INTERVIEWING

WHAT YOU WISH YOU’D KNOWN BEFORE YOUR JOB INTERVIEW

Common nonverbal mistakes made at a job interview

From a survey of 2000 bosses

21% Playing with hair or fiddling face
47% Having little or no knowledge of the company is the most common mistake job seekers make during interviews
67% Failure to make eye contact
38% Lack of smile
33% Bad posture
21% Crossing arms over chest
9% Using too many hand gestures
26% Handshake that is too weak
33% Fidgeting too much

Statistics show that when meeting new people the impact is:

33% from what we actually say
7% The quality of our voice
38% our way we dress, act and walk through the door
55% Clothes
65% Bright colors are a turn-off
70% If tattoos, nail polish, etc., may be too fashionably or trendy.

Top Ten Most common mistakes made at a job interview

1. Over-Explaining Why You Lost Your Last Job
2. Conveying That You’re Not Over It
3. “Winging” the Interview
4. Lacking Humor, warmth, or Personality
5. Not Sharing Enough Information or enthusiasm
6. Inadequate Research About a Potential Employer
7. Concentrating Too Much on What You Want
8. Inadequate Research About the Company
9. Convincing That You’re Not Over It
10. Trying to Be All Things to All People

Most common tips about interviewing

1. Be ready to briefly describe your experience
2. Have a specific job in mind
3. Review your qualifications for the job
4. Learn about the organization
5. Tell me about your experience at __________

5 questions most likely to be asked

1. Why did you leave your last job?
2. Why do you want to work for us?
3. What do you know about our company?
4. Why do you want the job?
5. Tell me about yourself

Classes/Careers

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Networking/Interviewing - Know Yourself to Sell Yourself

STEP 1: Make a list of hard/soft skills and write down your professional goals

1. List your most important skills and strengths (hard/soft skills).

2. What are your professional goals (job titles you aspire to, education/training you would like to complete, projects you want to work on, internships you plan to do, etc.)?

STEP 2: Brainstorm Your Accomplishments

Ask yourself the following questions (or any other interview question about hard/soft skills) and write down your responses:

1. Did you ever take initiative, or go above and beyond? HOW?

2. How did you do the job better than anyone else? HOW?

3. Did you leave your employer better off than before you worked there? HOW?

4. Did you constantly receive high ratings or compliments/recognition? WHY?

5. List any awards you won, such as Employee of the Month.

6. What are you most proud of in your career thus far? Be Specific!

7. Did you help your employer(s) save money, time, or increase the quality of their product/services? HOW?

8. Did you attract new customers or expand the business? How?
STEP 3: Write Your Elevator Speech

Elevator Speech (Template)

I am a/n ____________________________

(Occupation e.g. Carpenter or Administrative Assistant)

with the majority of my career Involved in ____________________________

(Industry e.g. Construction or Finance)

While working at ______________________, I ____________________________

(Company) (Share major accomplishment(s))

I have also ____________________________

(Briefly summarize additional relevant experience)

I find that wherever I have worked, I bring three key strengths to the table:

__________________________, ___________________________ and ___________________________.

(Name three relevant hard and/or soft skills)

At this time, my future plans are to ____________________________

(Future career objectives/goals)

STEP 4: Craft brief yet detailed stories to share in your interviews about your professional/relevant accomplishments

Tips:
- A good story has four elements, the Situation, the Task, the Action, and the Result.
- Be specific and quantify results. Interviewers like results translated to #’s, %’s, $’s.
- Use superlatives like first, only, best, most and highest.
- Demonstrate to the employer you didn’t just do the job but you were great at it!

Situation (problem) and/or Task: ____________________________

Action: ____________________________

__________________________

__________________________

__________________________

Result (Time, Money, and/or Increased Quality of Service/Product): ____________________________

__________________________

__________________________

__________________________

• Customer Service
• Conflict Resolution
• Leadership/Training
• Strong Work Ethic

• Flexibility/Adaptability
• Ability to Accept/Learn From Change
• Time Management/Scheduling
• Positive Outcome
Interviewing - Common Questions

INTRODUCTORY CONVERSATION/QUESTIONS
1. Please tell me a little bit about yourself.
2. What personal interests do you have that could be of value to this organization?
3. How would you describe yourself?

SOFT SKILLS (INTANGIBLE/PEOPLE SKILLS)

General
4. Do you have the qualifications and personal characteristics necessary for success in your chosen career? What are they? (This is a question of hard skills as well)

Communication
5. Describe a situation in which you were able to use persuasion to successfully convince someone to see things your way.
6. Tell about a time when you built rapport quickly with someone under difficult conditions.
7. Tell of the most difficult customer service experience that you have ever had to handle.
8. What has been your experience in giving presentations?

Leadership
9. How would you describe your leadership skills?

Cooperation/Manageability
10. How would you describe yourself in terms of your ability to work as a member of a team?
11. How would you evaluate your ability to deal with conflict, and please give an example?
12. Have you ever had difficulty with a supervisor? How did you resolve the conflict?

Flexibility
13. Tell of some situations in which you have had to adjust quickly to changes over which you had no control. What was the impact of the change on you?

Stress
14. Describe an instance when you had to think on your feet to get out of a difficult situation.

Planning/Organization/Time Management
15. Describe the system you use for keeping track of multiple projects.
16. Give an example of a time you identified and solved a small problem to prevent a big one.
17. How do you determine priorities in scheduling your time? Give examples.

Problem Solving/Decision Making
18. Provide an example of a time when you used good judgment and logic to solve a problem.

Work Ethic
19. What have you accomplished that shows your initiative and willingness to work?

HARD SKILLS (LEARNED IN SCHOOL/TRAINING)
20. What software and operating systems do you specialize in?
21. What is your word-per-minute keyboarding speed?
22. What has been your most rewarding accomplishment?
23. What training have you completed and what projects are you most proud of?

CHARACTER/MOTIVATION/goals
24. How do you know when you’ve had a good day?
25. What personal weakness has caused you the greatest difficulty on the job?
26. What specific career goals have you established?
27. Describe what you’ve accomplished toward reaching a recent goal for yourself.
28. What do you expect to be doing in five years?
29. What sorts of things have you done to become better qualified for your career?
30. Give an example of when you took a risk to achieve a goal. What was the outcome?
31. What quality or attribute do you feel will most contribute to your career success?
32. Which is more important to you, the job itself or your salary? Why?
33. How would you define “success” for someone in your chosen career?
34. Which is more important: creativity or efficiency? Why?
35. What was the toughest challenge you’ve ever faced?
36. What two or three things are most important to you in your job?
37. Give me an example of a time you had to make an important decision.
38. What is the biggest mistake you've made?
39. Everyone has made some poor decisions, give an example of when this has happened to you.
40. Tell about a time when your trustworthiness was challenged. How did you react/respond?
41. Describe a situation when you were able to have a positive influence on the actions of others.
42. Tell about a time when you were confronted by dishonesty in the workplace, how you handled it?
43. Describe a team experience you found disappointing. What could you have done to prevent it?
44. Describe a time when you had to make a difficult choice between personal and professional life.
45. What motivates you to go the extra mile on a project or job?

**COMPANY CULTURAL/PERSONALITY FIT**
46. What do you enjoy most about your current position?
47. Describe the characteristics of a successful manager.
48. What criteria are you using to choose companies to interview with?
49. Some people work best as part of a group-- others prefer the role of individual contributor. How would you describe yourself?
50. What are the key ingredients in guiding and maintaining successful business relationships?
51. By providing examples, what have you done in your past to adapt to a wide variety of people, situations and environments?
52. Give me a specific occasion in which you conformed to a policy with which you did not agree.
53. Sometimes it's easy to get in "over your head." Describe a situation where you had to request help or assistance on a project or assignment.
54. Describe a situation where others you were working with on a project disagreed with your ideas. What did you do?
55. Describe a situation in which you had to arrive at a compromise or guide others to a compromise.
56. What kind of supervisor do you work best for? Provide examples.
57. Give me a specific example of something you did that helped build enthusiasm in others.
58. Tell me about a time when you failed to meet a deadline. What things did you fail to do? What were the repercussions? What did you learn?
59. What suggestions do you have for our organization?
60. Describe a time when you got co-workers who dislike each other to work together. How did you accomplish this? What was the outcome?
61. Tell me about a time when you failed to meet a deadline. What things did you fail to do? What were the repercussions? What did you learn?
62. Describe a time when you put your needs aside to help a co-worker understand a task. How did you assist him or her? What was the result?
63. Give two examples of things you've done in previous jobs that demonstrate your willingness to work hard.
64. Some people consider themselves to be "big picture people" and others are detail oriented. Which are you? Give an example that illustrates your preference.
65. Describe a situation where you felt you had not communicated well. How did you correct the situation?
66. Give me an example of when you were able to meet the personal and professional demands in your life yet still maintained a healthy balance.
67. Before you can make a productive contribution to the company, what degree of training do you feel you will require?

**CONCLUSION QUESTIONS**
68. Is there anything else that we should know about you or a question we should have asked?
69. If you were offered the job are there any "deal breakers" that would prevent you from taking it?
70. Why should we hire you?
71. Why do you want to work for this industry?
72. Do you have any questions for us?