

INTERVIEWING

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At A Glance

- Conduct in-person mock interviews to sharpen your interviewing skills
- Practice answering the sample interview questions contained in this handout
- Also see Common Interview Questions handout

The Interview

Would you ever perform without practicing? Interviews require the same amount of preparation: people are watching your performance, taking notes and comparing you to other applicants. Review this handout and visit careers.byu.edu for useful tips. Then put them in action and practice, practice, practice!

Prepare by listing attributes that qualify you as an exceptional candidate (your strengths, why you would be an ideal hire, your connections to the company and its goals, etc.). Identify skills that are most important in your industry and incorporate them into your answers.

Behavioral Questions

Behavioral questions are asked by interviewers to better understand how candidates behave in different situations. They are best answered by providing a brief story that showcases what employers want to know about you, how you act in different circumstances, and your experience working in a variety of situations.

We recommend using the PAR Method to answer behavioral questions.

PROBLEM

Explain the situation.

ACTION

What did you do?

RESULT

What happened because of you?

“Give me an example of when you showed initiative or took the lead.”

The Society of Physics students had been inactive for a few years, so last semester I found out who the faculty advisor was and approached him about getting the club started again. I recruited some classmates to fill the various officer positions. We created flyers and went around to various physics classes to advertise the club. We’ve had four events this semester, with about 25 students attending each, and we also have an outline of upcoming events that we’re planning for next semester.

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Interview Questions

For practice, you can have someone ask you a few of the following questions.

General Questions

- Tell me a little about yourself.
- Why are you interested in this position/company?
- What are you passionate about?
- What aspect of this position do you anticipate being the most challenging to you?
- Tell me about a problem you solved in a unique way.

Aspirations

- Where do you see yourself in 5 years?
- What are your goals for the future?
- What motivates you?

Leadership

- Tell me about a time when you were in charge of a team project. What did you do? How did you do it? What was the result of your efforts?
- What is your leadership style?

Honesty and Integrity

- How would you respond if a senior coworker asked you to do something that you felt was unethical?
- Why do you want to leave (or have left) your past/current job?

Initiative

- Give an example of when you showed initiative or took the lead.
- Describe a situation where you have had to overcome an obstacle in order to move forward.
- How do you prioritize projects and tasks when scheduling your time? Give me some examples.

Interpersonal Skills

- Give an example of when you worked with someone who was difficult to get along with. How did you handle it? How did the relationship change?
- How would you describe your ability to work as a member of a team? What is your preferred role on a team?

Stress Management

- Describe a time when you were faced with a stressful situation that demonstrated your coping skills.
- How do you handle stress and pressure?

Strengths and Weaknesses

- What is your greatest weakness?
- What is your greatest strength?

Conclusion

- Do you have any questions for me?
(Examples: What do you enjoy most about working here? How would you describe company culture here?)

For additional information on different types of interviews, please reference the following handouts: Panel Interviews, Video Interviews, Case Study Interviews, Phone Interviews, Technical Interviews.