



Before the Interview

Preparation is everything! The more you are prepared, the better the interview. Here are some tips to help you prepare for your interview.

- Update your paperwork, and make sure to bring several copies to the interview (cover letter, resume, references). Put them in a folder to keep them neat and organized.
- Research the organization and company. It is important to understand what the company does if the interviewer asks. Through research, you can also develop questions to ask the employer.
- Read over the job description multiple times and make sure you can summarize the position in your own words if the employer asks you to.
- Anticipate and practice interview questions. Don't memorize your answers- make notecards to practice concepts or ideas to express for specific questions. Current students can also practice interviewing online with MMC Career Connection's [Mock Interview](#) module.
- Map out your commute to the interview the night before. Whether you are taking public transit or driving, knowing your route in advance will help you get out the door with time to spare.
- Arrive 10-15 minutes early, as there may be paperwork you need to fill out.
- Dress professionally. Try on your planned outfit in advance to ensure it fits properly.
- Prepare five thought-provoking questions to ask the employer. (Examples are below.)
- Give a firm handshake, smile, and introduce yourself first.

During the Interview

The key to giving a great interview is to be prepared, be professional, and be yourself! When you meet the hiring manager or the person who will be conducting your interview, remember that the first impression is the most important one! Smile, make good eye contact, offer a firm handshake, and greet the employer by their name. Once the interview gets started, it's important to be a good listener. When you speak, speak slowly and confidently. Keep your tone positive. If you tend to be talkative, be careful not to ramble; you may want to repeat the question back to the interviewer to keep focused. If you are asked a question you don't know how to answer, feel free to ask for clarification and take the time to think before you answer.

Overall, your goal is convince the employer that you have these four qualities:

1. **Qualifications:** Talk about your background, education, and experiences.
2. **Attitude:** Be honest, positive, sincere, and professional.
3. **Intelligence:** Use your communication skills, and speak about your knowledge of the company and its mission. How can you help the organization achieve its goals?
4. **Compatibility:** Speak about how you have adapted to different work environments in the past and provide examples of your ability to be an effective team player.

STAR Method

The **STAR method** is a helpful tool to use when answering questions that require examples. STAR is an acronym for **Situation Task Action Result**. Start by describing the **Situation** you were in: the company and the role. Then describe the **Task**: the problem, project, or goal you were trying to solve or accomplish. The bulk of the information should be shared when describing the **Action**: What steps did you personally take to accomplish the task? What challenges did you face and how did you solve them? Finally, describe the **Result**: What was the outcome based on your work? What did you learn through the process that you can bring to this position?

Sample Interview Questions

- Tell me about yourself.
- Why are you interested in this position?
- Why do you want to work for us?
- Describe your current or most recent job role.
- Why are you looking for a new opportunity now?
- What are three strengths you would bring to this role?
- What are three of your greatest weaknesses?
- What skills or training do you have, that qualify you for this position?
- How did your education help prepare you for this role?
- Describe your key accomplishments in your last role.
- How does your previous experience relate to this position?
- Describe a time when you had to be relatively quick in making a decision.
- Do you prefer to work in a team or independently?
- What are some of your future professional goals?
- Where do you see yourself in five years?
- If I were to ask your previous supervisor to describe you, what would the person tell me?
- What motivates you and how are you able to motivate others?
- Why should I hire you?
- Why are you the best candidate for this position?

Sample Questions to ask the Employer

- What kind of assignments might I expect during the first six months on the job?
- What qualities are you looking for in the candidate who fulfills this position?
- What is your supervisory style?
- How is success in this job measured?
- Is there a formal evaluation process?
- Are there opportunities for advancement in this organization?
- What kind of training will I have?
- What do you see as the biggest challenge for someone in this position?
- What is your favorite part about working with this organization?
- What kind of timeline do you envision in terms of hiring for this role?

After the Interview

The follow up is the final act of the interview process. Be sure to make notes during your interview, including the name and contact information of the person, or people who are interviewing you. You will need their email addresses to send follow up thank you emails, or addresses to send them hard copy thank you letters. In the closing phase of the interview, you should find out what you should expect going forward. Some companies do first and second interviews; some do not. It's always acceptable to ask for a timeline of when you might be able to hear back about the employers decision, so don't be afraid to ask. (See the last question above.)