

Typical Interview Questions:

- What are your long-range goals and objectives?
- What are your short-range goals and objectives?
- How do you plan to achieve your career goals?
- What are the most important rewards you expect in your career?
- Why did you choose the career for which you are preparing?
- What are your strengths, weaknesses, and interests?
- How do you think a friend or professor who knows you well would describe you?
- Describe a situation in which you had to work with a difficult person (another student, co-worker, customer, supervisor, etc.). How did you handle the situation? Is there anything you would have done differently in hindsight?
- What motivates you to put forth your greatest effort? Describe a situation in which you did so.
- In what ways have your college experiences prepared you for a career?
- How do you determine or evaluate success?
- In what ways do you think you can make a contribution to our organization?
- Describe a contribution you have made to a project on which you worked.
- What qualities should a successful manager possess?
- Was there an occasion when you disagreed with a supervisor's decision or company policy? Describe how you handled the situation.
- What two or three accomplishments have given you the most satisfaction? Why?
- Describe your most rewarding college experience.
- What interests you about our product or service?
- Why did you select your college or university?
- What led you to choose your major or field of study?
- What college subjects did you like best? Why?
- What college subjects did you like least? Why?
- If you could do so, how would you plan your academic studies differently?
- Do you think your grades are a good indication of your academic achievement?
- What have you learned from participation in extracurricular activities?
- In what kind of work environment are you most comfortable?
- How do you work under pressure?
- Describe a situation in which you worked as part of a team. What role did you take on? What went well and what didn't?
- In what part-time, co-op, or summer jobs have you been most interested? Why?
- How would you describe the ideal job for you following graduation?
- Why did you decide to seek a position with this organization?
- What two or three things would be most important to you in your job?
- What criteria are you using to evaluate the organization for which you hope to work?
- Will you relocate? Does relocation bother you?
- Are you willing to travel?

What the interviewer is looking for:

Interviewer:

Tell me about yourself.

You:

Remember, this is a job interview, not a psychological or personal interview. The interviewer is interested in the information about you that relates to your qualifications for employment, such as education, work experiences and extracurricular activities.

Interviewer:

What do you expect to be doing five years from now? Ten years from now?

You:

The interviewer is looking for evidence of career goals and ambitions rather than minutely specific descriptions. The interviewer wants to see your thought process and the criteria that are important to you.

Interviewer:

Why should I hire you?

You:

Stress what you have to offer the employer, not how nice it would be to work there or what you want from the employer.

Interviewer:

What are your ideas about salary?

You:

Research salaries in your field before your interviews so that you know the current salary range for the type of position you are seeking. You don't talk about salary unless the interviewer brings it up. Once you are offered the job, this is when you get the details on pay and benefits.

Interviewer:

Why do you want to work for our company/organization?

You:

Not having an answer is a good way to get crossed off the candidate list, and is a common pet peeve of interviewers. Research the employer before your interview; attempt to find out about the organization's products, locations, clients, philosophy, goals, previous growth record and growth plans, how they value employees and customers, etc.

Interview DOs

- ✔ Dress appropriately for the industry; err on the side of being conservative to show you take the interview seriously. Your personal grooming and cleanliness should be impeccable.
- ✔ Know the exact time and location of your interview; know how long it takes to get there, park, find a rest room to freshen up, etc.
- ✔ Arrive early; 10 minutes prior to the interview start time.
- ✔ Treat other people you encounter with courtesy and respect. Their opinions of you might be solicited during hiring decisions.
- ✔ Offer a firm handshake, make eye contact, and have a friendly expression when you are greeted by your interviewer.
- ✔ Listen to be sure you understand your interviewer's name and the correct pronunciation.
- ✔ Even when your interviewer gives you a first and last name, address your interviewer by title (Ms., Mr., Dr.) and last name, until invited to do otherwise.
- ✔ Maintain good eye contact during the interview.
- ✔ Sit still in your seat; avoid fidgeting and slouching.
- ✔ Respond to questions and back up your statements about yourself with specific examples whenever possible.
- ✔ Ask for clarification if you don't understand a question.
- ✔ Be thorough in your responses, while being concise in your wording.
- ✔ Be honest and be yourself. Dishonesty gets discovered and is grounds for withdrawing job offers and for firing. You want a good match between yourself and your employer. If you get hired by acting like someone other than yourself, you and your employer will both be unhappy.
- ✔ Treat the interview seriously and as though you are truly interested in the employer and the opportunity presented.
- ✔ Exhibit a positive attitude. The interviewer is evaluating you as a potential co-worker. Behave like someone you would want to work with.
- ✔ Have intelligent questions prepared to ask the interviewer. Having done your research about the employer in advance, ask questions which you did not find answered in your research.
- ✔ Evaluate the interviewer and the organization s/he represents. An interview is a two-way street. Conduct yourself cordially and respectfully, while thinking critically about the way you are treated and the values and priorities of the organization.
- ✔ Do not expect to be treated appropriately. If you believe you were treated inappropriately or asked questions that were inappropriate or made you uncomfortable, discuss this with a Career Services advisor or the director.
- ✔ Make sure you understand the employer's next step in the hiring process; know when and from whom you should expect to hear next. Know what action you are expected to take next, if any.
- ✔ When the interviewer concludes the interview, offer a firm handshake and make eye contact. Depart gracefully.
- ✔ After the interview, make notes right away so you don't forget critical details.
- ✔ Write a thank-you letter to your interviewer promptly.

Interview DON'Ts

- Don't make excuses. Take responsibility for your decisions and your actions.
- Don't make negative comments about previous employers or professors (or others).
- Don't falsify application materials or answers to interview questions.
- Don't treat the interview casually, as if you are just shopping around or doing the interview for practice. This is an insult to the interviewer and to the organization.
- Don't give the impression that you are only interested in an organization because of its geographic location.
- Don't give the impression you are only interested in salary; don't ask about salary and benefits issues until the subject is brought up by your interviewer.
- Don't act as though you would take any job or are desperate for employment.
- Don't make the interviewer guess what type of work you are interested in; it is not the interviewer's job to act as a career advisor to you.
- Don't be unprepared for typical interview questions. You may not be asked all of them in every interview, but being unprepared looks foolish.
- A job search can be hard work and involve frustrations; don't exhibit frustrations or a negative attitude in an interview.
- Don't go to extremes with your posture; don't slouch, and don't sit rigidly on the edge of your chair.
- Don't assume that a female interviewer is "Mrs." or "Miss." Address her as "Ms." unless told otherwise. Her marital status is irrelevant to the purpose of the interview.
- Don't chew gum or smell like smoke.
- Don't allow your cell phone to sound during the interview. (If it does, apologize quickly and ignore it.) Don't take a cell phone call.
- Don't take your parents, your pet (an assistance animal is not a pet in this circumstance), spouse, fiancé, friends or enemies to an interview. If you are not grown up and independent enough to attend an interview alone, you're insufficiently grown up and independent for a job. (They can certainly visit your new city, at their own expense, but cannot attend your interview.)