

Cañada College Career Center

Preparing for a Mock Interview

Overview

The mock interview is designed to increase your understanding and confidence in preparing for the real interview. The interview environment is simulated by a facilitator asking a set of questions (usually lasting 20-30 minutes) followed by a period of feedback and an opportunity for the interviewee to ask questions, which consumes the remainder of the appointment.

Preparing for a Mock Interview

1. Review the popular interview questions listed below.
2. Review these helpful tips for answering questions.

Think about answering questions using this process:

- Identify your skills, talents, knowledge
- Describe an experience to illustrate or reinforce the above
- Connect each experience to the position/organization

Another way to answer questions is to use the **STAR** approach. To provide sufficient information think about...

What was the **SITUATION**?

What was your **TASK**?

What **ACTION** did you or the group take?

What was the **RESULT**?

Be prepared to ask the interviewer questions. Research on the company/position can provide insight to possible questions.

Examples of Popular Interview Questions

Warm-Up Questions

What made you apply for this position?

Tell me about yourself.

Briefly, would you summarize your work history and education for me?

Work History

What is important to you in a company/organization?

Describe one or two of your major accomplishments.

Give an example of when you worked under pressure to meet a deadline.

Education

What special aspects of your education or training have prepared you for this job?

Why did you choose your major?

What job-related skills have you developed?

Self-Assessment

Which three adjectives would you use to describe yourself?
What is your greatest strength?
What is your greatest weakness?
How do you cope with conflict?
Describe a time when you overcame an obstacle.

Motivation

Where do you see yourself in five years?
How will this position enable you to reach your goals?
What will you bring to the company/organization that is unique?

Oral Presentation Skills

Describe any group presentations you have done.
How comfortable are you speaking in front of groups?
What is your experience with creating presentations?

Leadership

How do you facilitate group communication?
Describe a time when you delegated responsibilities to group members.
How do you set an example to others?
How would you describe your basic leadership style?
Describe a time when you worked in a team.

Stress Tolerance

How do you cope with pressure?
Give an example of a time when you worked well under pressure.

Job Performance

What would you say are some areas that you need to improve on?
Do you prefer working alone or in groups?
How do you receive feedback?
Describe a time when you explained something complex to a colleague successfully.

Creativity

Of your creative accomplishments, what gave you the most satisfaction and why?
What kind of problems have people recently called on you to solve? Tell me how you solved them.
What methods do you employ while brainstorming?

Decisiveness

The last time you did not know what decision to make, what did you do?
What was the last major problem that you were confronted with? What action did you take?
How do you determine or evaluate success?

Questions to ask employers

What do you (the interviewer) like best about your job/company?
What is the next step in the selection process?
What kind of assignments might I expect during the first six months on the job?
Describe the company culture.
What training would I receive if hired?

Feedback on Mock Interview

The following items are important during the interview process. The peer interviewer will provide feedback on:

A. Introduction

- Firm handshake
- Smile

B. Presence

- Posture
- Projected warmth/enthusiasm
- Avoided annoying mannerisms

C. Communication

- Voice tone and volume
- Proper use of diction
- Attentive listening Eye contact

D. Interaction

- Answered questions directly
- Provided specific examples
- Asked questions when appropriate
- Demonstrated interest in position

E. Closing

- Asked the interviewer thoughtful questions
- Avoided questions on salary and benefits
- Thanked the interviewer for his/her time
- Inquired about the hiring timeline/process
- Finished with a firm handshake and smile

F. Specific comments/suggestions on questions and answers during the interview