

# Interviewing Techniques

## Steps To a Successful Interview

### Before An Interview

- **Research:** Learn as much as you can about the position and the company beforehand – know the company's products and services. Sources for this research are your Career Services Centre, the Library and the Internet.
- **Practice:** Practice interviews with a career counsellor, friend, family member or by yourself in front of a mirror.
- **Be prompt and prepared:** Arrive 10 to 15 minutes early bring extra copies of your resume, your list of references, a pen and paper, and the list of questions you have for the interviewer.
- **Strengths and your weaknesses:** Make a list of your skills and key assets. Then reflect on past jobs/experiences and pick out one or two instances when you used those skills successfully. When exploring your weaknesses, be able to discuss the ways in which you addressed these weaknesses to make them a strength.

### During An Interview

- Introduce yourself in a courteous manner
- Have a firm handshake
- Act professionally: Dress appropriately! First impressions count!
- Keep your answers brief and concise
- Ask questions
- Maintain a conversational flow
- Smile, nod, give nonverbal feedback to the interviewer
- Be enthusiastic: have a positive attitude
- Ask about the next step in the process
- Thank the interviewer

## **After An Interview**

- Ask the interviewer for a business card and promptly send a thank you note.
- Keep the thank you note brief, but reiterate your interest in the position
- Review the interview process and your performance
- Evaluate your interview

## **How To Dress for Interview Success**

### **Men and Women**

- Conservative two-piece business suit/Conservative long-sleeved shirt/blouse
- Make sure your shoes are clean and polished
- Comb your hair: conservative style and out of your face
- Trim your fingernails and make certain that they are clean
- Use minimal cologne or perfume
- Carry a notepad or portfolio case

### **Men**

- Wear a silk tie, in an understated pattern: the colours should complement the suit
- Dark shoes
- Facial hair should be well groomed
- Do not wear jewellery.

### **Women**

- Always wear a suit with a jacket
- Wear low heels/pumps
- Conservative hosiery at or near skin colour
- Don't carry a purse into the interview
- If you wear nail polish, choose a clear or conservative colour
- Wear minimal makeup

## **Potential Questions Asked by Employers**

1. Tell me about yourself.
2. Why do you feel you are qualified for this position?

3. What is it about yourself that makes you believe that you could do a good and effective job in the position we are discussing?
4. How would you describe yourself?
5. What qualifications do you have that will make you successful in the field?
6. What college subjects did you like best/least? Why?
7. Do you think your grades are a good indication of your academic achievements?
8. How much effort did you put into your course-work?
9. If you could do so, would you plan your academic study differently? How?
10. Do you have plans for continued study? An advanced degree? Why?
11. How has your college experience prepared you for a career?
12. What have you learned from participation in extracurricular activities?
13. What are your skills (leadership, organizational, interpersonal)?
14. What is your supervisory and or management style?
15. Have you had previous experience in supervising a staff or other individuals?
16. Describe the relationship that should exist between a supervisor and an employee?
17. Why did you choose the career for which you are preparing? How did you choose it?
18. What are the most important rewards you expect in your career?
19. In your present or last position, what aspects did you like the most/least?
20. How would a previous employer, professor or friend describe you?
21. In what kind of work environment are you most comfortable?
22. What things are most important to you in your job?
23. Why did you decide to seek a position with this firm?
24. What do you know about our organization?
25. How do you determine or evaluate success?
26. What do you think it takes to be successful in an organization like ours?
27. What contribution can you make to our organization?
28. What do you consider to be your greatest strengths/weaknesses?
29. What is your greatest accomplishment?

30. What accomplishments have given you the most satisfaction? Why?
31. What motivates you to put forth your greatest efforts?
32. What have you learned from your mistakes?
33. How do you work under pressure?
34. How do you handle criticism?
35. Talk about a situation where you had to convince someone to see your point of view.
36. Talk about a situation where you had to deal with someone who was being difficult.
37. Tell me about a time where you had a major disagreement with an employer and how you handled the situation.
38. If you and another co-worker are working together and you end up doing a majority of the tasks and getting half of the credit, how would you handle it? What would you do?
39. As you view this position, what are some of the ways you would measure accountability.
40. What are your long-range and short-range goals, personal and professional?
41. What do you see yourself doing five/ten years from now?
42. If you were hiring someone for this position, what qualities would you look for?
43. What do you see as being your first goal if you take this position?
44. What do you feel this position should pay?
45. How would you compare us to our competitors?
46. What question do you have about this company, the position, or anything related?
47. What do you do in your spare time (hobbies, interests)?
48. What additional information can you tell me, that we haven't covered so far, that would make you the ideal candidate for this position?
49. Why should we hire you?