

Job Interview 101

A job interview is a face-to-face meeting of two or more people. Interviews give employers an opportunity to directly observe aspects of your behavior such as communication skills, physical appearance and mannerisms. It's also a way for employers to learn more about you than what was on your job application or resume.

It's important to prepare for your interview. If you fail to prepare, you are preparing to fail! Here are some ways to prepare for your interview:

- Look up the company website. Spend some time learning what the company does.
- Prepare answers to commonly asked interview questions.
- Make a list of questions you would like to ask during the interview.

No two interviews will be the same. But there are some commonly asked questions that you can prepare for.

- **Tell me about yourself.** This question can be scary. But it doesn't have to be! The interviewer is really looking at your attitude. Answer this question with confidence and enthusiasm. Here are some examples of how to respond to this question:
 - "I can summarize who I am in three words. I am _____, _____ and _____."
 - › This answer is concise and direct.
 - "When I was younger I always wanted to be a _____."
 - › This answer shows that you are passionate about the job you are applying for. It shows that this is your dream job.
- **Why should I hire you over someone else?**
 - "You should hire me because I'm committed to the values and success of this company."
- **Describe a situation in which your work was criticized. Tell me how you responded.**
 - "A customer criticized me for the way I responded to her request. I acknowledged her disappointment and tried to focus on another way I could assist her."

At the end of the interview you will have the opportunity to ask questions to the employer. You should always ask at least one question. Here are some examples of questions you could ask:

- **What does a usual day on the job look like?**
- **Why do you enjoy work here?**
- **Are there any other responsibilities of the job that we have not discussed?**

Make sure you shake hands with the interviewer at the end of the interview. Thank the interviewer for their time. Indicate your strong interest in the job.



Now it's your turn to practice answering some commonly asked interview questions. Write down your answers to the questions below. You can also ask a family member or friend to ask you these questions so that you can practice responding out loud.

1. Tell me about yourself.
2. Tell me about your work history.
3. Why should I hire you over someone else?
4. Describe a situation when your work was criticized. How did you respond?
5. How do you handle conflict?
6. What are your long-term career plans?
7. What are your biggest strengths?
8. What are your biggest weaknesses?
9. What is your biggest achievement?
10. Why are you currently looking for a job?