ARE YOU INTERVIEW READY?

**PRE-INTERVIEW**

1. Do your research
2. Practice, Practice, Practice
3. Dress like a professional (page 2)

**General Interviewing Tips**

- Arrive 10 minutes early
- Offer a firm handshake
- Be honest
- Be assertive
- Relate skills to the job
- Speak slowly-pause to think
- Ask for a business card
- Send a thank-you in 24 hours

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1. **RESEARCH**

   **Learn about the company**

   - Thoroughly research the company and be able to talk knowledgeably about it in the interview in order to shine
   - Research shows that most job hunters come to the interview knowing little or nothing about the company. This dramatically decreases your chance of a job offer
   - Candidates who have done their homework are better able to discuss how their experiences and qualifications match the company’s needs
   - The candidate who does well in the interview is typically the one who gets the job offer

2. **PRACTICE**

   - Schedule a practice interview with Career Services
   - Be able to relate your skills to the job requirements by using examples of past successes
   - Draw upon your experiences in the following categories:
     - Academic
     - Extracurricular
     - Volunteer
     - Work
     - Personal
   - Be confident
   - Employers prize communication skills in job candidates

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**Tips for Successful Phone Interviewing**

- Serves as a “pre-screening” interview, prior to selection for an on-site visit
- Treat the phone interview with as much preparation as you would an on-site interview
- Secure a private location to avoid interruptions or distractions
- Wear your interview suit, as it will help you feel professional
- Place your resume in full view—it will help you answer questions
- Have a mirror handy & look into it while on the phone—improves your telephone presence
- Speak slowly as rapid speech is magnified over the phone
- Do not use a cell phone unless necessary
- Record the names of each interviewer for follow-up thank you
3. PROFESSIONAL ATTIRE

**Women:**
- **Suit:** Neutral colors, such as navy blue, charcoal gray, or black. Long sleeved jacket with knee-length straight or pleated skirt. Solid-colored vs. a pattern. A suit consisting of a jacket and a skirt is considered more professional than a pant suit or a dress.
- **Blouse:** White or pastel shades. Cotton or matte silks are a good choice.
- **Shoes:** Close-toed leather pumps, in black or a complimentary color that works with your suit. No more than a one or two-inch heel. Last, no bare legs! Wear panty hose in a skin tone color.
- **Jewelry and Perfume:** Simple post earrings or pearls. No more than one earring per ear, one ring per hand, or one bracelet. No nose, tongue, eyebrow or any other rings worn in facial piercings. Very light perfume.
- **Makeup:** Simple and conservative. Avoid use of bright nail polish.
- **Hair:** Pull back if normally covers face. Don’t overdo scented hairspray.

**Men:**
- **Suit:** Neutral colors, such as charcoal gray, navy blue, or black. Look for suits made of 100% “worsted” wool.
- **Shirt:** Solid color. White is best for first interview. Well ironed, long sleeved with a point collar.
- **Tie:** Simple stripe or repeating pattern of good quality silk. No “story ties.”
- **Shoes:** Leather, polished, and matched to clothing (black shoes can be worn with navy blue or charcoal gray suit). Sock should be dark and mid-calf length so no shin is visible when sitting. Wear a black leather belt.
- **Jewelry and Cologne:** No nose, tongue, eyebrow or any other rings worn in facial piercings. Use cologne in moderation.
- **Hair:** Get a haircut a week (not a day) before the interview.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Top Skills &amp; Qualities of the Perfect Candidate</th>
<th>15 Knockout Factors</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>✓ Communication skills (verbal and written)</td>
<td>1. Poor appearance</td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Honesty/integrity</td>
<td>2. Overly aggressive</td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Teamwork skills</td>
<td>3. Inability to communicate clearly</td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Strong work ethic</td>
<td>4. No clear goals</td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Analytical skills</td>
<td>5. Lack of confidence, nervousness</td>
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<td>✓ Flexibility/adaptability</td>
<td>6. Over emphasis on $$$</td>
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<td>✓ Interpersonal skills</td>
<td>7. Provided vague responses to questions</td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Motivation/initiative</td>
<td>8. No research on company</td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Computer skills</td>
<td>9. Lack of interest or enthusiasm</td>
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<td>✓ Detail-oriented</td>
<td>10. No genuine interest in company or job</td>
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<td>✓ Organizational skills</td>
<td>11. Limited eye contact with interviewer</td>
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<td>✓ Leadership skills</td>
<td>12. No sense of humor</td>
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<td>✓ Self-confidence</td>
<td>13. Late for interview</td>
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<td>14. Asks no or poor questions about the job</td>
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<td>15. Did not follow-up with thank-you or phone call</td>
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General Questions Asked By An Employer

1. Tell me a little about yourself.
2. What interests you about working for this organization?
3. How did you choose this particular field?
4. What have been your most satisfying and most disappointing school or work experiences?
5. What is your major strength/weakness?
6. What motivates you?
7. Tell me about your extracurricular activities and interests.
8. How do you deal with stressful situations?
9. Where do you want to be five years from now?
10. How come I should hire you?

Behavior-Based Interviews

One of the fastest growing interview methods. Based on the premise that recent, relevant past performance is the best predictor of future performance in similar circumstances. Interviewers seek specific examples. Tip: Utilize the STAR technique to answer the question completely.

**Situation or Task:** Describe the situation that you were in or the task that you needed to accomplish. Be sure to give enough detail for the interviewer to understand.

**Action you took:** Keep focus on you. Even if you are discussing a group project or effort, describe what you did.

**Results you achieved:** What happened? How did the event end? What did you accomplish?

Sample Behavior-Based Questions

- Give me an example of a problem at work or school and how you solved it.
- Describe an experience in which you worked as part of a team.
- Tell me about a difficult decision you have made in the last year.
- Give me an example of a time when you went beyond the call of duty to get the job done.
- Give me an example of when you showed initiative and took the lead.

Questions You Should Ask An Employer

1. Would you please describe an average day on this job?
2. What are the key challenges/responsibilities in this position?
3. How would you describe the ideal candidate?
4. Is there room for professional growth and upward mobility?
5. What is the department’s environment/culture like?
6. What do you like most about working here?
7. With whom would I be working? Who would be my supervisor? Who would I supervise?
8. When and how will I be evaluated? What are the performance standards?
9. What are the company’s short- and long-range objectives?
10. When will you make the hiring decision?

Sources: www.quintcareers.com/STAR_interviewing.html; www.menswearhouse.com; Job Choices For Business & Liberal Arts Students, 2007, National Association of Colleges and Employers