

# Interview Techniques

## 10 Rules of Interviewing

1. **MAKE A STRONG FIRST IMPRESSION:**  
Get the interview off to a good start by being on time and greeting the interviewer with a smile and a confident handshake.
2. **RESEARCH THE ORGANIZATION:**  
Demonstrate knowledge of the company by including information from your research in your answers. The organization's website and LinkedIn are great places to start.
3. **KEEP YOUR RESPONSES FOCUSED:**  
Your answers should be between 30 seconds and 2 minutes long.
4. **USE STRONG EXAMPLES AND QUANTIFY WHEN POSSIBLE:**  
Show the interviewer that you have certain qualities and skills, rather than telling them, by providing specific examples. Including measurable information gives you greater credibility.
5. **REPEAT YOUR STRENGTHS:**  
Know your top three strengths as they relate to the position, and reiterate them throughout the interview. Remember to include strong examples of your strengths.
6. **PREPARE SUCCESS STORIES:**  
Fully developed examples from previous experiences can help you respond to any behavioral interview question an employer may ask.
7. **PUT YOURSELF ON THEIR TEAM:**  
Show that you are a good fit by positioning yourself as a member of the team. Use organization-specific language and refer to products and services.
8. **ASK QUESTIONS:**  
By asking questions, you convey interest and enthusiasm to the interviewer. Avoid questions regarding salary and benefits.
9. **FOLLOW UP:**  
Send a thank you note within 24 hours to the interviewer restating your interest and thanking them for their time.
10. **EVALUATE THE INTERVIEW:**  
Reflect on your experience and review your performance. What did you do well and what can you improve upon for next time?

## What to Bring

- Padfolio, notebook and pen
- Copies of your resume
- Transcripts / portfolio (if requested)
- Questions for the employer
- Calendar
- List of references
- Directions
- Examples of your work

## Before the Interview

- Explore your strengths, weaknesses, interests, and career goals
- Research the employer
- Review the job description
- Prepare for commonly asked interview questions and potential questions to ask the interviewer
- Practice aloud
- Review your resume

## During the Interview

- Arrive early – approximately 10 – 15 minutes before the interview
- Greet the employer and/or associates with a smile, firm handshake and confidence
- When responding to questions, organize your thoughts and then answer
  - Give examples using BART (Background, Action, Result, Tie it back to the position)
  - Answers should be positive and concise
  - Do not identify a weakness essential to the job
- Be aware of non-verbal behaviors – posture, voice, eye contact, and smile
- Relax and enjoy the conversation

## After the Interview

- Ask questions – have 3 – 5 prepared
- Thank the interviewer and determine next steps
- Reaffirm your interest in the position
- Ask for a business card and send a thank you letter or email within 24 hours
- Re-evaluate interview questions and your responses – reflect on your performance and take notes for future reference

## Typical Interview Questions

### PERSONAL:

- Tell me about yourself
- What are your major strengths and weaknesses?
- What motivates you to put forth your greatest effort?
- What achievements from your past work experience are you most proud of?

### EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND:

- How does your education experience relate to this job?
- What extracurricular activities did you participate in and what did you learn from those experiences?
- What was the most difficult course you took? How did you handle it?

### WORK EXPERIENCE:

- What prior work experience have you had and how does it relate to this job?
- How would your past supervisors describe you?
- What were your most significant accomplishments in your prior work experience?
- What did you enjoy most about your previous work experience? Least?

### EMPLOYER KNOWLEDGE:

- Why are you interested in this position?
- Why are you interested in this particular company?
- What attracts you to this particular industry?

### GOALS AND OBJECTIVES:

- Please describe your ideal work setting
- What major accomplishment would you like to achieve in your life and why?
- What are your career interests?

### BEHAVIORAL QUESTIONS – USE BART

(BACKGROUND, ACTION, RESULT, TIE IT BACK):

- Tell me about a conflict situation and how you resolved it
- Describe a situation when you had multiple tasks to complete under very tight time constraints
- Describe a time when you sold your colleague / supervisor on an idea
- Tell me about a time when you worked on a project as part of a team. What role did you play?
- Describe a time when you failed at something. What would you have done differently?
- Give me an example of a situation when you took a leadership role

## Sample Questions to Ask

- How is job performance measured?
- What are the biggest challenges associated with this position?
- What would a typical project / assignment be like?
- How would you describe an ideal employee?
- What additional qualities does the job require that we haven't discussed?
- How does the current or former occupant's background and experience differ from mine?

## Research

### WHAT TO RESEARCH:

- History of the organization
- Products and services
- Culture
- Management style
- Organizational structure
- Financial conditions
- Major competitors
- Plans for growth
- Job responsibilities
- Opportunities for advancement
- Locations

### WHERE TO RESEARCH:

- Company website
- career.uci.edu
- Onetonline.org
- Google
- Online newspapers
- Orange County Business Journal
- LinkedIn
- glassdoor.com
- Current and former employees, interns, alumni

For additional help, try:

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