



INTRODUCTION

The interview is often perceived as an unpleasant rite of passage. But once you have a better understanding of the interviewing process and the basic skills needed, you might find it to be more like a pleasant conversation between two new acquaintances.

Most people who are new to the interviewing process have the misconception that the interviewer holds all the cards. That idea is not true. You need to be interviewing the employer as he or she interviews you. Both you and the employer need to decide if you meet each other's goals, values, and culture. There needs to be a "fit."

The following information will breakdown the parts of an interview, list interview do's and don'ts, review basic interview questions, and suggest some questions you may want to ask an employer. Remember that **practice makes perfect**. You will want to create and practice your responses to the most common questions. Also, you can practice interviewing through Career Services' Mock Interview Program.

INTERVIEW PREPARATION

Before you begin the interviewing process, it is important to know what you are looking for in a company and position. Do you want to travel? Would you prefer to work inside or outside? Do you like to work with a team of people or independently? Are you willing to relocate? Spend some time thinking about your career goals. Hopefully, you have already conducted some of this soul-searching as you thought about your major while at W&J. If you are having a hard time identifying a career, conduct an information interview. Career Services can help identify a professional with whom you can speak about a particular job's duties and work environment.

Next, you need to research the employer. Employers are looking for candidates who have done their homework and have a general understanding of the company's products and/or services. One of the most useful tools available to find company information is the Internet. Most companies will have a Web site that has a wealth of information.

Once you have narrowed the types of positions you are interested in and have done your homework on your potential employers, you then need to prepare for the interview questions. Think about your strengths and weaknesses as well as what you have accomplished and your future career goals.

Lastly, learn your interviewer's name. It should be provided prior to the interview.

INTERVIEW STRUCTURE

Most interviews, whether on campus, at a job fair, or at an employer's site will have the same structure. The interview will begin with an introduction to establish a relationship between you and the interviewer. He or she will try to help you relax by asking simple questions such as how your year is going, did you have trouble finding parking (if you are at the employer's site), etc. Even though this phase may be a time for you to settle in and try to relax, keep in mind that the interviewer is forming his or her first impression of you. You want to make sure you have good eye contact, shake the interviewer's hand firmly, and wait to be asked to be seated. Do not forget



good posture. The way you carry yourself tells about your self-confidence. This part of the interview will last about 3-5 minutes.

The second part is the interviewer's questions. The interviewer will ask a variety of questions regarding your education, work and internship experiences, activities, career plans, and self-assessment. The interviewer will use open-ended questions that will let you describe your background. The interviewer may probe into certain areas to evaluate your knowledge and background. Your goal is to communicate clearly how your experiences lend themselves to the position. This is your chance to sell yourself.

Certainly one of the goals of the interview is to determine if you have the skills and knowledge needed to do the job. In addition, the interviewer is trying to determine if you are a "fit" for the company and position. He or she is evaluating how you handle yourself in a stressful situation and looking at your communication skills, self-confidence, ability to relate to others, motivation, interest in the position, and values. There is a lot going on in this 15-20 minute stage of the interview. To assist you in preparing for this part of the interview, there is a list of commonly asked questions at the end of this guide. Formulate answers to the questions in advance to help clarify your thoughts and to ease stress.

In the third part of the interview, you ask questions. By asking the interviewer questions, you have the opportunity to show that you did your homework and to clarify the information that has been provided. When developing your questions, make sure they are well thought out. Do not ask questions that could be answered from the company's Web site or literature. When developing questions, consider what you need to know to make an informed decision about employment with this company. Remember that you are interviewing them while they interview you. There is a list of suggested candidate questions at the end of this guide to help. This part of the interview will last about 5-10 minutes.

The fourth part of the interview is the close. The interviewer should inform you of the next step in the process. If he or she does not, you may ask in a professional manner. Express your appreciation for the opportunity to speak with him or her and "ask for the position" by indicating your interest and making a final statement regarding your qualifications.

INTERVIEW DO'S AND DON'TS

Do's

- Be 5-10 minutes early
- Leave with time to spare if you are traveling off campus; you never know when you might encounter a traffic problem or bad directions
- Take your cell phone if you have one and you are traveling off campus so you can call the interviewer if you run into an unforeseen problem; if you do not have a cell phone, call from a pay phone
- Take money if you are traveling off campus; you may need change for a toll road, parking meter, or parking garage
- Smile and make eye contact during the interview
- Maintain good posture

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- Dress professionally; to assist you in learning how to dress professionally, Career Services sponsors a business dress workshop every year that is open to all students
 - Be a good listener; fully listen to the question before you formulate your response—poor listening skills are undesirable
 - Be clear when you speak; talk slowly and confidently
 - Remain positive about your educational and work experiences, even if they were not; you can always find something positive about, or have learned something valuable from, every experience you have had
 - Answer questions with examples of specific circumstances, action, and results achieved; prove that you are able to do the job
 - Use correct grammar
 - Ask for clarification if you are not sure what the employer is asking
 - Convince the employer that you possess the needed:
 1. **Qualifications:** show how your education, experiences, and activities fit what the employer is seeking
 2. **Attitude:** be honest, sincere, positive, mature, and willing to learn
 3. **Intelligence:** the interviewer will be looking for excellent communication skills (both written and oral), awareness of current trends in the industry, and knowledge of the organization
 4. **Compatibility:** this is the “fit.” You want to show that you are enthusiastic, able to work with others, a team player, and that you have a sense of humor

Don'ts

- Be late
- Sit down until you are asked to do so
- Let the interviewer's casual approach fool you; maintain a professional image—do not be overly familiar
- Use the interviewer's first name; begin with Mr. Jones or Ms. Smith—do not use their first name until given permission to do so
- Giggle or be overly enthusiastic
- Ramble; answer questions fully and directly
- Smoke or chew gum
- Interrupt
- Discuss your personal problems
- Use flattery; the interviewer will see right through it
- Give one-word answers; elaborate on your answers
- Be arrogant
- Criticize your professors or past employers
- Lose your temper
- Name drop
- Drink alcohol if the interview is over a meal



INTERVIEW FOLLOW-UP

After the interview, collect and organize the business cards that were given to you. **SEND A THANK YOU LETTER** to each person you received a card from. If you met with a group but did not receive cards from everyone, send one thank you to your main contact or interviewer and mention the group in that letter. Expressing your thanks will set you apart from many of the other applicants. (Career Services has additional information regarding thank you letters.) Also, make notes regarding the interview to help prepare for a second interview.

By the end of the interview, you should have learned what the next step in the interviewing process is. Typically, you will receive word from the employer within two weeks. If you have not heard from the employer in that time span, you should call the interviewer. Ask for some indication as to the status of your candidacy or the employer's timeline for hiring decisions.

SECOND INTERVIEW

Your second, and possibly third, interview will usually be held at the employer's site. While the actual interview structure will be similar, the questions will be more in-depth and you will meet with a variety of people.

Making arrangements

It is proper to acknowledge the invitation for a site visit in writing. Clarify all travel details with the employer, including date(s) of visit, lodging, contact person, travel/flight information, time of arrival, local transportation, and itinerary. It is common practice for most employers to assume all reasonable travel expenses incurred by a candidate who is invited to visit the employer's office. If this is not stated, seek clarification. Be conservative in making arrangements, as some employers will judge your maturity and integrity by the manner in which you manage and report your expenses. Do not forget to save your receipts.

The Players

The person who originally interviewed you will probably serve as your host, or will at least greet you and orient you to the process. You will then interview with the hiring manager (who will be your prospective boss), and his or her supervisor. You may also meet and interview with those who work in related functions and/or other newly hired staff members.

The Interview

This interview will be more in-depth because it will determine whether or not you get the job. The questions will require longer, more detailed answers, so you will need to know more specific information about the organization and have intelligent questions to ask. In addition, tests and background checks are often a part of the second interview.

Source: *Career Services Guide* from Indiana University of Pennsylvania.

TESTING

Employers are using a variety of tests or checks, such as personality tests, criminal background and credit checks, or drug tests. The U.S. Chamber of Commerce estimates that approximately half of the Fortune 500 companies currently engage in drug testing either in the selection process



or as part of random testing programs. If asked to take a drug test, you should say yes. You may also be asked to take a skills test to measure your level of knowledge on certain topics or skills.

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

You will be faced with a variety of interview questions. Some will be easy to answer and others will be challenging. The interviewer will be asking questions to gather basic information such as your date of graduation, major, and favorite courses. Other questions will be used to probe into your experiences and possible weaknesses. These questions are open-ended and require well-thought-out answers.

COMMON INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Tell me about yourself.
2. Tell me something about you that is not on your resume.
3. What are your strengths?
4. What are your weaknesses?
5. Why did you choose to major in _____?
6. What are your career goals or future plans?
7. What do you know about our organization?
8. Why did you choose to interview for this position?
9. What were your grades in school?
10. What courses did you enjoy most?
11. If you had your education to do over again, what would you do differently?
12. Tell me about a typical day at _____ job.
13. What did you like about your supervisor? Dislike?
14. What kind of supervisor do you prefer?
15. What have you learned from the jobs you've held?
16. Which jobs have you liked best?
17. Describe your work style.
18. What skills, training, and experience do you have that qualify you for the position?
19. Have you held any leadership positions?
20. Are you willing to travel?
21. Are you willing to relocate?

BEHAVIORAL INTERVIEWING

Employers use the behavioral interviewing technique to evaluate candidates' experiences and behaviors in order to determine their potential for success. The interviewer first identifies desired skills and behaviors. Then he or she structures open-ended questions and statements targeted at those skills and behaviors. These statements should elicit detailed responses about your past experiences and how you handled them to gauge how you will handle future situations. A rating system is used to evaluate selected criteria during the interview. As a candidate, you should be prepared to answer the questions and statements thoroughly using the STAR system:

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- Situation:** Identify the problem
 - Task:** Define your objective
 - Action:** Describe the steps you took to achieve your objective
 - Results:** Measure your effectiveness

For example, an interviewer may ask you to describe a time when you needed to move a group to a consensus. Using the STAR system, here is a response:

(Situation) I am president of W&J’s service fraternity, and we needed to decide on our spring project. Some of the members wanted to assist a local family with home renovations while others wanted to reach more of the community by volunteering at the United Way in whatever capacity was needed. **(Task)** My job was to facilitate the discussion among the members and reach a consensus. **(Action)** I used a flip chart and wrote down each groups’ reasons for wanting to work on their chosen project. There was discussion and then a realization that by supporting the United Way, our family could also receive many of the needed services to help them with their home. **(Results)** The decision was made for the group as a whole to work through the United Way with special attention being given to our family.

A behavioral interview is no piece of cake. It takes preparation to be able to give effective answers to these types of questions. When you look at the following lists of commonly asked questions, you may feel overwhelmed at first. There are, however, two things to keep in mind that may calm you:

1. No interviewer will ask all of these questions.
2. You can prepare an answer for a “theme” rather than an answer for every single question.

As you read through these questions, you will begin to see that many of them sound alike. The wording may be slightly different, but essentially the questions are asking the same thing. For example:

1. Tell me about a project that you initiated.
2. Do you think initiative is important? Why?
3. What have you done that shows initiative?

Notice how these three questions basically ask about your ability to take initiative.

As you can see, by studying the theme of how you have shown initiative throughout your experiences, you will be able to intelligently answer any one of these questions because you will have thought about the theme prior to the interview.

BEHAVIORAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Focus and Dedication to the Industry

The goal of this category is to assess your commitment to the field and the reasons behind your choice.

1. Why did you choose your major and career?
2. At what point did you make a decision about your major or career?
3. Specifically, what attracts you to this industry as a career?

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4. Describe your dream job/career.

Technical and Professional Knowledge

This category looks at how well you understand technical and professional information and your ability to apply that understanding and knowledge.

1. Sometimes it's easy to get in "over your head." Describe a situation where you had to request assistance on a project or assignment.
2. Give an example of how you applied knowledge from previous coursework to a project in another class.

Teamwork

How did you work effectively with others in the organization and outside the formal lines of authority (i.e., peers, other units, senior management) to accomplish organizational goals and to identify and resolve problems? Consider the impact of your decisions on others.

1. Describe a situation where others you were working with on a project disagreed with your ideas. What did you do?
2. Describe a situation in which you found that your results were not up to your professor's or supervisor's expectations. What happened? What action did you take?
3. Tell of a time when you worked with a colleague who was not completing his or her share of the work. Who, if anyone, did you tell or talk to about it? Did the manager take any steps to correct your colleague? Did you agree or disagree with the manager's actions?
4. Describe a situation in which you had to arrive at a compromise or guide others to a compromise.
5. How would you define teamwork?
6. How would your coworkers at (some company) describe you?
7. What was the one most significant accomplishment you had with (past employer)? How did you impact the company after you left?
8. I'm sure you've worked on a team. Briefly describe one good experience and one bad experience you've had with teams. How did you deal with/resolve the problems? What made the good experience so successful?
9. How do you get cooperation from someone on another team or department?
10. When is it okay to "go with the flow?" When is it not?
11. Gaining the cooperation of others can be difficult. Give a specific example of when you had to gain cooperation from other people.
12. How do you make your feelings known when you disagree with the views of your teammates? Give an example.
13. How do you handle a teammate with an attitude problem?
14. Describe your most recent group effort.

Analysis

Discuss how you relate and compare data from different sources, identify issues, secure relevant information, and identify relationships.

1. What steps do you follow to study a problem before making a decision?

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2. We can sometimes identify a small problem and fix it before it becomes a major problem. Give an example(s) of how you have done this.
3. Describe a situation in which you had to collect information by asking many questions of several people.
4. In a supervisory or group leader role, have you ever had to discipline or counsel an employee or group member? What was the nature of the discipline? What steps did you take? How did that make you feel? How did you prepare yourself?
5. Recall a time from your work experience when your manager or supervisor was unavailable and a problem arose. What was the nature of the problem? How did you handle that situation? How did that make you feel?
6. Recall a time when you were assigned what you considered to be a complex project. Specifically, what steps did you take to prepare for and finish the project? Were you happy with the outcome? What one step would you have done differently if given the chance?
7. What was the most complex assignment you have had? What was your role?

Work Standards

Show how you set high goals or standards of performance for yourself, subordinates, others, and the organization. Do you experience dissatisfaction with average performance?

1. Compare and contrast times when your work was above the standard with times when your work was below the standard.
2. Describe some times when you were not very satisfied or pleased with your performance. What did you do about it?
3. What are your standards of success in school? What have you done to meet these standards?
4. How have you differed from your professors in evaluating your performance? How did you handle the situation?
5. Tell me about a specific occasion when you conformed to a policy even though you did not agree with it.

Initiative/Job Motivation

Show how you make active attempts to influence events for the purpose of achieving goals. Prove that you are a self-starter rather than passive acceptor. How do you take action to achieve goals beyond what is required of you? How do you originate action? Describe the extent to which activities and responsibilities available in the job overlap with activities and responsibilities that result in personal satisfaction.

1. Give me an example of when you felt you were able to build motivation in your coworkers or peers.
2. Give me an example of a time when you had to go above and beyond the call of duty in order to get a job done.
3. Give me an example of an important goal you had to set and tell me about your progress in reaching that goal.

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4. Give examples of your experiences at school or in a job that were satisfying. Give examples of your experiences that were dissatisfying.
 5. What kind of supervisor do you work best for? Provide examples.
 6. What motivates you?
 7. How do you motivate others?
 8. Describe some projects or ideas (not necessarily your own) that were implemented or carried out successfully, primarily because of your efforts.
 9. Describe a situation that required a number of things to be done at the same time. How did you handle it? What was the result?
 10. Have you found ways to make school or a job easier or more rewarding?
 11. What risks did you take in previous jobs or academic work? Tell me about them.
 12. Tell me about a project that you initiated.
 13. What would you like to have done more of in previous jobs or classes? What held you back?
 14. What did you do to make your previous jobs or classes more interesting?
 15. What three things about your course work or internship(s) gave you the most satisfaction? Why?
 16. Tell me about your efforts to “sell” a new idea to your supervisor or team.
 17. Tell me about a suggestion you made on the job to improve the way things worked. What was the result?
 18. Tell me about a time when you reached out for additional responsibility.
 19. What have you done in work or school that makes you feel proud?
 20. What motivates you to put forth your best effort?
 21. Can you give me an example of how you have been creative?
 22. Do you think initiative is important? Why?
 23. What areas would you like to develop further? How will you do that?
 24. What aspirations do you expect to satisfy by joining (company name)?
 25. In your opinion, what does it take to be a “success?”
 26. What does it take to challenge you?
 27. What have you done that shows initiative?
 28. What have you done to further your own professional development?
 29. Are you better at initiating many things or are you better at working on and getting results from a few specific things? Please give me two examples that illustrate.
 30. On a scale of 1 to 10, where is your energy level? Explain.
 31. Tell me about a time when you surpassed all job expectations by going the “extra mile.”
 32. Describe the pace at which you usually work (slow, moderate, or fast) and the circumstance under which your pace varies.
 33. What methods do you use to carry through assignments to assure their completion? Give examples.
 34. What kinds of information would you request or require before you felt you could do justice to an assignment?
 35. Describe the most creative project you have completed.



Ability to Learn/Adaptability/Flexibility

Tell how you assimilate and apply new job-related information promptly. Describe how you maintain effectiveness in varying environments, tasks and responsibilities, or with various types of people.

1. What tricks or techniques have you learned to make school or a job easier or to make yourself more effective? How did you learn these tricks?
2. How was your transition from high school to college? Did you face any particular problems?
3. Tell of some situations that required you to quickly adjust to changes that you had no control over. What impact did the changes have on you?
4. Give me an example of how you've persevered in a situation where obstacles were present.
5. How do you organize and plan information and ideas?
6. Once a problem has been resolved, how do you prevent it from reoccurring?
7. You mentioned you did poorly in (some class). What do you attribute your poor performance to? What, if anything, did you change to get through the class?
8. We all make mistakes. Tell me about a time when you made a mistake and about how you rectified it. What, if anything, would you do differently next time?
9. What do you do when priorities change quickly or unexpectedly? Give examples.
10. Describe a time when you were faced with problems or stresses at work or school that tested your coping skills. What did you do?
11. Give an example of a time when you had to be relatively quick in coming to a decision.

Planning and Organizing

Show how you establish a course of action for yourself (and/or others) to accomplish specific goals. Describe how you plan assignments for personnel and allocate resources.

1. How do you determine priorities in scheduling your time? Give examples.
2. Describe a time in school when you had many projects or assignments due at the same time. What steps did you take to get them all done?

Communication

Describe how you clearly express your ideas in writing including grammar, organization, and structure.

1. Tell of a time when your active listening skills really paid off for you—perhaps a time when other people missed the key idea being expressed.
2. What has been your experience in giving presentations to small or large groups? What has been your most successful experience in speech making?
3. What kinds of people do you get along with best?
4. What kinds of people irritate you?
5. How would you describe yourself as a communicator?

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6. Describe a time when you came up with a creative solution to a problem between two team members.
 7. Define “good communication.”
 8. What have you done to improve your verbal communication skills?
 9. On a scale of 1 to 10, how well do you think you listen? Explain.
 10. On a scale of 1 to 10, how well do you think your coworkers or teammates would say you listen? Explain.
 11. What are you doing to improve your listening skills?
 12. How important was communication in the jobs you’ve had? Explain.
 13. How does your boss or professor get your best out of you?
 14. What do you do to encourage others to do their best?
 15. When do your coworkers or teammates turn to you for advice or assistance?
 16. Describe the relationship you feel should exist between the manager or supervisor and those reporting to him or her?
 17. Describe a project you participated in that required a lot of interaction with people over a long period of time.
 18. How do you attempt to persuade others to your way of thinking?
 19. What would you do if you found yourself working for someone who could not control his or her temper?
 20. Tell me about a time when you caused a breakdown in communication at work or on a project team.
 21. Tell me about a recent success you had with an especially difficult coworker or teammate.
 22. Tell me about a time when your supervisor or professor criticized your work.
 23. How do you assert yourself in order to get what you need?
 24. How would you discuss job dissatisfaction with your supervisor?
 25. Tell me about a time when you had to use your spoken communication skills in order to get a point across that was important to you.
 26. Describe the most significant written document, report, or presentation that you’ve completed.

Customer Service Orientation

Describe how you make efforts to listen to and understand the customer (both internal and external), anticipate customer needs, and give high priority to customer satisfaction.

1. Tell of the most difficult customer service experience you have ever had to handle—perhaps an angry or irate customer. Be specific and tell what you did and what the outcome was.
2. Tell me about a situation in the past year in which you had to deal with a very upset customer, coworker, or peer.

Sensitivity

Show how you act out of consideration for the feelings and needs of others.

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1. Give an example of when you had to work with someone who was difficult to get along with. Why was this person difficult? How did you handle that person?

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2. Describe a situation where you found yourself dealing with someone who didn't like you. How did you handle it?
3. Describe a time when you felt it was necessary to modify or change your actions in order to respond to the needs of another person.

Problem-Solving Skills

Tell how you use your knowledge and skills to come up with ways to alleviate or correct problems.

1. What steps do you take to solve a problem?
2. How do you enlist the help of others in solving a problem?
3. Tell me about a specific time when you eliminated or avoided a potential problem.
4. Tell me about several unconventional methods you have used to solve problems.
5. What criteria do you use to make decisions?
6. How long does it typically take you to make a decision?
7. What kinds of decisions are the most difficult for you to make and why?
8. Describe the way you handled a problem involving people in your last team project or job.
9. What kinds of problems are you best at solving?
10. What is the biggest error in judgment you have made in a previous job? How did you correct the problem?
11. If a team member or coworker needed help in solving a problem, but you did not have the time to help, what would you suggest?
12. To whom did you turn for help the last time you had a major problem and why did you choose that person?
13. Describe a time when people were counting on you and you failed to solve the problem.
14. Tell me about a recurring problem that you wanted to resolve but didn't.
15. Give two examples of decisions you made on your last job.
16. Tell me about an experience in which you had a limited amount of time to make a difficult decision.
17. Describe a time you had to make an unpopular decision.
18. What do you do when priorities change quickly? Give me one example of when you had to act this way in a situation.
19. Tell me about a decision you made while under pressure.
20. Tell me about a decision you made but would have done differently given a second chance.
21. If you saw a team member or a coworker about to make a bad decision, what would you do?
22. What do you do when there is a decision to be made and there are no procedures in place?

23. Tell me about a time when you made an emotional decision and after you made the decision still felt uneasy.
24. How do you set goals for yourself?
25. Give me an example of a time when you used your fact-finding skills to gain information needed to solve a problem. Then tell me how you analyzed the information and came to a decision.
26. Give me an example of a problem you faced on the job or in the classroom, and tell me how you solved it.

BEHAVIORAL INTERVIEW EVALUATION SYSTEM

Below is an example of a simplistic rating system that may be used to evaluate you during a behavioral interview. Other rating systems are very sophisticated with multiple grading and evaluation system components.

5. Much more than acceptable:

Significantly above criteria required for successful job performance

4. More than acceptable:

Generally exceeds criteria relative to quality and quantity of behavior required

3. Acceptable:

Meets criteria relative to quality and quantity of behavior required

2. Less than acceptable:

Generally does not meet criteria relative to quality and quantity of behavior required

1. Much less than acceptable:

Significantly below criteria required for successful job performance

QUESTIONS YOU CAN ASK DURING AN INTERVIEW

1. Can you give me a detailed description of the position?
2. Can you tell me why the position is available?
3. What will the training program be like?
4. How long do people typically stay in the position?
5. Where do people go after they leave the position?
6. What characteristics are you looking for?
7. What growth/reduction areas do you anticipate in the future for this organization?
8. What major challenges is this organization facing?
9. What do you see as the challenges, negative aspects, or positive aspects of this position?

PERFORMANCE SKILLS

Listed below are key behaviors you may be evaluated on:

Adaptability
 Analysis
 Attention to detail
 Communication-oral and written
 Control
 Decisiveness
 Delegation
 Development of subordinates
 Energy
 Entrepreneurial insight
 Equipment operation
 Fact-finding
 Financial analytical ability
 Flexibility
 Impact
 Independence
 Initiative
 Innovation
 Integrity
 Judgment
 Leadership/influence
 Listening
 Motivation
 Negotiation
 Organizational sensitivity
 Participative management
 Planning and organizing
 Practical learning
 Presentation skills
 Process operation
 Rapport building
 Resilience
 Risk-taking
 Safety awareness
 Sales ability/persuasiveness
 Sensitivity
 Strategic analysis
 Stress
 Teamwork
 Technical/professional knowledge
 Technical/professional proficiency
 Tenacity
 Training
 Work standards

10. What advanced training programs are available for those who demonstrate outstanding ability?

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11. What are the organization's growth plans?
12. What is the next step in the selection process?
13. How will my performance be evaluated?
14. If I join and succeed with your organization, where do you see me in five years?
15. What is the organization's view on the career development and training of its employees?
16. What is the attrition rate of new hires within one/three/five years?
17. How does this position and department fit into the organization as a whole?
18. How would you describe the work atmosphere in the organization?
19. What do you want to see the new hire accomplish in the first six months on the job? In the first year?
20. What do employees seem to like best and least about the company?
21. What are the typical travel requirements of the job?
22. What is the likelihood of being relocated after starting the job?

ILLEGAL QUESTIONS

An employer's questions, whether on a job application, in an interview or during the testing process, must be related to the job for which you are applying. If you are asked an illegal question, you have three options:

- You can answer the question.
- You can refuse to answer the question, which is well within your rights. Make sure you phrase your refusal in a polite, professional manner so as not to appear uncooperative or confrontational.
- You can examine the question for its intent and respond with an answer as it might apply to the job. For example "What country are you from?" You can respond, "I am authorized to work in the United States."

The following lists of illegal and legal questions are taken from *Job Choices: Planning*, a publication of the National Association of Colleges and Employers.

National Origin/Citizenship

Illegal Questions

- Are you a U.S. Citizen?
- Where were you/your parents born?
- What is your "native tongue?"

Legal Questions

- Are you authorized to work in the U.S.?
- What language(s) do you read/speak/write fluently? (This question is okay only if the ability is relevant to the performance of the job.)



Age

Illegal Questions

- How old are you?
- When did you graduate?
- What is your birth date?

Legal Questions

- Are you over the age of 18?

Marital/Family Status

Illegal Questions

- What is your marital status?
- With whom do you live?
- Do you plan to have a family? When?
- How many children do you have?
- What are your child-care arrangements?

Legal Questions

- Would you be willing to relocate if necessary?
- Would you be able and willing to travel as needed by the job? (This question is okay if it is asked of all applicants for the job.)
- Would you be able and willing to work overtime as necessary?

Affiliations

Illegal Questions

- What clubs or social organizations do you belong to?

Legal Questions

- List any professional or trade groups or other organizations that you belong to that you consider relevant to your ability to perform this job.

Personal

Illegal Questions

- How tall are you?
- How much do you weigh? (Questions about height and weight are not acceptable unless minimum standards are essential to the safe performance of the job.)

Legal Questions

- Are you able to lift a 50-pound weight and carry it 100 yards, as that is part of the job?

Disabilities

Illegal Questions

- Do you have any disabilities?
- Please complete the following medical history.
- Have you had any recent or past illnesses or operations? If yes, list them and give dates when these occurred.
- What was the date of your last physical exam?
- How is your family's health?
- When did you lose your eyesight? How?

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- Do you need an accommodation to perform the job? (This question can only be asked after a job offer has been made.)

Legal Questions

- Are you able to perform the essential functions of this job? (This question is okay if the interviewer has thoroughly described the job.)
- Can you demonstrate how you would perform the following job related functions?
- As part of the hiring process, after a job offer has been made, you will be required to undergo a medical exam. (Exam results must be kept strictly confidential, except medical/safety personnel may be informed if emergency medical treatment is required, and supervisors may be informed about necessary job accommodations, based on exam results.)

Arrest Record

Illegal Questions

- Have you ever been arrested?

Legal Questions

- Have you ever been convicted of _____? (The crime named should be reasonably related to the performance of the job in question.)

Military

Illegal Questions

- If you have been in the military, were you honorably discharged?

Legal Questions

- In what branch of the Armed Forces did you serve?
- What type of training or education did you receive in the military?

CONCLUSION

The interview process is not easy, but with preparation, much of the anxiety can be eliminated. To strengthen your interviewing skills, participate in Career Services' Mock Interview program. Call the Office at 724-229-5126 to schedule an appointment.