

Interviewing Skills

Whether you are interviewing for a job or just gathering information, it is imperative that you prepare well for all interviews. Prior preparation demonstrates a high degree of motivation and professionalism and will have a positive effect on your candidacy. Feeling well-informed will also give you a sense of confidence.

Preparation For The Interview:

Do Your Homework!

Gather as much information as possible about the industry, the organization, and the specific position. This data can be obtained through a variety of resources such as recruiting brochures, annual reports, business publications, trade journals, personal contacts, and feedback from past and present employees. Investigate Internet resources such as WetFeet, Vault, and Hoovers that carry extensive information on publicly traded and selected privately held companies.

Know Yourself

This includes your values, interests, skills, and personality. Be prepared to use specific examples that highlight your marketable qualities. Who are you? Why are you applying for this job? How is there a match... how are you qualified? What do you offer? Your story should have a beginning, middle, and end. Be succinct, be relevant, be YOU! Be prepared to talk comfortably about yourself including your limitations, especially during behavioral interviews.

Communicate

PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE! Review all standard interview questions and techniques. Role-play with Career Services and Corporate Relations staff and friends. Non-Verbal communication is equally important in the interview as the verbal. Surveys show that people who dress well and look good are considered more intelligent. Be aware of body language and your image. Practice your non-verbal communication skills by using video-tapes for gesture, eye contact, and body language.

The Pre-Screening Interview

The first interview usually lasts about 30 to 45 minutes and is designed to determine a fit between you and the company, especially in the area of personality. Your background and qualifications (from a resume) got you the interview—now the company wants to get to know you personally. You will need to sell yourself in a very effective and professional manner. Be yourself! Neither you nor the employer will benefit from your attempts to sell yourself as someone you are not.

Probing Questions

The idea of probing or open-ended questions is to allow you to expand on your experiences in detail. Review the list of questions frequently asked in a preliminary interview provided to you by Career Services and Corporate Relations. Pay attention to why certain questions are asked and look for similarities in these questions. For example, your reasons for choosing CGU and your specific academic program may indicate criteria you use in selecting an employer. Be able to cite specific examples.

Your Questions

Toward the conclusion of the interview, you will be given an opportunity to ask questions. Continue selling yourself and ask questions that market your unique differences. Ask questions about important components of the job so that you can make an informed career choice. **Do not go into an interview without any questions!**

Follow Up

Shortly after the interview, follow-up with a thank you letter (48 hours max). Be positive and highlight strong points discussed during the interview. Express your sincere interest. **Do not use a form letter.**

Second Interviews

Be ready for a series of interviews with senior level representatives who are concerned with fit and technical competencies. The interviews usually last one hour each. You should be familiar with industry salary averages in the event the issue is addressed during the second interview. Have your list of references ready to give them.

Investment Banking Questions

- What do you think it takes to be successful in investment banking?
- What do you think investment bankers do every day?
- Describe a situation in which you used quantitative skills to solve a problem.
- Sales/trading: Sell me this XYZ object. Recommend a stock to me.
- What sources of information do you read on the investment banking industry?
- What do you think of the way the government treats insider traders?
- Has the investment banking industry been represented fairly in the press?
- What do you think of the Morgan Stanley/Dean Witter merger?
- What are your strengths in business analysis?

Management Consulting Questions

- Give me an example of a time you worked in a team. Did you face any obstacles?
- Give me an example of a problem you have faced and how you overcame it.
- What do you think management consultants do every day?

- Give me an example of a situation in which you analyzed and solved a problem. How did you do it?
- How would you describe your way of solving problems?

Marketing (Product Management)

- Give me an example of how you demonstrated initiative. What were the results?
- Rank order the important characteristics for brand management.
- Scenario and create a plan to market Brand X in Philadelphia.
- Tell me about a time when you had to influence various departments/people to help accomplish your goals without having direct authority over them.

Corporate Finance

- Tell me about some projects you initiated. What prompted you to begin them?
- How do you gather information to solve problems? Give me an example.
- What do you think you do best?
- Describe your greatest accomplishment and your greatest failure.

Organizational Development

- What was your most challenging personal encounter with someone? How did you deal with the individual?
- Tell me how you would build a team out of independent individuals?
- How would a friend, boss and a client describe you?
- Tell me about a creative solution that you developed for a difficult problem?
- What was the most challenging group you successfully worked with? What was one of your failures?