



# The Job Interview

Congratulations! Your hard work has paid off, and you've received a call to come in for an interview. Keep moving forward by:

- Studying the employer again
- Preparing a list of questions
- Answering questions you anticipate during the interview and doing mock interviews

Look smart, think smart and be ready.

## Interview Preparation

Knowing the kind of information the employer is seeking will help you prepare for the interview. What do employers want to know?

- Your motivation for employment
- Your ability to do the job
- How you'll fit in
- How much you'll cost them

Before you walk in the door, cover these topics on your own:

- **Do your research** – Ask about the interview process, who'll you meet with, how long it will take
- **Match your skills to the job** – Be prepared to show how other skills will compensate for weaknesses
- **Prepare to win the job** – Be positive, truthful and realistic
- **Look good** – For the big day, try to be the best-dressed person to visit the employer's office or plant

## Types of Interviews – Let's Get Acquainted

The purpose of an interview is to get to know you and for you to learn about the employer. Employers evaluate your qualifications. You provide a human face to your resume and sell your skills, experience and enthusiasm. It is an opportunity for you to learn what it is really like to work for the company – and to find out if you really want this job.

- **Telephone screening interview** – Keep job search records organized, in case of an unexpected call
- **In-person screening interview** – The goal is to select candidates to meet with the decision-maker
- **Selection interview** – Conducted by the hiring decision-maker, and you may be invited to return
- **Behavioral interview** – Gives employers insight about your on-the-job behavior and character

- **Work sample interview** – An opportunity to show what you know
- **Peer group interview** – An opportunity to meet and talk with prospective co-workers
- **Group interview** – This occurs with a group of other candidates for the job
- **Lunch or coffee interview** – This interview assesses how well you handle yourself in a social setting
- **Stress interview** – A test of whether you can handle stress on the job
- **Video conference interview** – Useful for candidates who live in distant cities or other states

## Communicate Your Best Image

Get yourself together early. Complete applications and gather letters of recommendation, if asked. Include a list of your references, copies of licenses (for jobs that require licenses), notebook, pens, business cards and extra resumes. Bring a portfolio and put everything together in a briefcase. Look professional.

- **Send positive signals** – Watch your nonverbal communication
- **Show and tell** – Back up your statements with work samples
- **Finish strong** – Demonstrate your interest, summarize your qualifications, don't overstay your time
- **Follow up** – Evaluate your interview, send thank-you letters, notes or emails within one day

## Key Interview Questions

Employers use many strategies to interview job candidates. Here are some typical questions.

- **Tell me about yourself** – An open-ended question
- **Why are you interested in working for this company** – Your answer will show you've done your homework
- **Tell me about your education** – Describe the impact your education has had on your understanding of your professional field
- **Why have you chosen this field** – Show your enthusiasm and commitment to your career
- **Describe your best and worst bosses** – Don't present a negative impression of former employers
- **What interests you the most and least in a job** – A gauge for measuring how you'll fit in
- **What is your major weakness** – State how you overcame a weakness.
- **What are your strengths** – Offer a confident response that will "market" you as an employee.
- **Where do you see yourself in three years** – Indicate your goal of acquiring skills and knowledge within that time to make a positive contribution to the company

Keep your answers brief and related to the job.

## Questions to Ask in an Interview

- Describe an average day on the job.
- What is the history of the position, and why is it vacant?
- What are the key challenges of this position?
- How would you describe the ideal candidate?
- Can the duties of the position be expanded?
- What are some outside influences that affect company growth?
- What are your short- and long-range objectives?
- When will you make a hiring decision? May I call for the decision? When is a good time?



For more job search guidance,  
visit your local  
WorkForce Center.

888-Get-JOBS  
(888-438-5627) or visit  
[mn.gov/deed/job-seekers/job-guide](http://mn.gov/deed/job-seekers/job-guide)



**mn** EMPLOYMENT AND  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Our WorkForce Centers are a  
proud partner of the  
American Job Center Network.

Upon request, this information can be  
made available in alternative formats.

Minnesota's WorkForce Centers  
are equal opportunity employers  
and service providers.