How is one evaluated in this position?
- What are the opportunities for advancement or professional development?
- What are the biggest challenges that someone in this position would face?
- What are some of the objectives you would like to see accomplished in this job?
- What are your most pressing projects in the next 3 months?
- What do you like about working here?
- What is the work environment like?
- Is there anything that concerns you about my background being a fit for this role?
- What are the next steps in the interview process?