



## How to Prepare for an Interview



Written and reviewed by Seasoned Match Mentors

Resumes/applications are just the beginning of the hiring process. Hiring managers will conduct an interview. Preparation and a positive attitude will be key to a successful interview. Interviewing is a critical part of the selection process and provides an opportunity for you to describe further your experience, education and training. It is also a chance for you to gain a better understanding of the organization and the position. The job interview is a two-way discussion between you and the interviewer. The interviewer is attempting to determine if you have the skills the position requires, and you are attempting to determine if you will accept the position if the job is offered. Both of you are trying to gain as much information as possible to make an informed decision.

### Mentee Objective covered

Encourage the mentee to see the big picture of the job search process – from searching for a job, applying for the job, interviewing for the job and follow-up after the interview.

### Goals / Objectives of this Module

Discussions between mentor and mentee may be done on this topic as often as necessary, prior to and following interviews. Good preparation and follow-up will enhance interviewing skills. Participate in a mock interview.

Preparing for the interview –

- Research the position and organization prior to the interview. Know the position duties and responsibilities
- Know your resume and application and be prepared to support questions with specifics
- Practice with a mock interview to get comfortable with your responses
- Be flexible with scheduling. Confirm all details of the interview
- Here are 8 questions you should prepare to answer:
  1. Why are you interested in this position / our company?
  2. Why are looking to leave your current position? (Only if this applies)
  3. What is important to you in a work environment?
  4. Why should we hire you / What makes you the best candidate for this role?
  5. Tell me about a specific situation where you failed.
  6. Tell me about a past accomplishment you are especially proud of.
  7. Tell me how you handle conflict at work.
  8. Tell me about your strengths/weaknesses.

During the interview –

- Dress appropriately. Plan to arrive early for any check-in procedures. Make a great first impression by showing respect to everyone you meet
- Be prepared to give your elevator speech and add what you will bring to the position



- Listen carefully to the questions presented and answer directly noting your expertise and achievements. Ask to have questions restated if clarification is needed
- Remain positive and avoid negative comments
- If asked a behavioral interview question, understand the STAR method of responding (situation, task, action, result)
- Focus on body language and tone of voice. Remain engaged
- Take limited notes, as necessary
- Prepare final questions to ask about the organization or the position
- Close out the interview by restating your interest in the position and expressing thanks for the opportunity to interview
- Ask about next steps

After the interview –

- If asked for additional information, provided it as soon as possible
- Send a thank you note
- Be patient as the hiring process takes time
- Follow-up if necessary

## **LESSON / MODULE TOPIC COVERED**

This module is designed to understand the interview process and to develop confidence in the process through practice and experience.

## **Lesson Notes**

Discussions on this topic should focus on what is learned during each interview and how that lesson is incorporated into the next interview.

## **Post Lesson and Pre-Lesson Assignments**

Continue what is working well and evaluate if something better might work and what that might be. Determine how to best incorporate solution into the interview process for best results.

## **SOURCES**

1. "Interviewing Tips" U.S. Department of Labor, web <https://www.dol.gov/general/jobs/interview-tips>
2. Herrity, Jennifer, "How to Make a Great Impression in a Job Interview" Indeed, web 31 May 2024, <https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/interviewing/job-interview-tips-how-to-make-a-great-impression>

