

FOR YOUR FUTURE



Career Guide



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INTERVIEW PREPARATION

In interviews, employers ask questions to uncover information about your skills in a particular area to determine if you are a good fit for the position they are trying to fill. They will look for examples of your behavior in previous employment situations or student activities. Because of this, your responses require preparation. Preparing requires you to reflect on your experiences (professional, educational, and personal) and to develop brief stories that highlight your accomplishments.

DO YOUR HOMEWORK!

Conduct research to learn more about: the organization in general, financial information, the organization's mission and search the internet for recent news and press releases.

Sample Interview Questions

- Tell me about yourself.
- Describe a situation where you had to deal with a difficult person. What happened and how did you handle that person? (Teamwork/Interpersonal skills)
- What are your career goals in the next five years and what have you done to accomplish them? (Self-management)
- At one time or another, we have all had a difficult time getting our point across. Give me an example of when this happened to you and what you did to resolve it. (Innovation and Creativity)
- Describe a time where you were experiencing conflicting work demands. What were the conflicts? How did you respond? (Influence/Leadership)
- Tell me about a recent meeting you attended. What role did you play in that meeting? (Communication)
- Tell me about a time you had to work in a fast-paced environment. (Motivational Fit)

Concluding with Questions

This is the only part of the interview that you can control. Take time to prepare your questions. Informed questions can make a great, lasting impression! Ask questions to clarify or follow up on information provided by the interviewer.

Sample questions to ask:

- What are some methods by which trainees are evaluated?
- What do you like about your job?
- What are some accomplishments your team has made that you are most proud of?
- When can I expect to hear back from you?

**Want to practice your interview skills more?
Practice online with:**



INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEWING

One of the best sources for gathering information about what's happening in an occupation or an industry is to talk to people working in the field. An informational interview is an interview in which you initiate and ask questions.

Reasons to conduct Informational Interviews

- To explore careers and clarify your career goal
- To discover employment opportunities that are not advertised
- To build confidence for your job interviews
- To access the most up-to-date career information
- To identify your personal strengths and weaknesses

Sample Questions for Informational Interviewing

- What skills, attitudes, or personal qualifications do people need for this industry or profession?
- What preparation, education, training, or background, is necessary for entrance into this field?
- What part of this job do you find most satisfying? Most challenging?
- What college major or courses outside of my major would be especially helpful in entering this profession?
- What types of extracurricular activities or work experience would help me prepare for my career?
- What changes do you foresee coming in this field over the next few years?
- Are there professional organizations you would recommend for meeting other people and learn more about the field?
- What general advice would you give an upcoming graduate considering entering this field?
- Could you suggest the names of other people you think valuable for me to talk with? May I mention your name as the person who referred me?

PANEL INTERVIEWS

This is a group interview. Each panel member will typically take turns asking questions relevant to their needs. This type of interview is often more formal and organized and may have a standard set of questions that will be asked of all candidates. Still prepare as you would a one-on-one interview. Make eye contact with the person asking the question and then also look at the other members. Address panel members by name when answering their question. As the interview closes out, make sure you thank each panelist by name as you shake their hand. Follow up with a personal thank you card written to each member of the panel.

Tips for Day of the Interview

- Be on time, which means 10-15 minutes early
- Dress professional. Determine what the regular attire is for the organization and plan accordingly.
- When being introduced, stand up, smile, make eye contact, and shake hands firmly.
- Realize that everyone you meet is interviewing you, so treat everyone, especially the receptionist, with respect.
- Ask the interviewer questions. Avoid salary and benefits issues on the first interview unless asked. Then be prepared.
- Ask the interviewer for a business card and learn everyone's name.

After the Interview

- If you were given a date to expect to hear back from the employer, and that date has passed, wait a day. Then, make a call to the interviewer asking about the time frame or if any additional informational is needed in order for you to continue in the process.
- If you were not given a date, wait for a minimum of one week before making a call.
- Remember to always be professional and polite in your correspondence.
- Write a brief hand written formal thank you note expressing your interest and thanking the interviewer for his or her time. The card should be mailed within 24 hours.

THANK YOU NOTE SAMPLE

Dear Ms. Rooney,
I appreciate your courtesy and the time you took to answer my questions about the Architectural Internship during my visit to Crain, Inc. this morning. Thank you for the opportunity to visit with you and see your facilities. The interview and the tour made for an exciting and informative day.

Having seen your operation, I am enthused about the internship opportunity that Crain, Inc. offers. I look forward to your decision. Again, thank you for your hospitality and for all your efforts to arrange my visit.

Regards,
Handwritten Signature