



**LITERACY
VOLUNTEERS**
OF GREATER HARTFORD
READ. LEARN. GROW.

Effective Interviewing Skills



Student Guide

Workshop Objectives and Agenda



Objectives

At the end of the workshop, you will be able to:

1. Use vocabulary and concepts related to job interviews in conversation with each other;
2. Describe what is included in an effective interview;
3. Practice effective interviewing techniques.

Agenda

- Introduction to Job Interviews
- Important Vocabulary
- Tips for Success
- Sample Interview Script
- Practice Interviewing

Introduction to Job Interviews

Directions: Answer the following questions. Then discuss with your classmates.

1. Why do you think companies have job interviews?
2. What do you think you should do at a job interview to be successful?
3. What shouldn't you do at a job interview?

About Interviewing



Are you preparing for a job interview? A job interview can be challenging if you have not done it before, or if it's been a while since you have interviewed. Companies use job interviews to get to know you, learn about your work **experience** and **skills**, and to see if you would be a **fit** for an open position. Because **first impressions** at a job interview are very important, it's necessary to present yourself in a positive way. When you are at an interview, you are also looking to see if the company is a fit for you.

Being prepared will help you to overcome any anxiety or uncertainty you feel about interviews. There are **techniques** you can practice that will give you **confidence**. There are also tips you can learn that will make your interview experience a success.



Important Vocabulary

Directions: Describe each word below. Use your translators if needed. Can you give an example of each one?

1. Experience
2. Skills
3. Fit
4. First Impression
5. Techniques
6. Confidence
7. Job Applicant
8. Employer
9. Accomplishment

Tips and Techniques for Success



Do:

- Prepare in advance for your interview: know your strengths and learn about the company
- Dress nicely
- Know where you are going, have the address with you and the name of the person you should ask for when you arrive
- Arrive early for your interview (at least 15-30 minutes before)
- Turn off your phone
- Be respectful of everyone you meet at the company
- Shake hands, smile and make eye contact
- Breathe and be relaxed
- Show a positive attitude during the interview
- Respond to questions with specific examples
- Be thorough but concise
- Tell the truth and be honest
- Ask good questions/Be prepared with at least three questions
- After the interview, send a thank you email to the interviewer

Don't:

- Wear casual, wrinkled, tight or poorly fitting clothes
- Wear lots of jewelry, perfume or cologne
- Arrive late
- Chew gum
- Give false information
- Complain about a prior job, boss or co-worker
- Fidget with pens, clothes or hair

What does it mean to “dress nicely”?

Directions: Pick which clothes are okay and not okay to wear to an interview. Explain why.



Sample Interview

Directions: Below is an example of an interview between an employer and a job applicant. Practice reading the interview script.

Employer: Hello, thank you for coming in today.

Job Applicant: Mr./Ms. _____, thank you for taking the time to interview me today.

Employer: How did you hear about the opening?

Job Applicant: I saw the position for cashier advertised on your company website.

Employer: How did you become interested in our company?

Job Applicant: I researched your company and learned that you put Members first and that you take pride in providing good customer service. I am someone with strong interpersonal skills. I have experience working as a cashier. I am known for providing excellent customer service.

Employer: Before we begin, I want to share information about our company and the position. Then, I would like to review your background and experience so that we can see if the position fits your experience and interests. At the end, we can go over any questions that you have. Sound okay?

Job Applicant: Sounds great!

Employer: We are a popular chain of stores with operations in 15 states. We take pride in doing all we can to show our customers that they are appreciated. We expect our cashiers to be accurate, efficient and friendly in all transactions.

Employer: Tell me about yourself.

Job Applicant: I worked as a cashier at Target for two years. I am customer focused and an excellent problem solver. My customers always said I was helpful and friendly.

Employer: What are your strengths?

Job Applicant: I am reliable, adaptable, trustworthy, considerate, and pay close attention to details.

Sample Interview (Continued)

Employer: What are your weaknesses?

Job Applicant: I like to make sure my work is perfect. I work hard to maintain a balance. My desire for organization and details makes me a very good cashier.

Employer: Tell me how you handled a difficult customer.

Job Applicant: I listened carefully to the customer. I didn't take things personally. I treated the customer with respect. I worked hard to solve the issue.

Employer: You've provided me with a good overview of your background and experience. I have enjoyed talking with you. Do you have any other questions for me at this time?"

Job Applicant: Yes. What would you say employees like best about working here?

Employer: Our employees love the company and the work environment. We offer flexibility and care about our team.

Job Applicant: That sounds great. Could you tell me the timing of your next steps?

Employer: We expect to make a decision by the end of the week. We will be in touch with you.

Job Applicant: Thank you for taking the time to meet with me today!



Discussion: What do you think the Job Applicant did well during the interview? Use the information on Page 6 as a checklist.

Questions You Might Be Asked at an Interview

1. Tell me about yourself.
2. Why do you want this job?
3. What do you know about our company?
4. Use three words to describe yourself.
5. What are your strengths?
6. What are your weaknesses?
7. What are the responsibilities at your current job?
8. Why do you want to leave your current company?
9. Why was there a gap in your employment between [insert date] and [insert date]?
10. Tell me about an accomplishment you are most proud of.
11. Tell me about a time you made a mistake.
12. Tell me how you handled a difficult customer.
13. When can you start working?
14. When are you available to work?
15. Why should we hire you?
16. Do you have any questions for me?

Practice Interviewing

DIRECTIONS

PART 1: Pick a job description that interests you. Prepare for a job interview by writing the answers to the following questions.

1. Tell me about yourself.
2. Why do you want this job?
3. Tell me about an accomplishment you are most proud of.
4. What are your weaknesses?
5. Why should we hire you?

PART 2: Pick a partner and share the job description with him or her. Your partner will play the role of the employer. Pretend you are at an interview and answer the questions. Switch roles.