

5 Minute Interview Prep Guide

QUICK TIPS ON
MAXIMIZING YOUR
INTERVIEW



THERALENT

Executive Search

OVERVIEW

There are very few professional interviewers in the world. It's a skill that most professionals may utilize about 10 times in their career. The ultimate goal in an interview are to communicate two things: You can excel at the role and people will want to work with you. Achieving those goals takes Practice and Preparation.

Practice

A common mistake during interviews is assuming you can make it up on the spot and interviews typically do not follow the structure or format you have envisioned. Most interviewees are a little nervous so being able to fall back on what you've practiced is important.

The Introduction

- Whether it is the first phone call or in-person interview a practiced strong opening gets the interview off to a good start. A confident and practiced introduction can be as simple as: "Hello David, I'm excited to talk with you today."

Typical Questions:

There are a few things you need to know about YOURSELF prior to the interview because there are questions that are usually asked by the interviewer where the opportunity to answer will be there. The worst mistake to answering questions during an interview is to give an answer to one of them you've found online. Most interviewers will have heard the answer before and it doesn't distinguish yourself from the competition. The best way to answer questions is to be sure no other candidate can provide the same answer. Answer them as honest, earnest and most importantly unique to yourself. The answers should be in your own unique language.

Typical Question examples:

Tell me a little bit about yourself

This is one of the most challenging questions in the interview. The best answers I've heard for this are to tell a two minutes story about how you got to the point you are now professionally. I believe adding some personal aspects to the story is a good idea. As mentioned previously the goal is to connect with the interviewer and adding hobbies, interests or activities makes you three dimensional and the interviewer may share one of those as well.

Typical Question examples (continued):

Why are you looking?

Answer in a way that shows you're running to the position versus running away from a bad job you're currently in.

What are your greatest strengths and weaknesses?

Everyone has unique strength and weaknesses. Answer these honestly because you probably know yours. On the weakness side, the interviewer isn't looking for someone perfect. They know everyone has weaknesses its more of a matter of do you know yours. Tell them your weakness and also provide information on how you deal with it and don't let it get the best of you.

Why are you a good fit for this job?

This is a great opportunity to lay out how your background relates to the position. The best activity for this is to add bullet points below their bullet points in the job description about how your background matches or exceeds their requirements or functions.

Behavioral Interview Questions:

These types of questions probe the interviewee's past examples of success and ability to problem solve.

Some interviewers want to hear short stories about how you've dealt with issues in the past. These questions are called the STAR Model. STAR stands for Situation, Action and Result. These questions are usually started off with something like:

Can you tell me about a time.....

When did you.....

What was the most.....

Tell me about how.....

These questions usually deal with your achievements or challenges you've faced such as times you've disagreed with management.

The best way to answer these types of questions are to keep no more than a 2 minute answer. Lay out the situation and provide specifics, talk about your thought process on how you arrived at the action which preferably provided a positive outcome.

Behavioral Interview Questions (continued):

- Look closely at the position you are applying for. Get hold of a job description. What specific skills are the employers looking for?
- Analyze your past work experience and background. Match the skills that you have with those the employers are looking for. Don't forget competencies that you have developed outside of the work environment (eg, leadership or organizational skills through not-for-profit activities, etc.)
- Now identify specific examples/situations that demonstrate those skills. You need to be able to explain an entire situation - tell a story to show how you actually used a particular competency. It pays to illustrate the level of involvement you had in resolving a situation, and to quantify the results. If there are situations where you applied a competency but things didn't work out, use them as examples and explain what went wrong. What did you do to resolve it?
- Try the STAR approach to answering questions. State the Situation, Task that was at hand, the Action you took, and the Results you achieved.

Miscellaneous Questions:

Be ready to talk about your past managers and what you liked and/or disliked about them.

Be ready for why you left your prior positions.

Know why you're a good fit for the position and be ready to provide your past achievements to prove you can do the job.

The Exit Speech

- They say the First Impression is the most important but the Last Impression is just as critical. The last impression is a little more challenging because sometimes the interview has to end abruptly because the interviewer is late for a meeting or the time slipped away from them. Know the last few sentences you're going to say ahead of time. Something that shows interest in moving to the next step is best. An example might be: "Thank you for your time. I was excited before we had a chance to talk and now that I've learned more about the company, position and you I would like to be considered to move forward."

Research

The first step to prepare for the interview is to research, research and more research. The more research you can incorporate into the questions you ask and the answers you provide make a BIG impact on the interviewer.

Research topics

- Company Size
- Revenue
- Pipeline
- Recent Press Releases from their website
- Google News-Try to find relevant information that requires a little digging and may be obscure. It makes an impact on the interviewer because it shows you've done your homework
- If it's a public company the quarterly and annual reports are a gold mine. They have a section where they will disclose challenges they foresee.
- Any connections via social media or past working relationships with management or employees?
- Research all those you will be interviewing with. It is perfectly OK to look at someone's profile on LinkedIn if they are on the interviewing schedule. If the person sees you've looked at their profile they know you're doing your research.

Incorporating your research into the interview shows interest and you come prepared. Typically you'll have an opportunity to ask questions of your own and those questions can have a number of purposes.

Communicate you're a great candidate for the position

- During the course of the interview there will be opportunities to showcase you're a great fit for the position.
- Review the job description and below each Qualification or Requirement, write examples of how you meet those or of past successes

Questions of your own

- Incorporate your research
- The questions should also clarify and develop any concerns you have to grow your interest in the position and company.
- There are certain questions of your own that should be held towards the end of the interview process. The first interview is typically structured for the company to decide if you're qualified and a good fit. The subsequent interviews will allow you to ask questions to help you determine if they're a good fit for your career.
- Ask questions which will provide information for the next interview such as, Who will I be working closely with in this role and how does this role impact theirs?



**THANK YOU AND WE HOPE
THIS HELPS YOU GET YOUR
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