

Interviews

INTERVIEW BASICS

A job interview, as defined by the *Cambridge English Dictionary*, is “a meeting in which an employer asks the person applying for a job questions to see whether they would be the right person to do that job.” The purpose of an interview is twofold: it allows the employer to assess how well you fit the role and what value you can bring to the organization, while also giving you the opportunity to determine whether the position aligns with your career goals.

PREPARATION

As you prepare for an interview, it's important to understand the company's culture. Is the environment formal, with suits and ties, or more casual, with jeans and polos?

Before an interview, take time to research the company's mission, values, and recent news to show genuine interest and preparation. Understanding the organization and the role will help you tailor your answers and ask thoughtful questions.

TOP INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

- **Tell me about yourself:** This is not an opportunity to go from your birth and recount your entire history. You want to give the interviewer a concise review of your skills and abilities, education, experiences, and accomplishments relevant to the position you are applying for.
- **Why are you interested in this position?** Give the employer some insight as to why you are interested in this position. Do you have the skills and experience they are looking for? You want to express authentic enthusiasm to the interviewer for the position and the company.
- **What are your weaknesses?** When answering this question, choose a weakness that won't raise red flags for the role you're applying for—avoid mentioning something critical to the job, such as disorganization for a position that requires strong organizational skills. Instead, select a weakness that is less central to the role and explain how you are actively working to improve it.
- **Why are you the best candidate for this job?** This is your opportunity to review your top skills and abilities and give the interviewer highlights of your most relevant accomplishments. Keep it concise and focused on the value you have to offer the company.
- **Do you have any questions for me?** Always come prepared with questions for your interviewers—it demonstrates genuine interest in the role. Consider asking about day-to-day responsibilities or the company's culture to gain deeper insight into the position.

KEYS TO REMEMBER FOR INTERVIEWING

- Research the company and review job description
- Practice – Schedule a mock interview with CS
- Dress for success
- Arrive early for the interview
- Have at least five extra copies of your resume
- Follow up with a “thank you” email and/or a handwritten note