

# The Interview Prep

## Before the Interview:

**Know Your Resume** – Make sure you know all the information on your resume and be prepared to speak about your past work experience, education or any other relevant information listed on your resume with the employer.

**Research** – Learn as much as you can about the position and the company beforehand. Research the company by using their company website, LinkedIn and resources like Indeed. Study the job posting to learn what kind of person the position needs and to help you anticipate what kind of questions you can potentially be asked.

**Practice** – Based on your research, practice common and potential questions that may come up in the interview. Practice your answers out loud in front of a mirror, ask a friend or family member to help you prepare or book a mock interview appointment with a Career Advisor or Coach to help you with your interview skills.

**Prepare Questions for Your Employer** – Asking thoughtful questions at the end of your interview is a simple way to show you're truly interested and enthusiastic about the role and the company.

## Day of the Interview:

**Arrive Early** – You should arrive 10-15 minutes before the interview. Know the directions to the interview and plan your commute in advance.

**Dress Professionally** – Look professional — neat, clean, and well groomed. It is appropriate to dress more formally for the interview even if the environment is casual.

**Self Marketing Tools** – Bring a professional looking folder or padfolio with 2-4 copies of your resume and your references.

**Be Kind** – Make sure to be friendly and courteous to everyone you meet; others not directly in the interview process may be asked to express an opinion about you.

**Avoid Distractions** – Turn off your cell phone or use the do not disturb function before and during your interview to avoid distractions.

## During the Interview:

**Monitor Body Language** – Make sure to sit up straight, smile and nod (at appropriate times), and actively listen during the interview.

**Be Confident in your Answers** – Give clear and concise answers with specific examples about your past experiences and skills that directly relate to the position or company goals. Mention your accomplishments whenever possible.

**Ask Questions** – Make sure to ask the employer 1-2 of the questions you prepared at the end of the interview to show them you're truly interested and enthusiastic about the role and the company.

## After the Interview:

**Evaluate your Performance** – Each interview should be a learning experience. Write down everything you think you handled right and wrong, so you can adjust your responses for the next interview.

**Send a Thank you Note** – Thank them for their time and restate your interest in the position. Send within 24 hours of your interview.

**Follow Up** – Check-in with them if it's been 2-3 days longer than you expected to hear back from them.

## Questions you can ask the Employer:

- What are the most challenging aspects of this job?
- Can you tell me about the team I would be supporting? What are their strengths and the biggest challenges?
- What do you enjoy about working here?
- What gets you excited about the company's future? When do you hope to have this role filled?
- Can you tell me how your career has developed at the organization? How does the company promote professional growth?

## Types of Interview Questions:

When preparing for an interview, you can expect the following types of questions:

### Traditional Questions

Most commonly used by employers and meant to gather background information about a candidate and to determine whether a candidate has all the relevant requirements for a job. Questions can include:

- Tell me about yourself
- What is your biggest weakness? Why should we hire you?

### Behavioral/Situational Questions

Designed to learn how the candidate would respond to a specific workplace situation, and how they solve problems to achieve a successful outcome. Questions can include:

- Tell me about a time you disagreed with a supervisor
- Tell me about a goal you set and reached and how you achieved it
- Describe a time you've made an error. How did you handle it?

### Case/Skill Verification Questions

These are questions where the interviewer presents a case, so that candidates can present their recommendations. You might have to also make a presentation or demonstrate your skills through a practical assessment. Questions can include:

- Our company is trying to grow our revenue by targeting the millennial demographic; what approaches should we take to market our products to this population group?

### Cultural Fit Interview Questions

Used to assess whether the candidate's personality, values and behaviour will align with the company's culture and will mesh with the existing team. Questions can include:

- Where do you see yourself in 5 years?
- Which of our core values do you most identify with?

## How to answer commonly asked questions:

### **Tell Me About Yourself**

**Answer Strategy:** Summarize your skills, experience and skills as it relates to the position you are being interviewed for. Remember to focus only the experience and skills you have that will add value to the position (think elevator pitch).

### **What is Your Biggest Weakness?**

**Answer Strategy:** Choose a weakness that will not prevent you from succeeding in the role & show how you've taken steps to improve them.

### **What Do You Consider Your Strengths?**

**Answer Strategy:** Describe skills that match the job description and will make you an asset.

### **Why Do You Want To Leave Your Current Job?**

**Answer Strategy:** Avoid speaking negatively about current employer. Highlight reasons such as "looking to grow in my career" or "expand my expertise".

### **Why Should We Hire You?**

**Answer Strategy:** Make a powerful statement about the value you'll bring to their organization and specific reasons you are a good fit by speaking to the skills, experiences and credentials that are unique to you.