



INTERVIEWING GUIDELINES

Purpose of an interview:

Think of an interview as a two-way street. It is an opportunity for an employer to obtain information about you and evaluate how your skills, qualifications, and experiences fit within an organization. It is also an opportunity for you to see if this job and organization are a good fit and match for what you are looking for. The keys to a successful interview are preparation and practice. Knowing what employers are looking for and what to expect during the interview process will help you prepare and ace your next interview.

What Employers Look for in an Interview:

- Are you capable? Do you possess the skills to successfully do the job?
- Do you present a professional demeanor and would they want you representing their organization?
- Are you a team player that will relate well to the department/staff?
- Do you wholeheartedly want the job?

Tips for Acing Your Interview

Before the Interview:

- **RESEARCH** the industry, company, and job before the interview. This will help you explain why you want to work there and why you will be a good fit for the position.
- **Take a self-inventory**– Review your resume and cover letter. Know your strengths, weaknesses, skills, and goals and be prepared to answer questions about them.
- **PRACTICE**– Practicing answers to questions is extremely important when preparing for an interview. Write down some answers to some of the general questions, practice answering these questions out loud.
- **Visit CCD for a Mock Interview.** The best way to learn is to do it and receive feedback.
- **Have your professional business attire ready to wear.**
- **Make multiple copies of your resume to bring with you to the interview.**
- **Employers want to know you have a desire to work for them.** Prepare questions in advance that you would like to ask the interviewer based on research you have done on the company and position.

During the Interview:

- **SHUT OFF YOUR CELL PHONE!!!**
- **Arrive 10-15 minutes early.**
- **Smile and be friendly to everyone you encounter**– all impressions count.
- **Establish eye contact and shake your employer's hand firmly.**
- **Answer questions using examples in order to demonstrate your skills and strengths.**
- **Avoid being negative in your responses.**
- **Sit appropriately. Do not fidget or chew gum!**
- **Convey enthusiasm in your answers**– both verbally and non verbally.
- **Before saying goodbye, thank the interviewer by name, collect his/her business card, reiterate your interest, and ask about the next steps.**

After the Interview:

- **Within 24 hours, send a follow up thank you note to everyone who you interviewed with.**
- **Take notes on the interview**– reviewing what you liked, disliked, impressions, memorable conversations, and next steps.
- **Reflect on interview questions**– take note of questions you struggled with and think of a solid response if asked again.

REMEMBER:

- **Prepare by researching**
- **Visit CCD for a Virtual Practice Interview**
- **Dress professionally and be well groomed**
- **Bring extra copies of your resume**
- **Be punctual**
- **Maintain a positive attitude and be enthusiastic**
- **Avoid being negative, especially about past co-workers or work environments**
- **Answer questions honestly and directly**
- **Evaluate whether the environment is a good fit for you**
- **Be prepared to ask the interviewer a couple of insightful questions**
- **Be yourself!**
- **Collect business cards**
- **Follow up with a thank you letter to everyone who interviewed you**
- **Take notes on your impressions after the interview**

Sample Interview Questions

WOW an employer by being prepared with questions of your own! For example:

What is a typical week in this job really like? [Do you offer mentoring programs to junior employees?](#) What characteristics does a successful person have in your organization? [What do you see as the biggest challenge for the person in this position?](#) I read in *Business Week* that a major competitor of yours is increasing its market share in your main market, what plans does your firm have to regain its lost market share?



GOOD LUCK!

Traditional Interview Questions:

These are the most basic questions– but don't let them fool you! These questions generally focus on the information provided on your resume.

Sample traditional questions:

- Tell me about yourself.
- Walk me through your resume.
- Why did you choose Babson?
- What are your strengths/weaknesses?
- How would your colleagues or supervisor describe you?
- How would you describe your ideal working environment?
- What about this job attracts you? What is unattractive?
- Describe a difficult problem that you have had to deal with.
- How do you manage stress? How do you handle criticism?
- Why should we hire you?

Case Questions:

The Case Interview Method is often used as standard practice for positions in management consulting and investment banking firms. Some interviewers will use this method to evaluate candidates' creativity, critical thinking, and decision making skills. They want to see how you can think on your feet and arrive at conclusions with limited information.

*******PRACTICE IS THE KEY TO SUCCESS!*******

The following resources are available to help you learn more about case interviews:

- CCD Case Interview Prep Sessions (visit *Babson Career Connections* to register for the Case Prep Sessions)
- *Case In Point* by Marc Cosentino (on Reserve in CCD)
- Vault Guide to Case Interviews (online)

Behavior-Based Interview Questions:

Many interviews will include behavior-based questions. The employer is assuming that past behavior and performance predicts future behavior and performance. By asking these types of questions the employer will gain information on how you demonstrate your skills and strengths and the impact this behavior has on others based on past experiences. These questions often begin with "Tell me about a time when..." or "What would you do if..." There is no "right" answer to these questions. If you have prepared and have a clear understanding of the company and their objectives it will be easy to choose appropriate answers.

Employers look for three types of skills:

- Content Skills (skills that demonstrate your knowledge of a specific field or task),
- Functional or transferable skills, and
- Adaptive or self management skills.

*The best way to handle a behavior-based question is to think **SAR!***

- Describe the SITUATION
- State the ACTION taken
- Describe the RESULT

This method will help you stay on track and answer the question appropriately without rambling on about a non-relevant story.

To Prepare for Behavioral-Based Questions:

- What skills are required by employers for the position you are applying for?
- What skills do you have (content, functional, adaptive) that relate to your career objective? Identify examples from your experiences that demonstrated those skills.
- Quantify your results whenever possible. When results didn't go as planned, what did you do?
- Before the interview, identify 2-3 of your top selling points and determine how you will convey these points to the employer.

Sample Behavior-Based Questions

- Give me a specific example of a time when you sold your supervisor or professor on an idea or concept. How did you proceed? What was the result?
- Tell me about a time when you came up with an innovative solution to a challenge your company or class was facing? What was the change? What role did others play?
- Describe two specific goals you set for yourself and how successful you were in meeting them. What factors led to your success in meeting your goals?

For additional tips visit: http://www3.babson.edu/Offices/ug_ccd/Interviewing-Guidelines.cfm