



INTERVIEW WORKSHOP

PARTICIPANT WORKBOOK

2020

**Types of Interview Questions**

**Behaviour-Based Questions**

These questions are designed to elicit information about how you have performed in the past because past behavior is a good indicator of how you will function in the future. Questions are developed around the traits and skills they consider necessary for succeeding in a position or organization. Questions usually begin with phrases such as:

* Tell me about a time…
* Recall an instance when…
* Give me an example of…
* Be prepared to give specific examples in your answers
* Use the S T A R formula: S = Situation T = Task A = Action R = Results (see Questions and Answers section for full explanation)

**Situational/Hypothetical Questions**

These questions are used to establish how you would react to and handle real-life situations on the job. Some examples of these questions would be”

* If you had met your project deadlines and your direct supervisor was unavailable, describe how you would remain busy.
* You have a conflict with another co-worker. How do you handle the situation.

**Skill-Testing Questions**

Employers often require proof that you have specific skills to do the job. These questions are usually hands-on (e.g. programming on a computer, math problems) and are more common in manufacturing and technical fields. Examples of these questions would be:

* Provide a brief description of a diode
* Explain the theory of elasticity

**Problem Solving Questions**

This type of question is used to measure your abilities to process information quickly, think logically, and problem solve creatively. Employers place more emphasis on the through process rather than the conclusion. There is no “right” answer to these questions only your answer. Examples of these questions would be:

* How would you project the future rate of PC game purchases in Canada?
* Describe how you would extract caffeine from coffee beans?

**Classic Questions**

In addition to asking the other types of questions mentioned, many employers rely on a series of standard questions, and you should prepare for them. Some examples of these are:

* Tell me about yourself
* What are your short term goals?

**BEFORE THE INTERVIEW**

**Know your Skills, Strengths, and Accomplishments**

* Are you able to talk confidently about them?
* Can you demonstrate your skills with concrete examples?
* MCj03526100000[1]Can you show how your skills and strengths benefited past employers?

It is vital to take the time to assess your skills and strengths. “Skills” is the language of employers.

**Know the company to which you are applying.**

* What do they make or provide?
* Do they have a mission statement and a yearly prospectus?
* What is their history?
* What challenges do they face?
* How will you fit in?

**Know the position for which you are applying.**

* Do you have a copy of the job description?
* What are the duties involved in doing this job?
* Can you identify which of your skills match the skills required for the job?
* Do you have a salary range in mind should you be asked?

**Know this**

* What is on your resume
* The exact location of your interview, how to get there, and how long it will take
* The exact time of your interview
* The name of the position for which you are being interviewed
* The name of the person(s) conducting the interview
* What type of clothing is appropriate for this interview; is your appearance neat and professional?

**What to bring**

* Extra copies of your resume
* Copies of your reference sheet
* Copies of relevant certificates, diploma, licenses
* Portfolio of sample work (if applicable)
* List of questions you will ask the interviewer
* Paper and pen for notes
* Folder to contain these items

**DURING THE INTERVIEW**

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**Arrival: the interview has already started**

* Go alone into the interview venue
* Arrive 10 to 15 minutes early
* Introduce yourself to the receptionist, mention your appointment, thank the person and wait until you are called
* Be friendly and business-like to everyone you meet
* Try to relax

**THE MEETING**

* Greet the interviewer and introduce yourself; be ready to shake an offered hand
* Follow the lead of the interviewer, stay on topic, ask for clarification where necessary
* Relate your skills and strengths to their needs through your answers
* Answer questions fully but do not ramble
* Provide copies of your resume, references, certificates etc. when asked
* Maintain eye contact; be aware of your body language and try to control any distracting mannerisms; be enthusiastic
* Briefly ask any suitable questions that have not already been answered
* State your interest in the position and company with enthusiasm
* Thank the interviewer
* Confirm the date you can expect to receive their decision or ask when you will hear from them. Ask if you may call them if they have not notified you by a certain time
* Shake hands if appropriate and say goodbye
* NOTE: if you are not sure of the name(s) of the interviewer(s), ask the receptionist on your way out; try to get their business cards if possible

**VIRTUAL INTERVIEW TIPS**

**PREPARATION**

* Test Your Technology: Make sure you have a strong internet connection and ensure your microphone and camera are working properly
* Find a quiet space for your interview with a neutral background and good lighting
* Set up your camera so that it is at eye level and includes your face and shoulders in the frame
* Limit distractions by ensuring the TV and your phone are turned off and your family/roommates know now to interact with you during your interview time
* Have a copy of your resume and references ready before your interview for easy reference
* Practise! If you have never participated in a virtual interview before, practise with an employment counsellor so you know what to expect

**DURING THE INTERVIEW**

* Dress professionally just as you would for an in person interview, solid colours usually show up better on camera than patterns
* Be prepared to answer questions but try not to memorize your answers and stay genuine
* Look at the camera instead of the screen when speaking as it will appear to the interview as if you are making eye contact
* Speak clearly and with appropriate tone to ensure you can be understood over video
* Monitor your body language: Smile, maintain good posture, and refrain from fidgeting

**AFTER THE INTERVIEW**

**Assess your performance**

* What did you do well?
* Where do you need to improve?
* Which questions did you find to be difficult?

**REFERENCES**

* Alert your references that they may be contacted by the companies that interviewed you

**Follow UP**

**Thank you Letter**

A “thank you” letter after an interview is pretty much required now.

This letter is brief, basically expressing your appreciation for the time they took to interview you and for anything they may have done such as give you a tour of their organization or answered certain questions for you.

This should be sent within 24 hours of the interview.

A cover letter can also be used with other purposes in mind:

* It may stress a particularly good fit between you and the company
* It can build on your strengths for the position
* Did something go wrong in the interview? Your thank you letter may be able to help with damage control.
* Did you forget to mention something to the interviewer? Include it in your thank you letter.
* A thank you letter following a job fair can be very effective in keeping your name in the mind of the company contact.
* Do not forget to send a thank you letter after an Information Interview to thank the person and perhaps keep them informed of your progress.
* You can even send a thank you letter when you did not get the job. Express your appreciation for their consideration and let them know that you are interested in future positions and that you will keep in touch.

**Telephone Call**

If you do not hear from the interviewer for a couple weeks, give consideration to making a follow-up telephone call. You can ask how the hiring process is going and, if they have not already made their decision, let them know you are still interested.

**INTERVIEW QUESTION WORKSHEET**

1. **Tell me about yourself?**

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Answers should contain your most relevant experience, education and training to the position you are applying for.

If they interviewer wants to know more personal information, talk about your hobbies, interests and volunteer/community work.

*(****Hint: Keep it professional and job specific. Look at your cover letter and highlights section of your resume)***

1. **What are your strengths?**

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Your answer will contain what you do well, what employers/colleagues know you best for, what makes you unique from other applicants and why your strengths are best suited for this position.

1. **What are your weaknesses?**

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Your answer needs to focus on something that you are working on improving In your life either professionally or personally. You can also mention a skill that could be both a strength and or a weakness i.e.: delegation, organizational skills; just be sure to back up why it is both.

**Other Examples:** Computer skills: I am updating my computer abilities and learning new programs.

I am learning the game of golf and it is teaching me attention to detail and patience.

1. **What have you learned about yourself from previous jobs?**

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Keep your answers positive and talk about the skills you have learned through your past experiences. Specifically the skills you like to use on a daily basis. Make sure the skills you mention apply to the job you are seeking.

1. **Why do you want to work for us?**

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Be sure to do your research here. Know about the company and their values. What interested you to apply?

1. **What do you know about our company?**

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1. **Why did you choose this type of work?**

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1. **Why did you leave your last job?**

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Be honest and positive here. If you left your last job on a not so favourable note then give simple information and keep the answer brief.

For example: My last job was no longer a fit for me. I felt it was time to move on and look for something more challenging.

1. **Why should I hire you?**

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This is your time to shine and answer why you are the best fit. Focus on your strengths and transferable skills.

1. **What kind of training do you feel you may need to be successful in this position?**

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Know about your learning style and how much training you would like. If you know of the companies training procedure mention it and how it would work for your learning style. Mention training you had in the past as well.

1. **What are your short term/long term goals?**

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Be brief but detailed with what you are planning. A short term goal could be to find work and excel in a new position. A long term goal could be schooling, a varied position with the same company, and or volunteer interests.

1. **What salary/wage do you expect?**

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Know your bottom line. What are your skills worth? Research the company and know what the wage range is. Always give a range in your answer.

1. **How do you prioritize tasks?**

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How do you identify which tasks are time-sensitive and use real-life examples.

1. **What do you consider your biggest professional achievement?**

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Use this opportunity to highlight a time you were able to successfully solve a problem no one else could, or were recognized for your hard-work by your boss. Make sure the example is specific, answers the who, what, when, where, and why, and is relevant to the position you are interviewing for.

1. **Tell me about a time you resolved a conflict with a customer or a co-worker.**

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Don’t blame the other party in this situation. Instead, pick a situation where you were able to successfully resolve a situation through strong communication, empathy, and both parties left the situation satisfied with the outcome.

**MOCK INTERVIEW EVALUATION**

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|  | **Positive** | **Needs Development** |
| **Appearance** |  |  |
| **Body Language** |  |  |
| **Tone of Voice** |  |  |
| **Preparedness** |  |  |
| **Answers to Questions** |  |  |
| **Environment Setup (Virtual Only)** |  |  |
| **Notes:** | | |