



10 Rules of Interviewing

1. MAKE A STRONG FIRST IMPRESSION:

Be respectful to everyone you interact with, remember to be on time, smile and be aware of your non-verbal body language.

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 measureable 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 e-mail to the interviewers 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
- Prepare your computer set-up, a neutral background and a good internet connection for virtual interviews

During the Interview

- Arrive early – approximately 10 – 15 minutes before the interview
- Greet the employer and/or associates with a smile 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?

SCHOOL BACKGROUND:

- How does your college 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:

- Company mission/values
- Products and services
- Culture
- Management style
- Organizational structure
- Financial conditions
- Major competitors
- Plans for growth
- Job responsibilities
- Opportunities for advancement
- Locations and remote opportunities

WHERE TO RESEARCH:

- Company website
- career.uci.edu
- Anteater Career Network
- Handshake (uci.joinhandshake.com)
- Onetonline.org
- Google
- LinkedIn
- glassdoor.com
- Current and former employees, interns, alumni

For additional help, try:

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There are many different types of job interviews. Be sure to inquire about which type(s) to expect so you can best prepare!



One-on-One

This is the most common type of interview, with one applicant being interviewed by one person. The interviewer will ask you questions and you will have an opportunity towards the end of the interview to ask questions about the job and organization.

Committee or Panel

In a committee interview, there are a group of people conducting the interview. While this can be an intimidating experience, just remember that it is not all that different from a traditional one-on-one interview. Interviewers will typically take turns asking you questions. You can address most of your response to the person asking you the questions, but you should also shift your eye contact to the other interviewers in the room.



Virtual Interviews

Prepare for your upcoming virtual interview by ensuring you have a neutral or virtual clean and simple background. Check your internet connection, volume, lighting, and ensure your device is at your eye level. Dress professionally and treat this interview as you would an in-person interview.

Second Round

If you make it past the initial interview, it is common to have a second round interview, usually at the company's offices. These on-site interviews can take up half or an entire day. You may have a series of interviews with different executives, a meal with some team members, and a tour of the offices. Second round interviews are a good indicator that the company is highly interested in you!



See reverse side for phone interview techniques!



Phone Interviews



PROCEDURE

1. **A representative of the organization will contact you in advance to set up a time.**
2. **There may be more than one person who will interview with you.** At the beginning of the interview, listen carefully to the names of your interviewers and write them down. Be sure to use their names when you can.
3. **They will ask you mostly open-ended questions.** Make sure to describe your past experiences as they relate to this job.
4. **Important traits** that you should display:
 - Good communication skills
 - Knowledge of the company and position
 - Ability to think on your feet
 - Enthusiasm
 - Leadership skills

TIPS FOR SUCCESS AFTER THE INTERVIEW

1. After the interview, **write down the questions you were asked and evaluate your responses.**
2. **Write thank you notes** to those involved in the interview.

Advantages

- ✓ You can have notes in front of you to serve as a reminder of important talking points. **DO NOT** write out your answers! They might sound scripted.
- ✓ You can be in a comfortable location.

Disadvantages

- ✗ You cannot see the interviewer's body language or facial expressions.
- ✗ If English is a second language for you or the interviewers, you may find it difficult to understand each other over the phone.



TIPS FOR SUCCESS DURING THE INTERVIEW

1. **Make sure your phone is reliable.** Hands-free is the best.
2. **Be alone and in a quiet place.**
3. **Make notes** ahead of time about important points you want to make and have your resume handy.
4. **Act like it is an in-person interview:** dress the part, sit up straight, use gestures, consider your vocal cues, smile (it will come through in your voice), and express confidence. If you need to think before answering, let them know.
5. **Be prepared with questions to ask** that demonstrate your knowledge of and interest in the organization. Design the questions to get information you can't get from other sources.
6. **At the end of the interview, be sure to summarize your skills and qualifications** and restate your interest in the job.
7. **Ask what the next steps are** and be sure to ask for contact information.

For additional help, try:

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MOCK INTERVIEW

Schedule an appointment on Handshake to receive feedback on customized practice interviews.

Informational Interviews

One of the best ways to gather information on a career is by talking with professional that are already working in the field. Conducting an informational interview is learning about a job and seeing if it fits your interests, skills, and personality. An informational interview is not asking for a job, rather it is gaining information about a career.

1 FIND PROFESSIONALS TO INTERVIEW

How do you find people to interview? The easiest way to start is to ask people you already know. Family members, friends, neighbors, teachers, or past coworkers may work in the occupation you want to explore, or they may know people who do. Career centers, alumni offices, professional associations, and religious organizations are other places to find potential people to interview. Utilize social media sites, such as LinkedIn, to identify individuals who are working in your field of interest.

2 CONNECT WITH CONTACTS

After finding people to consult, you are ready to arrange interviews. Contact the people you hope to meet by email, making it clear that you want information and not a job. Start with an email contact first and follow up with a phone call. This gives the professional advanced notice of your intentions before you put them on the spot during your phone call. You should also mention how you found the person's name and if someone suggested you contact them.

3

PREPARE TO INTERVIEW

Now that you have an appointment, the next step is to get ready for the interview by researching the occupation and the organization, creating a resume, and developing questions.

RESEARCH

Knowing something about the occupation and the company will help you develop specific questions, show your enthusiasm for the job, and help you look more professional.

RESUME

Bring a copy of your resume to demonstrate seriousness and professionalism. You can also ask the people you interview to give you feedback on your resume; this may help you gain relevant advice to be more competitive for a certain field.

DEVELOP QUESTIONS

The most critical part of preparing for an informational interview is to decide which questions will help you evaluate whether the career is a good fit for you. You want to gain information to help you imagine yourself in the job and to see whether you would enjoy it. See the next page for some suggested questions.



Informational Interviews

SUGGESTED QUESTIONS

1. How did you get into this field?
2. What do you like the most / the least about your job?
3. What is a typical day like?
4. What are your job responsibilities?
5. Are these duties the same for everyone with this job title?
6. What kind of individual (in terms of talent and personality) would be best suited to this position?
7. What are the prospects for someone entering your field today?
8. What advice would you give someone entering your field today?
9. What advice would you give on applying for and finding a job in this field?
10. Are there any other sources of information you might suggest to learn more about this field?
11. What function or services does your office provide?
12. Are there any other jobs that are similar to yours but with different job titles?
13. Do you have any contacts I might benefit talking with?

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4

CONDUCT THE INTERVIEW

Informational interviews are more casual than job interviews, but you should still make a positive and professional first impression. On the day of the interview, you should dress like you are going to an interview. Arrive early and be polite to everyone you meet. You are leading the interview so start by thanking the professional for his or her time. You should also monitor the time and end the interview within the specified time. Thank them for spending time with you and for the information they provided. After the interview, show your gratitude by writing a thank you note within 24 hours.

5

EVALUATE THE CAREER INFORMATION

Hopefully you'll leave every informational interview with new insights about the career you want. Take a moment to reflect on the following: What did you like? Did you uncover any new concerns about or advantages to the occupation? Did you discover another occupation you might want to learn about? Do you think you would be happy in this type of job or in this type of organization? It is important not to base decisions on the opinions of one individual or company environment. Try to conduct a few interviews in an occupation and confirm the information you learn through other sources. You can further test an occupation through a job shadowing experience or an internship to gain more knowledge before you choose a career.