

INTERVIEW TIPS

Interview Types

You've been selected for an interview. Prepare yourself by taking note of the following interview structures:

- Unstructured: Consists of a series of questions used to gauge your professional experience and your interpersonal skills. The context and direction of the interview is based upon your responses.
- Example: Please tell me about yourself? What are some of the greatest personal challenges you've faced in your lifetime?
- Semi-Structured: Poses questions which are specifically related to the position you've applied for. Unlike the Unstructured Interview, all of the candidates are asked the same set of questions. The answers to which may be scored or graded. Example: As Senior Auditor how would you balance performing complex operational audits, varying in levels of risk, with on-going client communications?
- Situational: Requires that you demonstrate how you would respond and react in a specific situation.
- Example: Describe how you would handle this situation. A recommendation you made was dismissed by your employees and/or co-workers and/or team, how would you handle opposition?
- Comprehensive Structure: A blend of both situational and job specific questions, this style is employed in cases where the position demands specialized knowledge.
- Example: What are the basic principles of an internal audit control system?
- Behavioral: Questions are asked to determine the ways in which you would behave in certain situations. These questions draw upon successes and failures. Example: What do you do when priorities change quickly? What is the riskiest decision you have ever made?

Questions to Ponder

Here are some sample questions that often help to identify the stronger candidates:

1. Describe a mistake you made in dealing with people. What did you learn?
2. Describe a circumstance where you tried to help someone change. Which strategy did you employ? What was the outcome?
3. Describe your best learning experience as well as your worst learning experience. What did you learn from each?
4. Describe the most recent major change you've made. Why did you do it? Did it work out? What did you learn?
5. What was your most challenging job to date? Why? What did you learn?
6. What was your least challenging job to date? Why? What did you learn?
7. Describe a situation where you've overcome obstacles to meet your objectives. What did you do and why? What did you learn from the experience?
8. Who do you admire the most? Who do you admire the least? Why?

9. Describe a situation where you made an attempt but failed. Why did you fail? What did you learn?
10. Describe a bad experience, what happened to you? What did you learn from it?

Be Prepared

Preparation includes researching your prospective employer, practicing and preparing for the interview, as well as generating prospective questions that you may have for the employer

- Demonstrate knowledge of industry-specific achievements, organization specific successes and challenges. Be up to date and ensure that you have a clear idea of the company's future plans, news references, clients and industry partners.
- Prepare anecdotes, and specific examples that anticipate potential interview questions. These examples should reflect your skills, strengths and weaknesses. Rehearse these to ensure that you will be able to recall and recount them. Keep your responses under 3 minutes.
- Reflect on your previous work experience and provide clear examples of the impact you made within your team or organization.

Communication

Communication skills are best identified by responding in a succinct and purposeful manner.

- Avoid generalizations and extremes. Be specific with your responses.
- Detailing community or professional involvement serves to highlight your character and interpersonal skills..
- A strong candidate is able to hone in on what they learned from a specific experience; vague and general responses weaken your case. The same goes for identifying causal relationships; a weaker candidate has trouble identifying why something occurred, instead they generalize and focus on the what. As a strong candidate, you will be able to identify why something occurred and predict how you would handle a similar situation in the future.
- Self-Awareness plays a key role when identifying your strengths and limitations. You should be able to demonstrate this awareness by fleshing out your responses. When it comes to identifying learning and growth, capitalize on your personal experiences. An openness about what you've learned from past mistakes ensures that you won't relay generic or convoluted information.
- Your ability to use foresight, as well as being able to understand and envision the complexities of your team and organization is an indicator of your leadership skills and ability to see in the long view. A lesser candidate will have a superficial understanding of his or her team

Dress

Ensure that you are dressed appropriately for the position which you are interviewing for. Essentially you want to look the part, neither over dress nor under dress.

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