

# THE ART OF INTERVIEWING

Professional Development Series

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# INTERVIEW TYPES

- **Behavioral interview:** asks direct questions and looks to support the information in resume. The interviewer asks candidates to recall specific instances where they were faced with a set of circumstances
- **Committee interview:** will be interviewed by a panel/group. Panel may represent different aspects of job, group format saves time and everyone hears the same answers to the same interview questions. Can also show how you perform under pressure, interact with others.

# INTERVIEW TYPES

- **Phone Interview:** used to screen candidates or for applicants located at a distance
  - positive: you can prepare notes, be in the comfort of your home and dress is not an issue
  - negative: difficult to connect or be energized over the phone
- **Screening Interview:** used to screen and prioritize candidates. Looking to see if your qualifications match. May be done by HR.
- **Case interview:** tests your ability to problem solve and think on your feet. The job applicant is given a question, situation, problem or challenge and asked to resolve the situation.
  - Cannot really prepare for this

# INTERVIEW PREPARATION

Use the **STAR** method to prepare for behavioral interviews

- Name a **S****ituation** facing you....
- Name a **T****ask** you had to complete
- Describe the **A****ction** you took....
- Describe the **R****esults** of your action

# PREPARING FOR BEHAVIORAL INTERVIEW

- **To prepare for your interview, think of examples from your education and work experience where you:**
  - Solved a problem or handled a conflict
  - Coached or influenced others
  - Made decisions
  - Managed Projects
  - Made recommendations for improvement
  - Came up with innovative ideas
- You will be asked to describe the actions you took in each situation and the impact your actions had on coworkers, patients, residents, customers or the organization.

# INTERVIEW PREPARATION

## **In the days before the interview:**

- Confirm location, time, contact person, parking, directions
- If travel is involved
  - Clarify if employer will pay for expenses
  - If so, how will it be handled. (prepaid/arranged or you to be reimbursed)
  - Use good judgment if employer is paying expenses

# INTERVIEW PREPARATION

- Determine your salary needs. What is your bottom line?
- Research salary information for the region and practice setting to know what is realistic for both you and organization
- Get permission from your references before you use their names and have their contact information readily available.

# INTERVIEW PREPARATION

- Write at least 3-5 scenarios to answer behavioral interview questions.
- List 5-10 questions to ask the interviewer about the job and company
- Prepare to answer questions such as
  - “tell me about yourself?”
  - “what are your career goals?”
  - “where do you see yourself in 5 years?”
  - “what are your strengths and weakness?”
- If this is a second career, determine how your previous skills/experience apply to new job



# INTERVIEW PREPARATION

## **Day of the interview:**

- Check yourself in the mirror to see if you look professional
- Take the following with you
  - Several copies of your resume
  - A copy or two of your references
  - A note pad for taking notes (optional)
  - Directions to interview and phone number
- Eat before the interview

# INTERVIEW ARRIVAL

- Arrive early
- Go to restroom and check appearance
- Announce yourself to receptionist in a very polite and professional manner (staff are watching)
- Review your prepared information while you wait
- Stand and greet your interviewer with a hearty NOT bone crushing handshake
- Smile and look interviewer in the eyes

# STRUCTURE OF AN INTERVIEW

- Rapport building
- Background/experience
- Matching skills/person to position
- Closing

# INTERVIEW

- Focus on the points you have prepared without sounding rehearsed
- Relax and enjoy the conversation
- Ask questions and listen
- When concluding, thank interviewer and determine the next step
- Ask for the interviewer's card so you can follow up.

# INTERVIEW

Preparation and practice  
are the two most important  
elements of interviewing.

# INTERVIEWING: COMMON QUESTIONS

- Tell me about yourself
- What do you know about our organization
- What are your goals
- What are your strengths and weaknesses
- Why do you want to work for this organization
- What has been your most significant achievement
- How would your last clinical supervisor (or boss) and/or colleagues describe you
- Why should we hire you
- What are your salary expectations

# SAMPLE BEHAVIOR BASED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

- Give me an example of time when you used good judgment and logic in solving a problem
- Tell me about a time when you had to go above and beyond the call of duty in order to get a job done.
- Describe a time when you were faced with problems/stress on the job that tested your coping skills.

## SAMPLE QUESTIONS CONTINUED

- Describe a situation where you were able to persuade someone to see things your way/participate in an activity
- Give some examples that demonstrate your flexibility and ability to adapt to different situations/people
- Give an example of a goal you set and how you were able to successfully achieve it.



## QUESTIONS TO ASK

- Is there an orientation/mentoring /education program?
- What makes this department/program different from others?
- What is the experience level of staff?
- What are your expectations for new hires?
- What are the caseload and productivity expectations?

# EMPLOYER QUESTIONS

| Illegal  | Appropriate  |
|--|--|
| Are you a US citizen?                              | Are you authorized to work in the US?  |
| Marital/family status?                             | Are you able to work weekends?   |
| Are you affiliated with any organization?          | Do you belong to any organizations relevant to this job?                               |
| Do you have any disabilities?                      | Are you able to perform the essential duties of the job?                               |
| Have you been arrested?                            | Are you eligible for a license OR Has your practice license been revoked or suspended? |
| If in the military, were you honorably discharged? | What branch did you serve? What type of training or education did you receive?         |

# THINGS NOT TO DO IN AN INTERVIEW

- Arrive late, looked rushed or unprepared
- Wear too much perfume/cologne
- Offer little conversation, no questions
- Talk too much, ramble, delay process
- Get emotional, rant, share too much personal information
- Poor eye contact, look nervous, fidget
- Use slang or street language, try to be funny
- Be deceptive or overconfident

# INTERVIEW: DRESS FOR SUCCESS

- Find out what the culture and dress code of the organization are before interview
- Wear something dressier than what employees wear. (clinical positions usually do not wear suits)
- Never wear jeans or t-shirt or clothing with slogans/logos etc.
- Jacket is best for men and skirt or dress slacks for women (general)
- Always dress more on the conservative side

# INTERVIEW: COMMON FASHION MISTAKES

- Wild nail polish, extremely long nails
- Wear excessive make up
- Too much jewelry or excessive piercings
- Wear shoes that are difficult to walk in
- Overly trendy clothing
- Poorly fit clothing, disheveled appearance

# FOLLOW UP

- Simple thank you note following an interview can have considerable power and influence and reflect positively on you
- Reason for sending thank you note
  - shows interest, courtesy and respect
  - will stand out if only a few send a note
  - can reiterate a few points you made during interview
  - opportunity to make points you forgot to make at interview
  - demonstrates written skills

## OTHER THINGS TO CONSIDER

- Email address
- Facebook or My Space pages
- Voice mail message
- Prior commitments such as trips, weddings, etc.
- Time frame/plan for taking certification exam

## FINAL THOUGHT

Remember most people evaluate each other by appearance, verbal and nonverbal communication.



QUESTIONS?

## REFERENCES

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- Collegegrad.com. Mastering the interview. Retrieved from <http://www.collegegrad.com/jobsearch/Mastering-the-Interview/>
- Monster.com. Interviewing. Retrieved from <http://career-advice.monster.com/job-interview/careers.aspx>
- University of South Alabama Career Services. Interview essentials. 2010 Spring Job Fair.

# PHONE INTERVIEWS

- Screening method for identifying and recruiting candidates for employment.
  - Narrow the pool of applicants who will be invited for in-person interviews.
  - Minimize the expenses involved in interviewing out-of-town candidates.
- While you're actively job searching, it's important to be prepared for a phone interview on a moment's notice.
- Recruiter or a networking contact might call and ask if you have a few minutes to talk

# PHONE INTERVIEWS

- **Be Prepared to Interview**
- Prepare for a phone interview just as you would for a regular interview. Compile a list of your strengths and weaknesses, as well as a list of answers to typical phone interview questions. In addition, plan on being prepared for a phone conversation about your background and skills.
- Keep your resume in clear view, on the top of your desk, or tape it to the wall near the phone, so it's at your fingertips when you need to answer questions.
- Have a short list of your accomplishments available to review.

# PHONE INTERVIEWS

- Have a pen and paper handy for note taking.
- Turn call-waiting off so your call isn't interrupted.
- If the time isn't convenient, ask if you could talk at another time and suggest some alternatives.
- Clear the room – evict the kids and the pets. Turn off the stereo and the TV.
- Close the door.
- Unless you're sure your cell phone service is going to be perfect, consider using a landline rather than your cell phone to avoid a dropped call or static on the line.

# PHONE INTERVIEW

- **Practice Interviewing**
  - Talking on the phone isn't as easy as it seems. I've always found it's helpful to practice. Have a friend or family member conduct a mock interview and tape record it so you can see how you sound over the phone.
  - Any voice recorder will work. You'll be able to hear your "ums" and "uhs" and "okays" and you can practice reducing them from your conversational speech. Also rehearse answers to those typical questions you'll be asked.
- **During the Phone Interview**
  - Don't smoke, chew gum, eat, or drink.
  - Do keep a glass of water handy, in case you need to wet your mouth.

## ILLEGAL/APPROPRIATE QUESTIONS

- **Are you a US citizen?** Are you authorized to work in the US?
- **Marital/Family status?** Are you able to work weekends, late/overtime, travel?
- **Affiliations?** Do you belong to any organizations relevant to this job?
- **Disabilities?** Are you able to perform the essential duties of job?
- **Have you been arrested?** Have you been convicted of \_\_\_\_ OR have you had your practice license revoked or suspended?
- **If in military, were you honorably discharges?** What branch? Type of training or education received?

# PHONE INTERVIEW TIPS

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Career Advice • Careers

Phone Interview Tips:

Employers use telephone interviews as a way of identifying and recruiting candidates for employment. Phone interviews are often used to screen candidates in order to narrow the pool of applicants who will be invited for in-person interviews. They are also used as a way to minimize the expenses involved in interviewing out-of-town candidates.

While you're actively job searching, it's important to be prepared for a phone interview on a moment's notice. You never know when a recruiter or a networking contact might call and ask if you have a few minutes to talk.

## Be Prepared to Interview

Prepare for a phone interview just as you would for a regular interview. Compile a list of your strengths and weaknesses, as well as a list of answers to typical phone interview questions. In addition, plan on being prepared for a phone conversation about your background and skills.

Keep your resume in clear view, on the top of your desk, or tape it to the wall near the phone, so it's at your fingertips when you need to answer questions.

Have a short list of your accomplishments available to review.

Have a pen and paper handy for note taking.

Turn call-waiting off so your call isn't interrupted.

If the time isn't convenient, ask if you could talk at another time and suggest some alternatives.

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Any cassette recorder will work. You'll be able to hear your "ums" and "uhs" and "okays" and you can practice reducing them from your conversational speech. Also rehearse answers to those typical questions you'll be asked.

## During the Phone Interview

Don't smoke, chew gum, eat, or drink.

Do keep a glass of water handy, in case you need to wet your mouth.

Smile. Smiling will project a positive image to the listener and will change the tone of your voice.

Speak slowly and enunciate clearly.

Use the person's title (Mr. or Ms. and their last name.) Only use a first name if they ask you to.

Don't interrupt the interviewer.

Take your time – it's perfectly acceptable to take a moment or two to collect your thoughts.

Give short answers.

Remember your goal is to set up a face-to-face interview. After you think the interviewer ask if it would be possible to meet in person.

By Jo Annan