

Preparing for a job interview

Know yourself

- Spend time thinking about your goals, talents, skills, abilities...what do you do well? Write it down. This is the first step in developing a resume.
- Think about your participation in organizations, teams, clubs and programs. What positive stories can you tell about being a player or member?
- How about people that have had an influence on your life. Who are they? How did you meet them? Why are they important?
- Prepare a 2-5 minute sales pitch about yourself and rehearse with a friend or family. Practice responding to questions the interviewer may ask.

Know the job or organization

- Research before you go. Find literature or information on line about the organization and its products so you are well informed.
- Make a list of 5 questions to ask the interviewer about the organization and position.

Know the interview process

- Arrive early
- Complete application neatly and carefully
- Bring IDs
- Go alone
- Shake the interviewer's hand. Sit and/or stand up straight. Maintain eye contact
- Answer questions clearly and succinctly. Try not to ramble
- Talk and think about the future rather than the past
- Indicate you are flexible and ready to learn
- Ask prepared questions
- Do not discuss salary or benefits
- Thank the interviewer for his/ her time at the end
- **Dress for success**

Tips: Hair- clean, trimmed and combed

Fingernails- trimmed and clean

Shoes- clean and shined, no holes

Men- solid colored or lightly pin-striped shirt, grey, blue or brown dress slacks, a tie, jacket or vest will make you look even better

Women- a nice dress or blouse and skirt or dress pants, avoid distracting jewelry, perfume or make-up

Some commonly asked job interview questions

- ***Tell me about yourself*** means describe your education (favorite classes, projects, teachers, programs or trips); mention your jobs or volunteer positions in terms of accomplishments or what you did well.
- ***List 3 adjective that best describe you.***
- ***Do you work well with others?***
- ***Are you self motivated?*** means can you successfully work on a task with little or no supervision
- ***What are your strengths?*** (ex. organized, creative, competitive, good speaking or writing skills, hard worker)
- ***What are your weaknesses?*** (this is a tough question but one that is often asked. Think of one and answer the questions in 1 or 2 sentences)
- ***What types of activities do you do for fun?*** Think of fun, positive things you do in your spare time.
- ***What is customer service?***
- ***Do you have short term goals? What are your long term goals?***
- ***Why do you think you'd be good at this job?***
- ***What questions do you have for me?*** Have 3-5 questions prepared to ask the interviewer about the job or the company.

Your answers to the questions interviewers ask will influence the hiring decision. Answer every question in terms of what makes you the right person for the job to be filled.

Creating questions to ask the interviewer

Employers like to be interviewed too!

General questioning guidelines

- Have questions written on a list
- Focus your questions on the job
- Ask questions that require an extended answer or explanation
- Don't interrupt during a response
- Avoid questions relating to salary, benefits, vacations or retirement

Some ideas for questions:

- Ask about the job; what are the duties, tasks, or responsibilities?
- Ask for a description of a typical day on the job
- Ask about the expectations of you in the position 6-12 months from now
- Have questions about the specific company or organization (after you've done the research and read about it, right?)
- Are there opportunities to further your education/ skills? Be promoted?
- Is there travel involved? If so, how much?
- If you could have lunch with anyone in the world, who would it be?