Sharpen Your Interview Skills and Get Hired

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Learning Outcomes

- Name the Skills required & at least 3 interview techniques
- Apply the techniques to prepare for an Interview
45-min One-on-One Consultation Session with Career Advisors

Job hunting strategies
Resume touch-up
Interview practice

Appointment: in person or by phone: 3442 5591
Top 10 Common Generic Questions

1. Could you briefly introduce yourself?

2. Why do you choose this job?

3. Why do you choose our company?

4. What do you know about this organization?

5. What is your career goal (like to be in 3/5 years)?
Top 10 Common Generic Questions

6. In what school activities have you participated? Why?

7. What was the biggest challenge in your life?

8. Tell me why we have to choose you?

9. What are your strength/ weakness?

10. What do you like to ask us?
Tackling the questions

Could you briefly introduce yourself?

Reasons for failing this questions:
Lack of preparation, too long, too boring, nothing to tell...
Tackling the questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Why do you choose this job?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My parents want me to be a XXX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have interest in it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don’t want to be an engineer, nor a teacher, so.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tell the interviewers about:

Your personal abilities, interest in the field, challenge, career aspiration,

advice from parents, advisors, or others
Tackling the questions

Why do you choose this company?

- My parents like me to work in your company.
- Your company is prestigious.

Tell the interviewers about:

*Your personal experience!*

Culture, vision, value of the company, how your relevant skills and attributes contributes to the company.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What is your career goal (like to be in the next 3/5 yrs)?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I have no idea .....</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’d like to be the CEO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’d like to travel around the world</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Contact with people, challenge, responsibility, job security, independence, involvement in decision-making, prestige?

Focus on your career goals, ways in which you anticipate or have already taken to attain them
Tackling the questions

What do you know about this organization?

- Um....
- The chairman recently distributed lai see to staff to celebrate birth of 3 grandsons

Talk about its business nature, recent development and news

Do research on the organisation
- Company website, news, articles in magazines
Tackling the questions

**What are your weakness/strength?**

- I have no weakness
- My weakness is I work too hard and tend to be a perfectionist
- I am lazy
- I am an idiot in maths

**Take a real weakness that can be improved. Talk about it in a compelling, insightful and positive way**

- What is your weakness
- How did you discover it
- Why it’s important to fix it
- How you’re trying to improve upon it
Tackling the question

What are your strength/weakness?

**Example on weakness:**

One of the things I am working on is my tendency to wait till the last minute to do things. Now, I would set a project schedule and a daily to-do list and make sure things will get done at least 1 week before the deadline. For example, ... I felt this actually takes the last minute pressure away and that also allows me to improve the work further as there are some spare time left before the deadline.
Tackling the question

What are your strength/weakness?

Example on strength:

I think one of my strongest areas is my ability to multitask. I’ve always been involved in quite a few things, and I really enjoy having a variety of things going on. I actually found out that I do better in school when I am more actively involved in out-of-classroom activities, such as ....
# Tackling the questions

**Tell me why we have to choose you**

I am hardworking  
Because I am cheap

**Tell the interviewer**

- How your competency fits with the job  
- Show that you have passion in the industry/field and most importantly in the company
Tackling the question

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Do you have any questions for me?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>You have told me everything I wanted to know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, how about the salary/fringe benefit?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For job interviews, ask 3 main types of questions

- **Person/job related**
  - What type of projects will I be able to assist on?

- **Next Steps**
  - When would I expect to hear from you?
Questions to the Interviewers

Ask questions that demonstrate your knowledge of and interest in the job

- What is the culture of the xxx department?
- Can you describe what life is like working in this company?
- What will my main task/s be?
- How will my performance be assessed?
## Tackling the questions

**What was the biggest challenge in your life?**

- Getting a pass in AL UE paper as my English was poor.
- No sleeping for 4 consecutive days during the exam period

* Mentioned something really difficult in school, work setting or social occasions and how you overcame these difficulties.*
Tackling the questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What are your hobbies?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I like watching TV, sleeping, karaoke</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am too busy to have any leisure time</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- You may demonstrate competencies and personalities in hobbies. E.g. analytical skills, determination.
Sample question on behavioural interview

“Give me an example of when you creatively solved a problem”

- A lot easier if you thought about it in advance
- Expand it with real examples

A company job description will usually tell you exactly the types of questions you’ll be asked on an interview!

“We are looking for creative problem solvers”
Challenging Question

“Why do you study Computer Science (or your Major)?”

X What does she mean? any hidden agenda?

She wants to know who you are and to find out what influenced your decision
Challenging Question

“You got a poor grade in UE paper”

X I will not get the job due to my poor English.
X She is humiliating me.

■ She wants to see how you react and what have you done to address your weakness.
Tough Question

Interviewers ask just to see you sweat!??

To see:
- if you can think on your feet – can be humorous, creative and sell yourself and relate to the job!
- How you react when challenged
- How you defend your opinion
- How you’ll sell your point of view to a skeptical client
Check Point

Are you confident to ace in job interview now?
Activity 2

Why do people fail in interviews although they may have prepared well for the questions?
How are you rated in an interview?

- Communication Skills?
- Qualification?
- Appearance?
- Attitude?
How are you rated in an interview?

- Communication skills: 25%
- Appearance: 25%
- Attitude: 40%
- Qualifications: 10%
Skills Required

- Listening
- Oral communication
- Knowledge about the organisation
- Business/social etiquette
If you do not attempt suicide remember to

- Dress properly
- Arrive a bit early (15 mins down stairs, 5-10 mins in office)
- Be honest
- Be positive
- Prepare
- Look clearly at the job/admission requirements
- Research the organisation/subject of study/university
- Know your strength and weakness
- Always relate your competencies to the requirements
- Listen to the questions
- Give a structured Answer (story like)
- Relax
- Be honest
- Be positive

Practice! Practice! Practice!
Dress for Job Interview

First Impression Counts!

☐ Do you have body odour or bad breath?
☐ Is your hair clean and free of dandruff?
☐ Are your nails clean?
☐ Is your face free of oil/pimples?
☐ Have you removed the unsightly body hair (face, nostril, ears, legs, armpits)
Tips for Ladies

- Suits or trouser suits (black, navy, charcoal grey, plum, beige, dark green, coffee brown)
- Blouses (white, cream, shell pink)
- Leather court shoes (black, brown)
Tips for Ladies

- Leather handbag/shoulder bag (not too big)
- Thin skin-coloured tights (15 denier)
- Wear simple make-up (natural colour)
- Simple accessories (earrings, ring, watch)
- Do not wear perfume
Tips for Men

- Business suits (charcoal grey, navy blue, black)
- Long-sleeved shirt (white, light blue)
- Tie (solid coloured, classic patterned)
- Tie should reach belt buckle and the tie knock should be firmly against the collar
Tips for Men

- Black leather shoes (Oxford style, lace-up, loafers)
- Dark-coloured socks
- Black leather belt, no braces
- Do not wear cologne or strong aftershave
Interview Tips
Video

http://youtube.com/watch?v=S1ucmfP OBV8
Interviews Advice

Advice:
- NEVER LIE!
- Prepare yourself - good self understanding
- Know your employer/career field
- Research the company
- Understand clearly the job requirements and selection criteria
- Always match strengths/competencies with job requirements (Your Key Unique Selling Points)
Interview Advice

Advice:
- KSPQ approach (Knowledge, Skills, Personal Qualities)
- STAR approach (Situation/Task, Action, Result)
- Good general knowledge (current affairs)
- Good professional knowledge
- NO rehearsed answers!

Preparation! Practice! Confidence!
More questions..

- Why didn’t you have any extra-curricular activities, exchange experience, or work experience in your university life?
- How special are you?
- Describing your role in your family
- Your expected salary is quite high, Why do we paid for that to employ you?
- How long will you work for our company?
- Did you apply any job in other companies?
- What do you think about HK after 10 years?
Interview - Do’s

- Be punctual
- Be clean, tidy and presentable
- Be confident, natural – Be yourself!
- Maintain eye contact with the interviewers
- Smile and nod appropriately
- Listen to the questions carefully
- Give direct, concise and brief answers
Interview – Do’s

✓ Stay focused
✓ Always match your strengths/professional knowledge/skills/work experience with the job requirements
✓ Give specific examples to illustrate your point (e.g. describe an actual experience in which you demonstrate your leadership)
✓ Answer questions honestly – do not give “model answers”
Interview – Do’s

- Show independent and logical thinking – do not repeat others’ views without having thought deeply about them.
- Answer the hidden questions
- Be prepared to be asked “awkward” questions (e.g. Your GPA is low, why? Well, you did not do well in public examinations. You have sat for HK Advanced Level Exam three times already.)
- Show enthusiasm and interest in the job
- Follow up letters – thank you letter
Interview – Don’ts

× Be late
× Be sloppy, narrow-minded, rude and passive
× Try to be someone else
× Memorise and recite answers to questions
× Lie, bluff, try to please
× Do not beat around the bushes, do not “ramble”
× Talk too much/too little
Interview – Don’ts

× Oversell/over-humble
× Become emotional, defensive
× Try to be funny
× Unduly emphasis starting salary
× Linger over fringe benefits
× Come unprepared
BUT...

☐ You are still nervous!

>> You want to get the job!  **Pressure!**
Useful References

Competencies

- Successful Interview Skills, Rebecca Corfield, Kogan Page
- Fearless Interviewing, Marky Stein, McGraw Hill
- Confessions of a Recruiting director, Brad Karsh, Prentice Hall Press
- Other online resource: key words – resume, interview, industry, graduate
- Mock Interview preparation

- www.jobweb.com/resumes_interviews/default.htm
- http://www.unca.edu/career/ResumeBasicswithSampleResumes.pdf
- http://www.careerservices.calpoly.edu/Students/JobSearch/mockinterviews/mock_interview.htm
Learning Outcomes

- Name the Skills Required and 3 tips/advice on techniques
- Apply the techniques to prepare for an Interview
Actions After the Interview

Be Reflective!

- Use each interview as a learning experience
- Make some honest notes about the way you perform in each interview (good and bad)
Actions After the Interview

Be Reflective!

- Write down specific steps for improvement
- Share your reflection with friends, teachers, and career advisors
GOOD LUCK!

Please fill in the Evaluation form