

INTERVIEWING

What role does the interview play in the job search process?

- The interviewing process facilitates the opportunity for hiring managers to evaluate a candidate's work experience, assess a candidate's hard and soft skills, discover the most qualified candidates, and define the position and company needs and expectations.
- Interviewing is a mutual selection process where the employer and the candidate assess compatibility. Both the organization and the candidate should be assessing if the other will fulfill their needs, match their values, and fit into the culture.

Prepare for Your Interview!

- Interviewing can be nerve-racking, and it's hard to come up with things on the spot.
- Interviewing requires you to reflect on your unique skills, abilities, experiences, and values, which improves your ability to better articulate how you will best contribute to an organization.
- Interview preparation helps relieve stress, pressure, and angst and helps you channel that energy into equipping yourself with an arsenal of stories and tangible examples to answer any question that comes your way.

**PREPARATION
IS**

ESSENTIAL

How should I prepare for an interview?

Step 1: Research

Start by researching the organization to ask more informed questions and demonstrate your knowledge and enthusiasm for the position and organization during the interview.

Below are some reliable websites where you can gather a well-rounded understanding of the company's background, culture, financial health, and industry position.

- **Company Website:** Start with the company's official website for information on their mission, products/services, leadership team, and recent news.
- **LinkedIn:** Explore the company's LinkedIn page for insights into their culture, recent updates, and employee profiles.
- **Glassdoor:** Read employee reviews and ratings to understand the company's culture, management, and interview process.
- **Crunchbase:** Get information on a company's funding, investors, leadership team, and recent news related to funding rounds or acquisitions.
- **Hoover's:** Access comprehensive company profiles, financial information, key executives, and industry analysis.
- **Bloomberg:** If the company is public, you can find detailed financial data, news, and analysis on Bloomberg's website.
- **Google News:** Stay updated on recent news articles, press releases, and announcements related to the company.
- **Industry-specific Websites:** Depending on the industry, there may be specialized websites or publications that provide in-depth analysis and insights.

INTERVIEWING

Step 2: Interview Prep

Download the **WSC Interview Preparation Guide** to organize and reflect on your thoughts to identify specific skills, stories, and examples to share during your interview.

- Writing out your answers to each one of the questions will help you organize your thoughts and reflect on specific skills, experiences, and values that you wish to convey to prospective employers

KNOW THE FACTS

Employers want answers from **your experience**, not hypotheticals. Think of real situations from your work history, coursework and projects, leadership and involvement, and your life experiences.

Scan to access the preparation guide!



www.wsc.edu/cs-guide

Use the STAR method to help you construct detailed answers:

STAR method by Tim Howard | <https://fortifyexperts.com/using-the-star-method-in-your-interviews/>



Prepare

- Listen to the question
- Think of an event
- Plan, organize in 5-8 seconds

One-sentence summary

S

Situation

- Provide context and background
- "Our customers complained..."

T

Task

- Describe problem and challenges
- "We faced supply chain shortages..."

A

Action

- Explain what you did and how
- "We solved..."
- "I calculated..."

R

Results

- State benefits, savings, rewards, recognitions, etc.
- "The impact of..."

Use the responses you prepared for your practice questions and relate them to the actual questions. Make sure to answer the questions fully using the **STAR** method.

- **Situation:** Outline the situation. What was happening? What was the setting? Who was involved?
- **Task:** Identify your task or assignment. What was the challenge? What was the problem needing to be solved?
- **Action:** Describe what you did to accomplish the task. What did you do? How did you decide what to do? What skills did it require?
- **Result:** Share the results. What was the outcome? Was the challenge met or was the problem resolved?

Closing the interview on a strong note:

- This is when you ask the questions you prepared ahead of time or if some came up during the interview (write them down in your padfolio).
- Express your continued interest in the position.
- Inquire about the next steps in the hiring process.

Common Interview Mistakes

Not preparing or practicing	Fidgeting, playing with hair tie or accessories
Not reflecting on real-life stories and examples	Not showing interest, enthusiasm, or engagement
Saying “um” or other filler words too much	Not being YOURSELF

Step 3: Prepare Questions

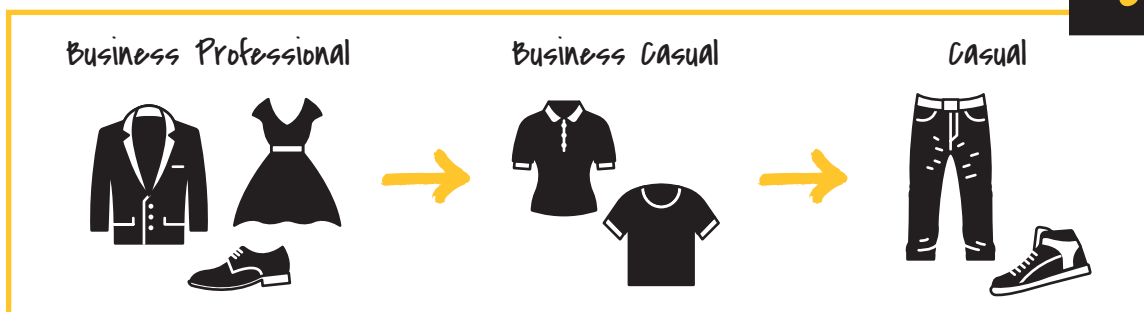
Prepare questions for the interviewers. This is your chance to dig deeper and make sure the organization is the right fit for you. Below are some great questions to ask during your interview:

- If I were to start in this position today, who would I be reporting to?
- I saw on the company website that you value [value], can you tell me how that's implemented?
- I recently saw on the news that [competitor] launched a [new initiative/product], will [this company] be following suit?
- I'm really interested in this position. Is there anything I can elaborate on to strengthen my application?
- How has your sector changed most since you started?
- How do you predict your industry will change most dramatically in the next several years?
- How is technology/AI impacting your industry?
- If you had just been hired into this role, what's the most important thing you'd do in your first 30 days to ensure you got off to the best possible start?
- Thank you so much for your time. When can I expect to hear back about the next steps?

Step 4: Dress for Success

During the interview, be intentional about your first impression.

! Dress one step above the expected dress code for employees



Body Language and Clothing

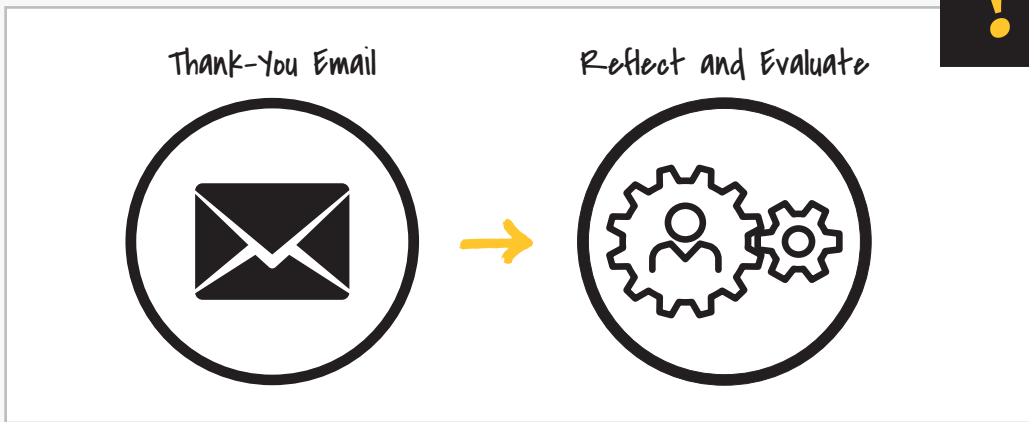
- Are they a suit-and-tie place or do they wear jeans? Try to find out and dress one step above to make a good first impression and show you are serious about the position.
- Pick out your clothes ahead of time; make sure they are clean and pressed and that you feel comfortable in them.
- Punctuality: arrive 10-15 minutes early. If you are unfamiliar with the location, drive there the night before so you know the route.
- Introduce yourself to anyone you meet in a courteous manner; be respectful to the office personnel. Shake their hand firmly and look them in the eyes.
- Stay off your phone while waiting for your interview. Consider turning it off.

Communication and Social Skills

- Practice active listening - make sure to listen to the entire question before answering. Don't be afraid to ask them to repeat or clarify.
- Effective verbal and non-verbal communication - sit up and do not slouch. Lean forward, nod your head to show understanding, and smile.
- Handling difficult questions (behavior-based questions)
 - Take your time. Breathe. You do not need to blurt out the first thing that comes to mind when they finish asking the question. Take a few moments to gather your thoughts.
 - If it is a multipart question, you may need to write down the questions, so you make sure to cover them all in your response.
 - Bring copies of your resume. Print off several copies of your resume to take to the interview. Put them in a padfolio along with a pen and paper.

Step 5: Next Steps

What To Do After the Interview



Follow these steps after your interview

Follow up by sending a thank-you email.

- Write your draft right away while everything is still fresh. You could write it in your car in the parking lot.
- Tell them how much you appreciated the meeting.
- Mention something specific about the interview or items discussed.
- Include a brief description of why you'd be a good fit for the job.
- Offer to send additional information to make their hiring decision easier.

Reflect and evaluate the interview experience.

- How did you feel it went?
- What went well?
- Identify areas for improvement.
- What do you think could have gone better?
- How can you prepare differently for the next interview?
- Do you need to revisit your responses?

Why Interviews Are an Important Part of the Recruitment Process | Indeed.com

The Pros and Cons of Virtual and In-Person Interviews (shrm.org)

Common Phone Interview Questions (and How to Answer) - Forage (theforage.com)

How to Give a Great Elevator Pitch (With Examples) - Harvard FAS | Mignone Center for Career Success

AAEE Job Search Handbook for Educators, 2023