

Interviewing

The telephone rings. It's for you. An unknown voice provides an introduction and begins a conversation. "I'm pleased to tell you that after reviewing what seems to be at least a hundred applications you are one of those selected to be interviewed."

Is this a moment of excitement or a moment of panic for you? The following ideas are designed to help you be a more successful interviewee.

What is the Purpose of an Interview?

An interview is a two-way exchange, a conversation, in which both participants have some goals.

The **Interviewer** wants to determine:

- Can the candidate do the job?
- Will the candidate fit in?
- Is this the best candidate for the position?

The **Interviewee** wants to determine:

- Do I want this job?
- Can I do this job?
- Does this job offer me the opportunities I want for advancement or experience?

To enhance your success at interviewing there are things you need to do before, during and after the interview.

Before the Interview:

- Read about the job/occupation.
- Interview people in the department
- Build your network
- Practice interviewing
- Dress for success
- Visit the organization
- Have an agenda, know what you want the interviewer to learn about you
- Anticipate what questions will be asked
- Know your Knowledge, Skills, Abilities and Accomplishments
- Relate your KSAs to the position for which you are applying

- Know who is interviewing you
- Prepare and practice answers to typical questions

During the Interview:

- RELAX!
- Answer the questions using the “PROVE IT” Method
- Ask intelligent questions about the organization
- Don’t volunteer negative information about yourself
- Be honest
- Have eye contact with the interviewer
- Be believable, be yourself
- Say positive things about your former supervisors and working conditions
- Find ways to let the interviewer know you are a team player

After the Interview:

- Evaluate the interview
 - What questions were asked?
 - What did you say that seemed to interest the interviewer?
 - Did you present your Knowledges, Skills and Abilities well?
 - Did you learn what you need to know about this job?
 - What did you forget to say?
 - Did you get a commitment from the interviewer?
 - Do you know what the next step is in the hiring process?
- Write a thank you note to the interviewer
- Follow up
 - Contact the interviewer for feedback
 - Express your interest in the position even after the position is filled

Typical Interview Questions

The Boy Scouts are right. It does pay to “Be Prepared”

Develop and practice answers to these typical interview questions. Use the “Prove It Method” to display your accomplishments that are pertinent to the job you are being interviewed for.

The Prove It Method

1. Pick a skill.
2. Explain how you used it, giving specific examples, i.e., quantify and qualify

- the skill.
3. Use accomplishment statements to describe how you used this important skill.
 4. Explain how it links up to the interviewer's needs. Explain how this skill/accomplishment will benefit the office/organization where you would like to work.

1. Tell me something about yourself.
2. What do you like about your field? What do you dislike about it?
3. What are the most important considerations for you in choosing a job?
4. Why do you want to work in this office? Branch? Division?
5. What have you learned from your previous work experience?
6. What are your strengths? What are your weaknesses?
7. What kinds of people do you like working with? What kinds of people do you dislike working with?
8. How do you react under pressure?
9. What are your long term goals? What do you see you doing five years from now?
10. Do you have any questions you would like to ask?

Questions You May Want to Ask

Since the interview is a two-way exchange, you may want to be prepared with some questions of your own. Consider the suggestions that follow but be sure to identify other questions that are important to you.

1. What would you consider ideal experience for this job?
2. If you had an ideal candidate, what skills and personal qualities would that person have?
3. What are the primary results you want to see from this position in the next year?
4. What are the criteria for measuring success for this position?
5. In what way does this position fit into the broader mission of this office?
6. Tell me about the reporting relationships involved with this position. To whom will I report, and in turn, to whom would they report?
7. What is the next step in the hiring procedure?
8. When can I expect to hear from you?
9. When will a decision be made?
10. When would you want me to begin working in this position?

If you'd like to know more about interviewing try out the world wide web, schedule an appointment with a counselor at the CDRC or explore the books and tapes at the CDRC Library.