



## PREPARING FOR THE INTERVIEW

The interview is your only chance to make a favourable personal impression with the employer. You have already made a favourable written impression with your resume and now you have been selected to come in and meet with them in person.

### Appearance and Presentation

It's best to dress smartly for every job you are pursuing. It's important to have your clothes cleaned, pressed, and well coordinated. When this is accomplished it will help you feel self-assured and confident. Lay out your entire wardrobe of what you will wear the day before the interview. Look professional because you want this job. Don't wear something that will distract or divert the recruiter's attention. If it's something new you are wearing for the first time, make sure you remove the sales tag and visible labels from sleeves. Dress to be successful. A positive attitude is also very important.

### Punctuality and Timing

Plan your trip to the employer the day before. Plan to arrive no later than 15 minutes prior to the scheduled start time. Determine the time you must leave your home and which route you will take to get there on time, considering rush hour traffic. Google the address and determine how long the drive will be in minutes and kilometres. If you must drive a long distance and traffic could be a problem, an alternative would be to drive the night prior and stay in a motel or with a friend who might live nearby the interview location. Also determine with the employer where you will park when you arrive. Don't arrive too early as this could cause confusion and disrupt the recruiter's schedule. If you arrive earlier than the scheduled time, spend time by reviewing the job ad in your car or in the lobby. If the interview is to take place in a large building, make sure you know exactly where the room is located and how to get there on time. Under no circumstances should you ever be late for an interview.

When en route, carry your cell phone and make sure you have the interviewer's telephone number, in case a problem arises outside of your control, such as heavy traffic or your car breaks down.

Telephone the recruiter immediately to let them know you are behind schedule.

### First Impression

Many interviews are won or lost in the first few minutes of meeting the recruiter. Make a great "First Impression". Offer a firm handshake, a pleasant smile, and be well dressed, this demonstrates your enthusiasm and confidence. Let the recruiter break the ice and set the tone for the interview.

Recruiters usually have scheduled time slots based upon the number of interviewees, and a predetermined time limit for each one, so don't get off topic.

## Research the Company

This is your opportunity to show the recruiter that you've done your homework on knowing about the company and the position. Visit their website, pickup their year-end report or newsletter, use the Scott's or Fraser's Directory, check the newspaper for articles about them, telephone or visit the company to get information. By knowing about them, you can refer to recent developments that have affected the organization. The more you know, the more confident you will feel when meeting with them.

## What to take with you

In a briefcase you should carry: 1) Your resume, perhaps updated since your application for the job.

2) Your personal reference page. 3) Letters of recommendation from previous employers. 4) Work samples; something that would assist the recruiter in determining whether you have the required skills. 5) Your transcript of marks. 6) A copy of the job ad to review prior to the interview. 7) A pen to sign documents. 8) Your Portfolio, with well organized documents.

## Keep it Positive

You made it past the initial screening process, the resume competition, and now you are preparing to meet with them in person. Knowing what to say is often a matter of knowing what not to say. It's obvious that interviewers judge you by how you respond to their questions. Telling the truth is always the first rule but selling yourself as a perfect fit with the right skills and an asset to the company is also very important. Bring a positive attitude and avoid speaking about any negativity in your life.

## Personal Problems

Never provide a hint that something may be wrong in your personal family life because recruiters feel this will affect your performance on the job. Even an innocent statement like, "I'm separated" or "I'm divorced" or " I have just moved in with my girlfriend", may raise doubts about whether your full attention will be on the job. The interview is all about you and not your family.

## Rehearsal of Questions and Poise

Prior to the interview, rehearse with a friend or in front of a mirror. Sit straight and don't lean or slouch and keep your hands away from your face when speaking. You might get questions like: Tell me about yourself? Why are you interested in this position? Prepare answers to some probable questions ahead of time. Obviously you won't have prepared answers for every question, but know the focus of the job and be able to explain how you will apply your skills and knowledge to this job.

## Question Period

During the interview, you are in the hot seat. It's a lot of pressure and tension being put on you during the question period, but it's your time to shine. Be confident and prepared to answer questions about your knowledge, skills, abilities, experience, and training, while you are in the spotlight. Listen to each question and respond with complete answers. Keep your responses to the point but give examples of what you can do. As a guideline, use a 1 minute response for your explanation. Answer only what they ask for. Relate what you will bring to the job and reflect on how you will contribute as a team member, this is what they want to hear. Ask for clarification if you are unsure of a question.

When you listen to a question and respond, maintain eye contact with the individual or the panel.

## Your Faults or Weaknesses

A question that interviewer's frequently ask is whether you have a weakness; they want you to acknowledge and identify it. No one is perfect. You should think of a weakness you have but be able to explain what you are doing to correct it. This will immediately turn your negative into a positive.

You could say that often work past normal working hours to double check numbers and calculations because you are a dedicated perfectionist and a detail oriented person.

## Personality Conflicts

The interviewer asks, "So why are you leaving ABC Co.?" You are not prepared for this question and there is silence. You might respond by saying "I'm leaving because of a personality conflict". In one brief statement you have gone from a potential candidate to unsuccessful applicant, the interview is virtually over. The last thing an interviewer wants to hear is that you may not get along with other co-workers. You want to show the interviewer that the opposite is true. Emphasize items from your resume such as your involvement as a community volunteer because you enjoy interacting with people and contributing as part of a team.

## Salary

If salary isn't mentioned during the interview, a good rule of thumb is to wait until the company makes you an offer. If you are asked how much you expect to earn, indicate a salary range and never one exact number. Use the Mohawk College Graduate Employment Statistics as a guide.

## School Plans

If asked about your future education, say that you would like to take advantage of whatever training or educational programs the company requires, or that you are continuing with your night school studies, as outlined on your resume. Hiring you costs money and the last thing an interviewer wants to worry about is whether you will leave once you get your degree, or another diploma.

## Office Tour

On occasion the recruiter will take you to the department where you will work or show you around the office to meet people that you would be working with or even to meet your future boss. It's usually a good sign if you are introduced to a second person or taken on a tour. For this reason, you should never schedule your interviews too close together.

## Ask a Question

Prepare an intelligent question about the company or the job. Ask something that you would like to know but can't find out. Don't ask a question regarding salary until the job is offered to you.

## When Could You Start?

Recruiters usually want to hire ASAP and they like to hear that you can start right away. If you are not working, you could start right away, but if you are working, arrangements must be made with your current employer. Once you get the offer you can negotiate the details of your end date with your current employer but do not leave a company on bad terms.

## Closing

Understand what will happen immediately following the interview. If you feel that the interview has gone well, ask when you should expect to hear from them and how they will contact you. Leave the interview with a confident handshake, a smile, and thank them for the opportunity to meet with you.

## Send a Thank You Letter

Make sure you have the interviewer's name and email address before you leave the interview, and send a short thank you by email as soon as you arrive home. Don't send a text message, and don't send the message seconds after you leave, give them time to digest your interview.

## How will you fit in?

Recruiters must also determine how you will “Fit In” to their organization. This is another part of the hiring process and a decision that they must consider. They must like your attitude.

## Turn off your cell phone

Remember to turn off your cell phone before meeting with the recruiter. You do not want to interrupt the interview process while the recruiter is deciding on if you are the right person for the job. You want to give full attention to the recruiter and concentrate on each question they ask.

## Attending Interviews

Attend as many interviews as you can to gain confidence and experience in the types of questions asked and the different interview types. You will also learn more about many different types of job opportunities that are available in your field.

## Relaxation Tips

A relaxation strategy is deep breathing – sets of 4, deep breaths. This stimulates oxygen to the brain for thinking quickly.

Indulge in a physical activity like walking or working out to de-stress, gain energy and become fit and flexible. Read your Portfolio and review your past accomplishments

## **BE PREPARED**

To ace the interview you must be alert and flexible to quickly adapt your presentation to the style and questions of those interviewing you. You never know what to expect when you are called into an interview, the number of people conducting the interview, or what the questions will be. When looking for work, you have little choice but to put up with the many variations and hiring tactics presented by employers. Relax as best you can and consider each interview as a new learning experience.

Questions will vary and a good rule of thumb is to attend as many interviews as you can to gain confidence and experience. Keep smiling and exude a positive attitude. Attitude is very important.

When given the opportunity, speak about your recent academic accomplishments, skills, knowledge, abilities, and training, that you acquired and developed. When appropriate, give examples where you have applied your skills and how they relate to this job. The recruiter wants to know how your skills match his requirements. Remember the competition is strong and there will be others applying for the same job with similar qualifications. Tell them by example, you have the skills that they are looking for. This is your opportunity to shine. Put modesty aside, be confident with your responses, and brag about yourself.

Behavioural interview questions allow the interviewer to get a better understanding of how potential employees would handle on-the-job situations. These questions require you to think, solve, and respond to work scenarios, on the spot. Always provide a good reason to your answer and decision.

There could be gimmicky type question, such as: We work as a team here and if you were a piece of fruit, what type would you be, and why? or, if you were in a forest, what type of tree would you be, and why? These are difficult questions to answer, but they want you to think quickly and respond with a meaningful answer. Always provide a good reason for your choice. Employers sometimes like to know what you do outside of school and work. It's best if the interviewer brings up this topic and asks for your response. Let the interviewer start this discussion unless you have a good opportunity to mention your hobby or outside interest. Be tactful, and by small chance, the interviewer might have the same interest. Do not elaborate too extensively on your outside interest, there might be other interviews to follow.

### The Dress Code Continued:

Students continually ask: "How should I dress for the interview?" My answer: "Dress professionally as it is a competition". During an interview, employers judge you on everything which includes: hygiene, shiny shoes, hair in place, and smartly dressed; you're in the spot light.

Students comment: "I'm looking for a job as a Mechanic Apprentice, can't I dress in blue jeans and work boots and be ready to work?" My suggestion is: "Have you seen professional hockey players and how they dress when arriving at the arena before a game?" They don't dress in track suits or casual clothes. They are well groomed and dress with suits, ties, and shiny shoes because they have an image they want to portray. They are professional. Even junior hockey players across Ontario are required to dress with ties and dress pants when arriving at games.

See sample interview questions starting on page 5.

## **COMMON INTERVIEW QUESTIONS WITH POSSIBLE ANSWERS**

Read the questions below and plan a well thought-out response of your own, before your next interview.

Some interviews today begin with the interviewer explaining the entire job to the interviewee. They explain what is involved in the job and the day-to-day routine and what they expect their prospective employee to contribute. They might reference the company or department objective or how they plan to grow and develop or where they need assistance, improvement or strength. In other words, they introduce you the position and how it fits into the big picture with the company. Then the interviewer wants to hear from you. They begin to ask questions involving your past education and experience that would contribute to this position. This was already addressed on your resume or cover letter, under education or employment, but it will give you the opportunity to sell yourself again to highlight, identify and match your skills to them in more detail. Elaborate on your training and experience and what you can do to help them. It's your opportunity to sell yourself.

Here are some questions with possible answers.

1. Tell me about yourself?

This could be one of the first questions you are asked. The interviewer is attempting to set the tone of the interview by letting you speak freely and openly while trying to make you feel relaxed. Even though it seems like a simple question, you probably wonder where to start. As a suggestion, a good place to begin would be the city, province, or country where you were born, then jump to the school you graduated from, before coming to college. Next elaborate on the courses you especially enjoyed or excelled at or mention a recent work experience that relates to the position. It's a good time to emphasize your best skills and how they relate to the job description. Don't get off base with your personal life and current problems and wished later you shouldn't have introduced them. Keep it positive and upbeat and don't make reference to your weaknesses. This is your opportunity to speak positively about how your education and training has prepared you for this job.

Response

I was born in Windsor Ontario and graduated from West Lincoln Secondary School with Honours and 6 OAC Credits. I decided to take the Computer Networking Program at Mohawk College. I enrolled in the program and was excited to move to Hamilton to get involved with this program. I now have exceptional Microsoft skills including PowerPoint and Excel, which I know is a job requirement. I will be graduating in August and available to start work on September 1st.

2. Why did you decide to apply for this position? or to our company?

The employer asks this question to see if you thought about it. Have a good answer ready. Make sure you consider the travel to work time, will you move or commute, is it the job you want, do you have the right qualifications, and have you researched the company.

## Response

I like the environment of smaller companies because you can experience a variety of job duties from a close network of all employees. Or, I like large corporate environments because you can become involved in a specialized area and learn the job from experienced individuals. I have learned your company is a leader in the field of automotive parts production and that your quality control is the best in North America.

### 3. What do you know about our company?

Make sure you research the company and know what they do. Having some background knowledge about a company will show a potential employer how interested you are in working for their company and that you don't blindly rush into situations. You should know about the products and services they offer, who are their customers and even who are some of their competitors.

Knowing information about their financial status is also important.

### 4. In what ways do you think you can make a contribution to our organization?

This is the perfect opportunity to explain what skills, knowledge or personality traits would make you a unique asset to the company. This is where you can differentiate yourself from other applicants that have similar qualifications to your own. I'm a team player with great communication skills and time management skills, and I have experience prioritizing a heavy workload in a busy environment. I thrive on keeping busy and learning new things.

### 5. Why should we hire you?

Here you could summarize and sell yourself as a complete package. Tell the employer how your education, skills, experience and knowledge combined with your personal characteristics come together to create the perfect employee that they are looking for. I thrive on continual learning and I strongly believe this is an important factor for both the company and my personal growth. I have my diploma and the training required to perform the job. I am eager to apply my skills and gain experience with this great opportunity.

### 6. Why are you leaving your current position?

When answering this question you want to try and be as positive as possible about why you are leaving your job. Some possible responses: I was unsure of the company's future. I am looking for a change in the type of work that I do and the experience that I would like to get. I was not applying the training that I received at college and it didn't challenge my skills and abilities.

### 7. What do you think it takes to be successful in this job?

To be fully confident working on assigned tasks and duties, to be a good communicator with my co-workers, being focused and learning about the product, what can go wrong during the development and production process, and knowing that support is available when questions arise.

### 8. What is your goal? Where would you like to be in 5 years?

My goal is to become part of the supervisory staff within the next few years.

9. Where do you see yourself in 10 years?

My long-range goal is to become part of the management team within the next 10 years.

10. How would you describe your work habits?

I would describe my work habits as focused, confident, analytical, and determined to complete jobs on time to the best of my ability. I am well organized, a self-starter, can multitask, and can work with limited supervision.

11. How would you describe your personality?

I would describe my personality to be friendly, honest, and outgoing.

12. How would your friends describe you?

My friends describe me as being loyal, honest, dependable, great personality, hard worker, easy to approach, always willing to provide support and help them whenever I can.

13. Which courses did you like best (or least) in school?

I enjoyed CAD drawing because it gave me the knowledge and ability to perform the job that I love doing with confidence. The training was excellent and I learned a lot about many software tools that are currently used in industry. I didn't particularly enjoy journalism courses because it was geared more to the becoming a journalist for a newspaper, however it did provide good insight into report writing which is an important segment of my profession.

14. Why did you choose your program of study?

I chose industrial engineering because it allowed me to build on my strengths in Math and using all Microsoft Office applications. It also provided me with the opportunity to work in labs and use testing devices and gauges and to become more familiar with the equipment. I now have a better understanding of how various trade workers work together in unison, on job sites.

15. Describe a situation where your work was: a) criticized      b) praised

Once my supervisor criticized me for taking too much time on a project but I didn't realize there was a short turn around time for the completion date. The due date was not given to me. I always double check my calculations and I wanted to present a perfect project, so I was focusing on my accuracy and not on the timing. When I completed the project the supervisor was impressed with the final result. I was given praise for establishing an excel data base of clients that documented names, addresses, phone numbers and email addresses, all in alphabetic order. This allowed the management team to easily visualize, in report format, the names of companies they were working with on a regular basis. I have an example here in my portfolio.

16. What do you consider to be your greatest achievement?

My greatest achievement to this point, was to give guidance and support to a group of children that I was Camp Counsellor for last summer. They asked me questions on how to do different things, and my advice on situations. They even shared their personal thoughts and general life questions with me. This gave me tremendous confidence and I thoroughly enjoyed having them look to me for support.

17. How do you think your previous job or education has qualified you for this position?

Mohawk College prepared me very well for this position. It gave me the knowledge, skills and training to handle most situations in business today. The instructors were incredible with their wealth of knowledge, and they took the time to provide more detail, if we needed it. It allowed me the opportunity to get hands-on experience while working in my Co-op Work Placement, to practice and use a variety of tools that we talked about in class.

18. If you could start over what career would you choose?

So far, I wouldn't change a thing. I find that I have found my niche in life and enjoy the education and training that I am receiving and look forward to applying what I have learned in my job.

19. What do you think of your present boss?

My boss at my part-time job is a great person. He encourages me to look for full time employment in my field of study and has given me an excellent recommendation letter which I have here for you today in my portfolio. (Remember not to use any negative tones.)

20. What do you think of your present company where you work?

I find that they are generally a good company. (Don't talk negatively about them) The supervisory staff are great and they provide guidance, instruction and support to the all employees. We have weekly meetings to discuss openly what we are experiencing and it allows management to let us know what is in the planning process.

21. Why have you changed jobs frequently?

I changed jobs a few times because they were short contract positions but they gave me a well-rounded background in many different areas. I didn't feel confident with the experience I was getting, and it didn't challenge my skills, knowledge, and abilities.

22. Why are you not working in the area you trained for?

There seems to be a shortage of full time positions available for ...?... My Employment Advisor at Mohawk College has explained to me that it's a matter of timing and that sometimes when you graduate, the right job is not available. It's the same as when an Employer advertises for staff, the students are not ready to graduate, it's all about timing. I'm working as a ...?... to gain customer service experience, which builds my communication skills and is important for any job. I'm constantly looking for work in my field of study.

23. What are your best skills and abilities?

My best skills and abilities are ....list the skills and abilities that the employer wants to hear, what he has asked for in his job posting.

24. What was the last training course you took, aside from your formal academic training?

I took a First Aid course at the YMCA this past winter. It's something that you can always use.

25. Would you consider yourself to be a team player and can you give me an example?

Yes definitely, I consider myself to be a team player. My friends always ask for my opinion when we are together in a group, they value my opinion. I also play hockey in an organized league on a weekly basis, so I know that my team depends on me to be there as a contributor.

26. What motivates you to give your best effort?

I find that given good guidelines and direction, I enjoy working on a project with minimal supervision. I can manage my time and develop new skills while intensely working on the project.

27. Can you give me an example where you worked with a group and what was your function?

While attending Mohawk College, the class was broken into 5 groups to prepare a plan on how to handle.....whatever you did.... . My function was to collect information on ..... whatever you

did ... and I used the library and internet to find out all that I could about it. My information was considered to be vital for our topic, and my group devoured the extensive research that I made available.

28. How do you work under pressure?

I enjoy working under pressure and have had a lot of experience while attending college. The work load was intense and while working part-time I was still able to study for exams and pass with excellent marks. I am well organized and have excellent time management skills.

29. What kind of relationship do you think should exist between you and your supervisor?

I think a good working relationship is the key to being successful both for you personally and the company that you represent. A good open relationship must exist where you can approach your supervisor at any time or he can approach you with problems and concerns for explanation and updates.

30. Do you work best alone, or with others?

I have worked in both situations, alone and with a group. In a group I worked at (provide your own information and what you did to contribute). We met at regular intervals to discuss and solve problems. I worked with minimal supervision at (name of place where you worked and explain what you did). I managed my time, and set time schedules to have the various components completed on time.

31. Which is most important to you, career opportunity, money, or job satisfaction?

I think that job satisfaction and working in your field of study is most important. I have discussed this with people older than me who are in the working world, and this is their recommendation.

Learning more about what you enjoy doing would provide much longer job satisfaction.

32. How would you define success?

I think success is working in your field of study and enjoying your job. If you enjoy going to work and enjoy doing your job every single day, this would be a tremendous advantage.

33. Tell me about your work experience?

My work experience in my part time job has been rewarding in that it has given me hands-on skills in working with customers on a regular basis and providing quality customer service. It has given me skills in time management, organization and communication. My employer has confidence in me and gave me a key to open and close the store when I came in early and left late.

34. What did you do this past summer?

This past summer I took a course on life saving at the local community centre. I learned the proper method of rescuing a person who was drowning, and I also learned CPR.

35. What have you done since graduation?

Since graduation I have been looking for the perfect job to begin my career in my field of (whatever it is) I have continued to work part-time to gain customer service skills which is an important aspect of any job.

36. What do you really enjoy doing?

I enjoy learning more about my field by reading current articles and as a matter of fact I subscribe to (applicable magazine).

37. What do you feel is your biggest weakness?

My greatest weakness is speaking to large groups of people, but I am taking a Public Speaking course through the Dale Carnegie Program, to develop those skills. I hate to say no when friends ask me to do them a favour or make a special request, but by prioritizing my agenda, or establishing time lines, I find a way to accomplish my requirements, goals and objectives.

38. How do you handle stress? Do you have a routine to relieve your stress?

I handle stress by going for long walks or removing myself from the stressful situation for a period of time, to get my mind clear and away from the problem. I enjoy walking in the evening and this is a routine that I try to maintain.

39. What do you do for relaxation?

For relaxation I enjoy reading. I read novels and information about biotechnology.

40. Is there anything you want to ask us?

Make sure that what you ask is something that you could not find out yourself through their website, the Scott's Directory, or a telephone call to the office.

Could you explain your company benefit package and when would it commence? When will I be hearing from you on your decision of this job opportunity?

41. If you were a tree in a forest, what type of tree would you be?

I would be a tall oak tree because I feel strong, I want to protect the other smaller trees, I want to be the tallest tree in the forest, I want to shelter small animals, and I am the most colourful in the forest, or, I would be an evergreen tree because I am green and alive all year around.

42. Have you ever had a disagreement with a co-worker? Could you explain the situation?  
How did you or would you resolve the situation? What was the outcome?

No, I have never had a disagreement with a co-worker. If this were to ever occur I would want to address the problem immediately with the individual, as soon as it happened. I wouldn't want to put off solving this problem because it might become worse. I would rather try to solve it immediately before management got involved. I would prefer to deal with the issue myself. I might ask the person to go for a coffee or to simply get away from the office area to discuss the problem where we would not be disturbed by telephones ringing or others listening in. If this didn't work, I would put a hand-written note on their desk and simply apologize for what had happened and hope that we can work out our differences.

43. If you worked on a group project and one of the team members didn't contribute their share, how would you deal with that situation?

I would eliminate that person from the project and divided up that roll with the other members of the group. Everyone contributing should work together as a team to share the entire work load equally. If one person doesn't handle their share of the workload, it reflects badly on the entire team. Eliminate the problem and solve it with competent people.

44. Can you tell me a time when you had a problem with a customer and how did you deal with it?

With aggressive, impatient customers, I let them talk and express their feelings and explain exactly what they feel the problem is. Let them vent their frustration. I usually point out to them the key issue or most important element or repeat entirely what they had just said, in order for both of us to understand the problem. I start off by saying we apologize for the problem and go on to express the company policy or handle the problem myself according to company guidelines. Customers should be treated with respect because they are your business.

45. How do you motivate others?

I believe to motivate others you must gain their respect, trust, honesty, and confidence. You must provide guidance, and always be available to answer questions and offer your assistance. Be honest and caring towards them and respect them as well. I also believe you should praise them occasionally for their work efforts.

46. What would you do to go the extra mile for the team?

Make sure everyone on the team communicates freely with each other and be available whenever you are needed. Be ready to accept phone calls or emails whenever you are needed, be willing to do research and work weekends and overtime, and take any training that is required.

47. Have you ever done something that you weren't supposed to do? Why or why not?

Doing something you were not supposed to do is foolish and not worth losing a job for it.

48. What makes a good supervisor or manager?

Trust, honesty, confidence, patience, open door policy, listening compassionately, and above all, being able to communicate effectively, are all good traits of a successful manager.

49. How would you rank our company with the others you have met with?

I would rank your company as #1. I have done a thorough investigation of a few companies through websites and other means and find that your Goal, Vision, and Mission Statements are the strongest and clearest and most achievable. I really feel good about meeting with you today and hope I will be accepted to join your team of professionals.

### Bad Response

“I’d rather stay home and watch movies all day but I have bills to pay like everyone else” “I know everything about your company”

## **ADDITIONAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS**

### Goals or Objective Questions

What rewards are you looking for in your career? What is most important to you in a job?

Describe the most important thing you learned in your last job? What does “success” mean to you?

What does “failure” mean to you?

What qualities should a successful supervisor possess?

### Character Questions

Who do you admire and why?

What have you learned from your past employment experience?

In addition to your technical skills, what can you personally contribute to our team?

### Strengths and Abilities Questions

Why should we hire you?

What are your strongest abilities?

What do you think are the most important skills to be successful at this job?

What courses have you taken that would be useful in this job? Having read the job posting, how do your skills relate to our needs?

Relate your (whatever) skills on a scale from 1 to 10, 10 being the highest?

### Examples of Using / Developing Skills on the job

Tell me about a time when you successfully used prioritizing skills? Time management skills?

Were your extracurricular activities worth the time and effort you put into them?

Tell us about an achievement you are proud of?

What do you do to keep active and fit? What do you do for relaxation?

## Research & Preparation

What did you do to prepare for this interview? What do you know about our company?

### **QUESTIONS TO ASK AT THE INTERVIEW**

It's a good idea to find out as much as you can about the job and the company prior to the interview however, if there remains a void in an important issue you would like to know or clarify, then this is your opportunity. It's a good idea to show your interest by asking an intelligent question.

Remember, questions about salary and benefits are not appropriate at an interview. Don't ask these types of questions until after they offer you the job. Know what you are worth.

End on a positive note. Thank them for their time and meeting with you. Here are some sample questions, but not all are appropriate for every field:

#### Questions about the Job:

1. Can you describe a typical day in this job?
2. Could you identify the most important skills to being successful in this job?
3. What do you see as the most challenging aspect of this position?
4. Can you break down this job into specific functions or tasks?
5. Why is this position available? (Their answer might be, expansion, growth, parental leave)
6. Typically, when an employee advances from this particular job, what position would they get?
7. Can you describe what is required to move ahead in the department?
8. What do you see as a realistic learning curve for this position?
9. How might I expect to receive feedback on my performance in this role?
10. Could you share with me what you believe to be the most rewarding aspect of working in this department / or in this role?
11. When should I expect to hear back from you on your decision?
12. Can you tell me about your background and how you attained your position?

#### Questions about the Company:

1. I noticed on your website that you have a branch office in (the West or the U.S.). Do you anticipate opening another other office in the future and where will it be located?
2. I noticed the wall plaque in your lobby that you received an award for (green technology). Can you tell me a little more about that because I'm very interested in that field?

3. I read an article about your involvement in (whatever). Can you tell me what your next major project will be? Or what area you are looking to in the future?
4. Does your organization support employee professional development or further education?
5. Where do you see the next area for growth with your organization?
6. What was the last big change at your company? How was it implemented?
7. Can you describe what is required to move ahead in the company?
8. Could you give me an example of how a successful employee has moved ahead?
9. Could you share with me what you believe to be the most rewarding aspect of working at your company?

In order to ask relevant questions, you need to do as much research as you can about the organization. You don't want to ask questions where answers can be found out quite easily by doing a little research.

For Research, use the Library, the Scott's and Fraser's Directory, trade magazines, the telephone directory, and the company website.