

**During an interview your interviewer and you are determining your suitability for the position.**

The interviewer wants to learn that you can do the work and want the position; understand your experience as a team player and effective problem solver; and observe you modeling professional behavior.

And YOU should learn the organization's needs, their structure, work environment, business activities, future plans, and communication style of the people/organization you are considering. As a candidate you must assess whether the position and organization are a fit for your personality, skills and goals.

**Preparation for interviews is critical.**

Know yourself. You must be able to articulate your interests, abilities, values, experience, education, and short and long term goals as well as your interest in the organization. Make a list of possible interview questions and practice delivering your responses. Participate in a mock interview through Career Services.

Research the organization. Know products or services, key people, organizational structure, and competitors' views of the organization. To find this information, talk to people within the organization or to people in the industry, and read the organization's webpage, annual report, and other literature.

**Making a good impression is about how you look, what you say, and post-interview follow-up.**

Wear a suit, unless you have been advised otherwise. Choose a conservative suit in grey or navy.

Bring a leather portfolio to your interview that has a copy of your application materials, extra copies of your resume, a list of questions that you will ask, and a pen. Do not bring food or drink into an interview.

Promptness is important. Arrive 10-15 minutes before your interview start time. You may have paperwork to complete, or you can review your application materials one more time before the interview.

Offer a firm handshake. This and what you wear are your first impressions to the interviewer. It is critical that these impressions are strong and positive.

Ask questions at the end of the interview. Focus your questions on the nature of the job. Do not ask about salary and benefits. Ask for next steps in the hiring process if this information has not yet been provided.

Ask for a business card or contact information for your interviewers, and write or email a thank you note.

**Include examples from your experience when responding to interview questions.**

Respond directly to the interview question. If you do not understand the question, ask for clarification. If you need time to think about an answer, say so, and then take a few seconds to compose your response.

Respond to interview questions briefly and completely. Use examples to illustrate your skills. Include specifics on what you did, how you did it and what the outcome was.

Avoid "um," "ahh," "like," "uh," and "you know" in your responses.

**Evaluate your interview experience.**

Make notes about your interview. Include details on how you felt about the interview, types of questions you were asked and how you responded, how interviewers responded to your questions, and impressions of the people with whom you spoke. This will help you determine if the position and organization are a fit for you.

**Write a thank you note to your interviewers.**

Write or email a thank you note to the person or people who interviewed you. Include things that impressed you during the interview, and re-state your interest in the position.

# SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

## Personal Assessment

Tell me about yourself.  
What major problem have you dealt with recently?  
What is a difficult decision that you've made?  
Do you handle pressure well?  
How do you deal with ambiguity?  
How do you prioritize your time and activities?  
Define success.  
How do you deal with conflict?  
What are some things you are proud of?  
What does it take to be successful in this career?  
What are your future plans?  
What are 4 things I will remember about you?  
Why should we hire you?  
Tell me about your strongest skills.  
What is your greatest weakness?  
If I were to ask one of your professors to describe you, what would he or she say?

## Work Environment Questions

Describe your ideal job.  
How does your experience relate to this job?  
What do you expect from a supervisor?  
Describe how you have worked as part of a team.  
What 2-3 things are important to you in a job?  
Why?  
What motivates you?  
What are qualities of a successful manager?  
What do you know about this area?  
Are you willing to travel? How much?  
How much money do you need to make to be happy?  
Do you enjoy doing independent research?  
Who were your favorite professors? Why?  
Have you ever had a conflict with a boss or professor? How did you resolve it?

## Knowledge of Organization and Position

What attracted you to our position?  
Why are you qualified for this position?  
What are some of your long-range & short-range goals and objectives, and how have you prepared yourself to achieve them?  
What do you hope to accomplish personally and professionally in this position?  
Why do you want to work in this industry?  
What do you know about our company?  
Why are you interested in our company?  
What do you like best about your job/company?

## Questions to Ask Interviewers

What kinds of assignments might I expect the first 6 months on the job?  
Do you have plans for expansion?  
In what ways is a career with your organization better than one with your competitors?  
What do you like best about your job/work place?  
Where does this position fit into the organizational structure?  
What is the largest single problem facing your staff /department now?  
Does your company encourage further education?  
What are your growth projections for next year?  
If you could change one thing about this company, what would it be? And why?  
With whom will I be working most closely?  
Does this position lead to other jobs in the organization? Which ones?  
What is a typical day like?

## Be able to articulate 2-4 examples from each of these areas

- What you want employers to know about you.
- Examples of how you cooperated with people, or groups to get a job done.
- Accomplishments you are proud of and what employers can learn about you by knowing these achievements.
- Illustrations of problems you resolved and descriptions of the process you used to solve them.
- Your strengths and examples from your experience demonstrating them.
- A weakness and how you are working to resolve it.