

# Interview Guide

You've created the perfect resume, but now that you are gaining the attention of employers, you realize you're not interview ready. Enter the Career Services Interview Guide, the one-stop shop for being prepared and getting rid of those pre-interview jitters.

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# Be Prepared!

## First things first—do your homework on:

- The organization you are applying to
- The position you are applying for
- The interviewer(s), if possible
- The interviewee – yes, you! Google yourself. Do a quick social media check and make sure nothing pops up that you do not want the interviewer seeing. THEY WILL CHECK!

## The Tell-Me-About-Yourself Conundrum:

Most interviewers will ask this or some variation of it. Be prepared to answer this question with:

1. **Present, Past, Future:** Tell a personal narrative
2. **Benefit:** How you will benefit the organization

### To Elaborate

- Start with the **present**—where you are right now. Then, segue into the **past**—a little bit about the experiences you have had and the skills you gained from those experiences (academic, professional, and/or personal). Finally, finish with the **future**—why you are really excited for this particular opportunity. This is where **benefit** comes into play. That is, you have to be clear and concise as to how your skillset, ambitions, and future plans benefit the organization.

## Interview Etiquette Refresher:

- Whether it is a traditional interview or Skype interview, dress formally.
- If it is a traditional interview, be there at least 15 minutes before time.
- Be friendly to the receptionist and everyone you meet.
- During the interview, sit up straight and maintain eye contact (practice before).
- Talk slowly. Be sure to pace yourself.
- If it is a Skype or phone interview, make sure you know who calls—you or the interviewer
- When asked about weakness, demonstrate introspection and humility.
- After the interview, Email an appropriate and professional thank you note. If some conversation topic from the interview stands out, be sure to incorporate that.

Schedule an appointment with a Peer Career Adviser to improve your resume and LinkedIn profile to best showcase your strengths, talk about careers, or discuss any inquiry you have.

PROVEN: Frequent visits correlate to better chances of landing your dream job!

## Sample Interview Questions:

Below are common questions interviewers may ask, as well as methods of displaying your strengths and value through your past experiences

### General:

1. What is it about this particular position or program that attracts you?
2. What are your career ambitions or goals? How does this position align with your ambitions?
3. What do you know about our organization?
4. What criteria are you using to evaluate the organization for which you hope to work?
5. What do you consider to be your greatest strengths and weaknesses?
6. What have you learned from your mistakes?
7. How would others (colleagues, professors, peers, etc.) describe you? [Be prepared for each]
8. How has your college experience prepared you for a career?
9. Why should I hire you? [The Benefit Statement can be tailored to answer this]
10. What qualifications do you have that make you think you will be successful?
11. How can you make contributions to our organization? [variation of Benefit Statement]
12. Describe the relationship that you believe should exist between you and your supervisor.
13. If you could do so, how would you plan your academic study differently? Why?
14. In what kind of work environment are you most comfortable in?
15. What major problems have you encountered and how did you deal with?

### Behavioral:

Many interviewers ask behavioral questions, as your past behaviors can be a good predictor of your future behavior. These questions must be answered with at least one specific example.

Typical Behavioral Questions (**and what they address**) include:

1. Describe how you resolved a disagreement with a colleague. (**conflict management**)
2. We've all had occasions when we misinterpreted something that someone told us, like a due date, complicated instructions, etc. Give me an example of when this happened to you, why it happened, and how you rectified the situation. (**communication**)
3. Give me an example of a situation in which you made up your mind too rapidly, and how that affected the outcome of the situation. (**decision making**)
4. Everyone has to bend or break the rules sometime. Describe an example of when you did this, why, and what came of it? (**judgment or ethics**)
5. Describe your strengths and specific ways that you have utilized them. Identify a weakness and how you've countered or worked around it successfully. (**transferable skills**)
6. Describe an experience when you were part of a team, the part you played on the team and how you handled team members who were not contributing. (**teamwork**)

7. Describe a situation where you assumed responsibility for getting something complicated or important done and how you went about it. **(planning/organizational skills)**
8. Describe a time when you encountered an obstacle you could not overcome and how you dealt with that situation. **(persistence)**

### Negative Experiences:

Although an experience can be negative, it is imperative to showcase the lessons learned and skills developed from it. Try to identify one example where you can talk about:

1. How you were able to pull something positive out of the negative experience **(Reflection)**
2. How you have identified how to handle a similar situation differently in the future **(Growth)**

## Questions for the Interviewer:

At the end of the interview, you will be asked if you have questions. If you have done your research on the position and organization, this should come naturally. It is criminal to say, —No. Here are a few sample questions to get you started (select 1-3):

1. What does it take to be successful here?
2. What do you see as the biggest challenges of this position or program?
3. Why was this position made available (or created)?
4. What types of tasks should I expect to be prepared to face on a day-to-day basis?
5. What are the most rewarding components of this job or program?
6. What kind of training opportunities can I expect as a new employee?
7. How easily do people advance from this position? What is a typical career path?
8. How will I be evaluated?
9. What do you see as the future of this organization or program?
10. What are the immediate goals of this organization or program?
11. What are the challenges facing this organization or career field in the near future?
12. How would you recommend that a new employee builds relationship in this position?
13. How can the person you hire be of most value to the team or organization in light of the project goals you mentioned?
14. What type of team member have you hired in the past that worked out well? What about new hires that didn't fit in?