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## Interviewing: From the Employer's Perspective

### What Traits Are They Looking For?

**The PADMAN Model**

- **Presentation**
  - Do you fit the organization's image?

- **Ability**
  - Can you do the job or learn it quickly?

- **Dependability**
  - Are you loyal & trustworthy?

- **Motivation**
  - Are your goals in line with the organization?

- **Attitude**
  - Will you fit the culture?

- **Network**
  - Do you have connections that will benefit the organization?

### Additional Traits

- Reliability
- Communication
- Independence
- Initiative
- Collaboration
- Organization
- Conflict resolution

### Prove That You Are a Match to Their Needs

- What is the "big picture" view of you as an applicant? What do you want to highlight for the employer?
- What makes **YOU** different from other candidates who have similar skills & experiences?
- What is missing from your resume and cover letter?
  - Talk more in-depth than your application could

### Identify Barriers & How to Overcome Them

- Identify the gaps between employers' needs & your experience in each area
- Create solutions to overcome them:
  1) Learn a new skill
  2) Access a resource
  3) Craft a good answer
  4) Change your job target
# Types of Interviews & What to Expect

## Screening Interviews (In-Person or Telephone)
- An initial impression of your attitude, interest, and professional style
- Treat this as a "regular" interview

## Behavioral Interview
- To answer: Use the STAR method to provide examples of your behavior, personality, and character
- Think of examples ahead of time

## Selection Interview
- Evaluation of your qualifications through in-depth questions
- Could have more than 1 interviewer
- Establish a connection with each person you meet

## Work Sample Interview
- Shows the employer samples of work you have done or skills you have demonstrated
- Practice describing your portfolio/skills beforehand

## Peer Group Interview
- Meeting with potential coworkers who evaluate how well you fit in
- Remember to: SMILE!
- Focus on how you will work with coworkers

## Group or Panel Interview
- 3+ people ask you questions, and also may include other candidates
- Be polite, introduce yourself, and maintain eye contact equally with each person there

## Luncheon Interview (The Meal)
- Conducted in a restaurant to assess your social abilities
- Pick easy food to eat so you can answer without being distracted

## Stress Interview
- Questions are meant to test how you handle stress on the job
- Relax & take your time answering. Illustrate your thought process/reasoning for finding the solution
**VIRTUAL INTERVIEWING TIPS**

**BEFORE**
- Turn off notifications, close browsers, phone on silent
- Test your tech!
- Minimize distractions
- Pick a good location and background
- Have a notepad, pen, resume, & bottle of water

**DURING**
- Watch your body language
- Show up on time - log in early!
- Make eye contact with the camera
- Good posture
- Dress up
- Build rapport & be yourself
- State your interest
  - They can't see nonverbal ques as much

**OTHER TIPS**
- Choosing a location for the interview
  - Quiet
  - Distractions turned off
  - Make sure your face is camera level
  - Can put sticky notes around your computer but do not read off of them
- Check internet connection, audio, and camera
WHAT TO WEAR

Interviewing Guide

- Better to be **TOO FORMAL** than **TOO CASUAL**
- Dress how you feel comfortable
- Think about how **YOU** want to be viewed in a professional setting

Pinterest board with examples on how to dress professionally for an interview
HOW TO AVOID COMMON INTERVIEW MISTAKES

COMMON MISTAKES

1) Not preparing or practicing for the interview
2) Focusing on incorrect content for your answers
   • Presenting the problem/situation
   • Skipping what steps were specifically taken by you
   • Jumping directly to the impact or results
4) Too much confidence & lack of humility, leading to an arrogant portrayal
5) Too nervous or fidgety to answer questions properly
7) Lack of energy/enthusiasm

TIPS TO AVOID THESE MISTAKES

• RELAX! Think of the interview as a conversation about your experience.
• Research & properly prepare
• Need to give more detail in common mistake #2. Interviewers are most interested in this step!
• Mock interviews. PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE
• Be yourself!
# Interview Preparation

## Why Do I Need to Prepare?
- May be asked questions in a different way
  - Be able to adapt to different questions, but still getting at the same idea
- Understand a few techniques for answering
- Prep broadly
  - Avoid only prepping for certain questions

## How Do I Prepare?
- Prepare some examples and results of those examples
- Review job description, information about employer then determine
  - What would I like to share? What do I want them to know about me? What is my competitive advantage? (Bring in information from page above on employer’s perspective)

## Preparation Exercise

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INTERVIEW PREPARATION
Open ended questions

OPEN ENDED - SKILLS

• What is your greatest strength?
• What can you bring to our organization?
• Why should we hire you?

Consider other ways that skills are assessed.

MOTIVATION QUESTIONS

• Why are you interested in this position?
• What do you know about our organization?
• Where do you see yourself in 5 years?

Consider other ways that motivation is assessed.

PERSONALITY QUESTIONS

• What is a weakness that you have?
• How would you deal with conflict with a supervisor or colleague?
• How do you work in a team?

Consider other ways personality is assessed.
What will you bring to the position?
- Identify/name your skill, strengths, knowledge, interest, value, etc. Don’t just describe your answer, actually clearly state the answer to the question.

How do you know that what you named is a skill/value/knowledge base/interest of yours? What is your proof?
- Provide evidence using examples
- Could come from feedback received, self-awareness, performance reviews, classes taken

Make the connection
- How does this relate to the position or organization you are applying for?
  - Why does it matter to the interviewer?
  - What value will it add to the position?
- What did you learn?
  - How are you going to apply that learning in the future?
My team members told me (evidence) they greatly appreciate this as they are skilled in brainstorming not executing tasks. So I take on that role of ensuring we are meeting our goals.

In ____ position I will be able to balance brainstorming with also listening, synthesizing and executing tasks to keep the ___ team on track.
INTERVIEW PREPARATION
Behavioral Based Questions

BEHAVIORAL-BASED INTERVIEWS

- Ask for specific situations that demonstrate when and how you have utilized the skills needed for the job
  - Past behavior predicts future performance
- "Tell me about a time when..."
- "Describe a situation in which..."
- Challenging because you need to generate a specific example
- Nearly EVERY industry uses behavioral questions

COMMON INTERVIEW TOPICS

- Introductory - "Tell me about yourself"
- Teamwork
- Conflict management
- Strength & weakness
- Communication skills
- Technology
- Leadership
- Interest/passion for the job
- Diversity & inclusion
- Challenge/mistake
- Add topics to this list based on your research

Office of Career & Professional Development
Humphrey School of Public Affairs
**STAR SYSTEM**

Interviewing Guide

**STAR STANDS FOR...**

- **Situation** = Circumstances or state of events
- **Task** = Tasks needed to deal with the situation
- **Action** = Actions taken to complete the task
- **Result** = Outcomes as a result of your actions

**WHY USE STAR?**

- Works well when answering behavioral interview questions where you have used a skill or done an activity
- Paints a clear picture of your unique skills & how you plan to apply them
- Feel more in control of your interview
- Helps frame what you want the employer to know about you to clearly show your skills
- Talking too much or too little?
  - STAR gives you a beginning, middle, and end of your answers
  - Ensures that you give the right amount of details & examples
- Makes your answers sound more sincere by sticking to concrete facts, behaviors, and events
Research the organization, highlight the most important skills and experiences the employer is seeking

Make a list of the top 10 things the employer needs to hear from you in order to hire you

For each employer on your list:
- Think back to your work, education, volunteer and life experiences.
- Come up with examples for your top 10 list
- Come up with a STAR story for each by using a list, mind-map, or notecards

Practice practice practice telling your STAR stories until you're comfortable!

Plan some STAR stories that include TRANSFERRABLE skills & qualities as well
- Ex: Teamwork, communication, problem-solving, motivation, initiative, flexibility, work ethic, etc

Prepare STAR stories about dealing with conflict

Keep stories less than 3 minutes
**Situation/Task:**
During my internship last summer, I was responsible for managing various events. I noticed that attendance at these events had dropped by 30% over the past 3 years and I wanted to do something to improve these numbers.

**Action:**
I designed a new promotional packet to go out to the local community businesses. I also included a rating sheet to collect feedback on our events and organized internal round table discussions to raise awareness of the issue with our employees.

**Result:**
We utilized some of the wonderful ideas we received from the community, made our internal systems more efficient and visible and raised attendance by 18% the first year.
SAMPLE QUESTIONS TO ASK THE EMPLOYER

Wrapping up the interview

ABOUT THE POSITION:
• How is success measured in this role?
• What type of training is necessary for this position?
• What is the most rewarding aspect of this role?
• What is the most challenging aspect of this role?

ABOUT THE ORGANIZATION & THEIR WORK ENVIRONMENT:
• Why do you enjoy working at this organization?
• What is the culture of the work environment like?
• What differentiates your organization from others in the same field?
• What does your organization do to promote a healthy work-life balance?
• Does this position offer the opportunity for advancement?

ABOUT INTERVIEWING NEXT STEPS:
• What are the next steps of the interview process?
• When will I hear from you about this position?

For more sample questions, copy & paste https://z.umn.edu/sample-questions into your browser.