

YMCA CAREER CRUISER



INTERVIEW PACKAGE

HOW TO USE THIS BOOKLET ...

This booklet is a resource guide displaying the different processes to having a proper and memorable job interview. Each section has a description of each process you must go through with examples and scenarios for any type of job interview.

SECTIONS FOR EACH PROCESS WHEN IN AN INTERVIEW ...

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INTERVIEW PREPARATION

- Before an interview, you must review the competencies, skills, and qualifications from the job posting and incorporate those skills within your interview, as well as your attributes and accomplishments.
- Consider calling the hiring manager or resourcing consultant to find out more about the position and type of interview you can expect, so you can better tailor your responses.
- Bring the name and phone number of the person you will be meeting with for the interview.
- Bring extra copies of your resume and a typed reference list on a separate piece of paper to the interview.
- Prepare a portfolio of sample work such as reports and presentations that are relevant to the position (if appropriate).
- Prepare written questions you want to ask in the interview
- Practice your responses out loud either to yourself, a family member, or a co-worker in a mock interview.
- Think specific situations, experiences, actions and outcomes that relate to the job position.

Example of a Job Description

Job Advertisement

Title: Executive assistant

Salary: \$16.00 to \$18.00 hourly for 40 hours per week

Skill Requirements:

Education: Completion of college/CEGEP/vocational or technical training

Experience: **3 - 5 years**

Business Equipment and Computer Applications: **Windows, MS Word, Excel, and Electronic Mail**

Specific Skills: **Prepare and co-ordinate the preparation and submission of summary briefs and reports, Prepare agendas.**

Essential Skills: **Reading text, Document use, Writing, Oral communication, Working with others, Problem solving.**

- Before entering the interview for this position it is best to review the skill requirements, education, experience, applications, specific skills, and essential skills.
- After reviewing each of these competencies it would be best to discuss these skills within the interview when the question is asked to talk about yourself.

An Example of this would be:

"I have worked as an assistant within a variety of companies for the past 4 years. Being in a variety of companies has allowed me to use different computer software programs such as Windows, MS Word, Excel and electronic mail. I have also organized, prepared and recorded agendas and minutes for many meetings, as well as provide summaries for different clientele and staff (give example). I feel that I have excellent oral and written communication skills through (provide example)..."

- This will help you to relate your skills to there competencies through past experiences and situations through different employers and creates leverage over other applicants

APPROPRIATE DRESS ATTIRE

- Always look neat, clean and professional.
- After researching the company, you will get a feel towards an appropriate dress during the interview.
- Maintain good personal hygiene: shower/bathe, brush your teeth and wear deodorant.

MALE

- Business Professional: Wear a suit or well-matched sports coat and pants, shirt and tie, shoes and socks.
- Other Professions: Sports blazer, dress shirt or nice sweater, slacks and matching shoes.
- Reminder: Clothes should be clean, neat and pressed
Face is fresh, shaved mustache, side burns and beards freshly trimmed and hair neatly styled or tied back if have long hair.

FEMALE

- Business Professional: wear a skirt suit or a well matched pant suit, with hosiery and shoes with heels or no heels depending on your comfort level.
- Other Professions: nice sweater, dress shirt or blouse, slacks or long skirts with matching shoes.
- Reminder: Simple clothing with non-flashy patterns is best.
Avoid tight clothing, short skirts or anything to revealing.
Hairstyle should be neat, but not too extreme.
Avoid big flashy jewelry and excessive amounts of makeup.



"ALWAYS DRESS TO IMPRESS"



APPROPRIATE BODY LANGUAGE

- Body language can say even more than your words during a job interview.
- Always make sure you:
 - Smile: A friendly face is more pleasant than a grim one
 - Be ready to shake hands: Be alert and quick to respond to the interviewer both at the beginning and end of the interview. If the interviewer offers to shake hands at the beginning then you offer first at the end of the interview. Also ensure your handshake is firm and friendly rather than limp and weak.
 - Maintain eye contact: Shows trustworthiness and interest to interviewer.
 - Avoid crossing arms: Shows defensiveness to interviewer.
 - Avoid nervous habits: Do not chew gum, play with your hair or jewelry or tap your fingers on the desk.
 - Sit up straight: Do not slouch or lean on the desk or chair as it shows a lack of self-assurance and interest in the job.
 - Sit down when interviewer asks you too: Sitting down before the interviewer displays a lack of respect and rudeness. Try to sit when invited too and sit as close as possible to the interviewer rather than sitting across the room.

TYPES OF INTERVIEWS FOR BODY LANGUAGE:

- One on One: Use positive body language by being attentive and sitting up straight while maintaining good eye contact.
- Panel (Several Interviewers): Direct your answer to the person who asked the question, but make eye contact with each of your interviewers.
- Phone: Organize notes around you so you can easily find information. Also keep a smile on your face it will be reflected in your voice.
- Multiple (More than one interview): Find out what the next interviewer is looking for and prepare.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS IN AN INTERVIEW

- Asking you to tell them about yourself?
Tip: The interviewer wants to see if your education, work experience, hard/soft skills are compatible to the position being applied for.
- Asking why you want to work for them?
Tip: Answer with sincerity and indicate how this position will benefit you as an individual and the company/position you are applying for.
- Asking what your previous boss would say about you?
Tip: Stay consistent with what the boss would say. Do not over do it, be honest and realistic.
- Asking what your strengths are?
Tip: Do not just give one example; give them two or three of your top strengths Use examples to illustrate how good you really are.
- Asking what your weaknesses are?
Tip: Give only one weakness and ensure that it relates to the job, and explain to them how you are improving it.
 - : When weaknesses are asked, try to say; "I do not know of any that would prevent me from doing an excellent job in the position."
 - : If you cannot think of any weaknesses try discussing the kind of workplace you hope to enter.
 - : Examples of what you can say to turn a weakness into a strength;
"I prefer not to work in an environment where there is no teamwork or where I do not have a sense of why my work matters." OR
"I work better in a team environment, despite the fact that I am a self-starter and think well independently."

ADDITIONAL WORK REFERNECE QUESTIONS THAT MAY BE ASKED IN AN INTERVIEW:

- Why do you want to work for us?
- What do you know about the company?
- What are your long-term career goals?
- Why should I hire you?
- What does teamwork mean to you?

- These are situational questions that the interviewer might ask to get a feel of how You would behave in difficult situations.
- The best way to answer a behavioral question is to remember to explain the **situation**, your **actions** and the end **result**.

ADDITIONAL BEHAVIOURAL/COMPETENCY BASED QUESTIONS THAT ARE ASKED IN AN INTERVIEW:

- Describe a time when you provided excellent customer service?
- Explain to me when you had to meet a major deadline?
- Describe a time when you increased or improved productivity?
- Tell me a time when you had difficulties dealing with another staff member?
- Describe a time when you were unsuccessful in meeting a goal?
- Tell me about a time when you demonstrated teamwork?

FOR YOUR OWN KNOWLEDGE:

- There are questions that an interviewer can not ask due to discrimination laws that protect the public and their private information.

Examples of Illegal Questions:

- What's your race?
- What's your national origin?
- What's your maiden name?
- How old are you?
- Do you have any disabilities?
- These are questions that relate to discrimination, which can prevent an interviewer to not hire, you rather than your skills not corresponding with the job position.

QUESTIONS TO ASK THE INTERVIEWER

- Once the interviewer is finished asking their questions to you, take the opportunity to ask the employer a few questions.
- Tip: Do not over do the questions keep it to a maximum of three.
- Tip: When creating questions consider the following;
 - What stage you are in the interview process.
 - Creating questions that help you have a "self-leverage" over the interviewees.
 - Creating three general questions that relate to all various companies you will be applying to
 - Tailor questions to each company based on what you know about the company or have experienced with the company to date.

Examples of Questions to ask the Interviewer:

- What opportunities are there in this position for me to develop my skills?
- What are some of the challenges of this position?
- Could you describe the work environment?
- What are your expectations for this position?
- What is your company's dress code?
- What are the company's plans for future growth?
- When will you be making your decision?

FOLLOWING UP AFTER THE INTERVIEW

- Once the interview is complete it is always best to thank the interviewer for their time and consideration.
- Be sure to send a thank you letter. This letter should go out the same day or the next business day. It can be sent by fax or e-mail or dropped off in person.
- If some time has passed and you have no word on the decision, take initiative to call the employer regarding the status of your interview and when a hiring decision may be made.

Example Thank You Letter:

Kathy Smith
269 East Drive
Hamilton, ON
L7L 4H1

April 21, 2004

George Simpson
Human Resource Manager
21 Paddington St.
Hamilton, ON
L7L 5R1

Dear Mr. Simpson;

Thank you for interviewing me on Friday April 21, 2004 for the Customer Service Representative position. Since our discussion I am more than confident that I can make an immediate contribution to your organization. It was particularly nice of you to show me around your center and introducing me to the day staff. I would really enjoy being a part of the team.

Thank you once again, I hope to hear from you soon.

Sincerely,

Kathy Smith
(Make sure to sign your name)

Kathy Smith

RESOURCES AND HOW TO CONTACT US

Included below are online resources for additional information and assistance.

Monster.ca – Interview Centre

<http://interview.monster.ca/>

Quint Careers

<http://www.quintcareers.com/intvres.html>

Workopolis

<http://www.workopolis.com/content/resource/usablenews/interview.html>

Campus Program

<http://www.campusprogram.com/employment/interview1.html>

Wet Feet

<http://wetfeet.com/advice/interviewing.asp>



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