



Interview Tips

HOW TO CONDUCT YOURSELF DURING AN INTERVIEW

Preparing for an Interview

- ▶ Research the prospective employer. Know the basics about the company and its services.
- ▶ Dress appropriately and if in doubt, conservatively.
- ▶ Identify your 5 key strengths, so you can focus on these areas when asked questions.
- ▶ Know why you want the job.
- ▶ Prepare questions to ask during the interview.
- ▶ Contact your referees to ensure they are still available, to give a reference. Make sure you brief them about the role you have applied for.

Arriving at an Interview

- ▶ Arrive early. Allow 20-30 minutes in the vicinity. Enter the premises 5-10 minutes before the interview.
- ▶ Be professional with everyone you meet.
- ▶ Introduce yourself.
- ▶ Greet the interviewer by their name.
- ▶ Shake hands firmly.
- ▶ Wait until you are offered a seat.
- ▶ Smile.

During the Interview

- ▶ Look the interviewer in the eye when talking.
- ▶ Look alert and interested at all times.
- ▶ Listen through eye contact and non-verbal expressions, such as nodding your head.
- ▶ Do not interrupt the interviewer.
- ▶ Be personable, as well as professional.
- ▶ Be prepared for the common interview questions and know your answers to them.
- ▶ Answer all questions honestly.
- ▶ Do not answer questions with a simple "Yes" or "No". Give explanations where possible.
- ▶ Don't assume the interviewer knows how to gain information. Be prepared to offer it, to get your key strengths across.
- ▶ Formulate your answers before you speak.
- ▶ Be aware of your body language.

Closing an Interview

- ▶ Don't be discouraged if an offer isn't made or salary expectations discussed.
- ▶ Ask if there is anything else you can provide, such as additional references or work samples.
- ▶ State your interest in the position.
- ▶ Ask about the next step in the process.
- ▶ Shake hands with the interviewer.
- ▶ Thank the interviewer for their time.

Ask Questions

Great questions to ask early in a job interview: "What are you most hoping to find in the person you hire?" and "What would be my first priorities on the job?" The earlier you can ask these questions, the sooner you can start tailoring your answers to the employer's requirements.

At the end of the interview: Ask, "Based on what we've talked about today, I feel confident I have the skills required for this role, do you have any questions about my suitability?" Often, that gives you a chance to counter any objections.



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10 COMMON QUESTIONS ASKED DURING INTERVIEWS

1. What are your strengths / weaknesses?

Concentrate on your five key **strengths** and ensure they are a requirement of the job you are applying for. Give specific examples to demonstrate why it's a strength. Everyone has a **weakness**. Minimise your weaknesses by emphasising your strengths. Stay away from personal qualities and concentrate on professional traits. Select a trait and then explain how you work to overcome your weaknesses.

2. Tell me about yourself.

Generally, when an interviewer asks this question they are looking for information on a professional level, not personal information. Begin by talking about past experiences and proven success, mention your strengths and abilities and conclude with a statement about your current situation.

3. Why should we hire you / what can you offer our organisation?

What makes you unique? This will require an assessment of your qualifications, experiences, knowledge, skills and traits. This is a good opportunity to summarise your 5 key strengths. Discuss what you would do in the new job and don't concentrate on your job history. Focus on the future, not the past.

4. Why do you want to work for our organisation?

The interviewer is looking for an answer that indicates you've given this some thought and not sending out resumes just because there is an opening. Conducting research into the organisation will assist you with your responses.

5. What are your current responsibilities?

Summarise the key responsibilities and tasks performed in your current role and emphasise certain skills you utilise that are required in the new role.

6. What are your goals?

In general, it is best to talk intermediate goals rather than locking yourself into the distant future. Choose realistic goals that are attainable short-term. Only discuss professional goals, not personal.

7. Why are you wanting to leave your current job?

Focus on what you want in your next job and avoid talking about issues and concerns in your current role. Do not criticise your current employer or manager.

8. When are you most satisfied in a job?

The interviewer wants to know what motivates you. It is a good idea to relate an example of a job or project you enjoyed, so the interviewer will get an idea of your motivational factors

9. Tell me about a time when...

Interviewers often ask for examples of on-the-job experiences. This technique uses your past experiences and behaviours as an indicator of your future success. When answering these types of questions, consider situations where you have:

- ▶ Demonstrated leadership
- ▶ Worked on a major project
- ▶ Handled/managed change
- ▶ Solved a problem
- ▶ Shown initiative
- ▶ Worked as part of a team
- ▶ Handled criticism
- ▶ Handled/managed conflict
- ▶ Made a good/poor decision
- ▶ Met/missed a deadline

10. What are your salary expectations?

If asked about your salary expectations too early in the process, say you would rather postpone that discussion until you have more information about the position. Know the market rates and your walk-away point. Turn the question around and ask what their salary expectations are. If you must quote a salary, provide a salary range not an exact figure, which leaves room for negotiation.