

Interviewing Skills II

I. Interview Types: There are several interviewing styles; however, we will only focus on the two most common:

- Traditional Interviewing
 - The most common type of interview
 - Consists of a series of questions that may or may not be standardized
- Behavioral Interviewing
 - Based on the concept that future behavior can be predicted from past behavior
 - The behavioral interviewer is fact-finding and will focus on your actual past actions, not what you “should” or “would” have done. Some interviewers, however, will follow-up with questions such as, “Looking back on this experience, what would you do differently?”
 - The interviewee is expected to respond honestly to the question based on a real life experience that the employer is asking about. The more specific the response to the question the better.
 - The acronym “STAR” provides the formula for the questioning process.
- **S**: Explain the Situation in which you were involved.
- **T**: Describe the Task to be performed.
- **A**: Tell your Approach to the problem
- **R**: Summarize the Results of your actions.

II. Sample Questions

- Traditional Interviewing
 - Tell me about yourself.
 - What are your major strengths/weaknesses?
 - Why should I hire you over other candidates?
 - What leadership roles you have had?
 - Why are your grades low? Do they reflect your ability?
 - What do you know about our organization?
 - What qualifications do you have that make you feel you would be successful?
 - What is not on your resume that you would like to tell me?
 - What have you read recently?
 - What school activities do you enjoy the most?
 - What are your long-range/short-range goals? How do you plan to achieve them?
 - What do you see yourself doing in five years from now?
 - Why did you choose the career for which you are preparing?
 - What would be your ideal job?

- Behavioral Interviewing
 - Describe the best/worst team of which you have been a member.
 - Tell me about a time when your course load was heaviest. How did you get all of your work done?
 - Give me a specific example of a time when you sold someone on an idea or concept.
 - Tell me about a time when you made a bad decision.
 - Give me an example of a time when you had to work under pressure. Be specific.
 - Give me an example of a major problem you have had and how you dealt with it.
 - Give me an example of a mistake you have made. How did you overcome it?

III. Interviewee Questions:

- There is another side to employment interviewing. Interviewers also evaluate candidates on the basis of the questions they ask during the interviews.
- One goal of your questions is to learn more about the organization/position
- A second goal of your questions should be to learn what needs the organization has so you can share how you can help fulfill those needs.
- You can develop good questions by researching the employer's organization and the industry.
- Questions relating to salary and benefits should be avoided during initial interviews

IV. Sample Questions to Ask the Interviewer

- What qualities are you looking for in your new hires?
- Could you tell me about your initial and future training programs?
- How is an employee evaluated and promoted?
- What are the most challenging aspects of the position?
- What is the work environment like?
- What are the company's plans for future growth?
- What makes your firm different from its competitors?
- What industry-wide trends are likely to affect your company?
- What are company's strengths and weaknesses?
- Why did you join and stay with the firm?
- Have you cut your staff in the last three years?
- What do you like best about your job/company?
- Has there been much turnover in this job area?
- What skills are especially important for someone in this position?
- Is there a lot of team/project work?

- How much travel, if any, is involved in this position?

V. Concluding the Interview

- If the interviewer does not provide details as to whom will contact you and when, you should ask before leaving the interview.
- You should request a business card and ask if you can call or email the interviewer with any additional questions or follow-up on the status of your application.
- Send a thank-you card or business letter to the recruiter within a week of the interview. A thank you via email is now commonly accepted.