

Interview Preparation Sheet

Stages of the Interview

Stage 1: Building Rapport

Establish chemistry first during the interview (Remember – people hire people they like). Spend the first few minutes of the interview on building rapport with the individual.

Stage 2: Qualifying the Hiring Authority

Before getting into the interview you must qualify the hiring authority by finding out what qualifications they are looking for in the right individual. Ask something along the lines of:

“What characteristics are you looking for in the candidate you want to hire?”

After finding this information out focus your presentation on how your experience and accomplishments really match up with what they are looking for and how you would be a good fit for the position.

Stage 3: Asking Questions

Be prepared to ask a series of intelligent questions. Review the included ‘Interview Prep Questions’ document and choose at least three questions that you plan to ask during the interview. This conveys a genuine interest in the opportunity to the hiring authority.

Stage 4: Probe for Concerns

In every interview the hiring authority will have concerns. Your goal is to bring these concerns to the surface so they can be addressed. The following question is an example of how this can be accomplished:

“Mr. Hiring Authority, earlier you mentioned to me that you are looking for an individual who has experience in blank, blank, and blank. You also shared with me that the right candidate would be able to blank. It appears that I match up well with what you are looking for. Do you have any questions as to my ability to be a fit for this position?”

What this does is allows you the opportunity to address any concerns they may have. Quite often it is something small that may have been missed initially that you can elaborate on and show how that would not be anything to be concerned with. If it is something that cannot be easily addressed the best way to handle it is to acknowledge their concern but explain, if it is the truth, how that concern has not affected your ability to succeed in the position previously and then stress your strengths.

Stage 5: Closing for the Next Step

It is very important to close for the next step before leaving the interview. The goal here is to get agreement that you will go to the next step or else probe for more concerns. This is important because it tells the hiring authority that you are there to do business and are serious about the opportunity.

Handling the Money Question

If and when the question of compensation does arise it is perfectly fine to share with the hiring authority what your compensation is currently. If you are asked what it would take to bring you on board the best way to respond, if it is true, is by saying the following:

“Mr. Hiring Authority, I’m currently making \$ _____. I know if the opportunity is right your company will make me a fair offer. However, the most important thing to me is the opportunity.”

The reason for this is because you don’t want to put out a number that is too high, before having created as much interest as possible from the hiring authority’s perspective, so as to knock you out of consideration. On the other end you don’t want to share a number that is too low so as to potentially leave money on the table.

Follow-up to the Interview

Be sure to send a follow up letter or email to the hiring authority thanking them for their time and re-emphasizing your interest in the opportunity.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS by the INTERVIEWER

- Tell me about yourself.
- Why should I hire you?
- Describe your style of management
- What is your major strength? Weakness?
- What do you feel is the single most important aspect of your position?
- Describe your great accomplishment in your last position?
- If I spoke to your current (or last) boss, what would he/she say was your strength/weakness?
- How would your subordinates respond to that question?
- When hiring subordinates, what are the specifics you look for?
- If you were to start over, what would you do differently?
- What is your definition of success? How do you measure your success to date?
- How do you define “leader”? Are you one? Why?
- Some things we try top accomplish do not work out; describe a few things that did not live up to your expectations. Why did it occur?
- In your profession, what do you consider to be the major leading-edge issues you will face over the next several years?
- Have you ever fired anyone? Describe the circumstances and what you did.
- Describe what you believe to be an ideal working environment, regarding size of company, management from above, your decision in scope, etc.
- Describe your personality.
- What do you do with your free time?
- What other opportunities are you exploring at this time?
- What do you consider to be the two or three significant opportunities in our industry?

QUESTIONS TO ASK THE INTERVIEWER

About the organization...

1. What are the key strategies/objectives of the organization?
2. What are the company’s goals over the next 5-10 years
3. What are the key shifts or changes in direction that the organization is attempting to bring about?
4. What effect will these shifts/changes have on the function in which I would be working?
5. Would you outline for me what the department goals are?
6. What new results will be expected of the department? Why?

About the position...

1. How did this position come to be open?
2. Does a job description exist for this position?
3. What are some of the more difficult challenges of this job?
4. What kind of person are you seeking to fill this job? (Skills, etc.)
5. What new results will this position be responsible for? Why?
6. What current responsibilities will become obsolete?
7. What aspects of the current position will likely remain unchanged?
8. What is the key skill or attitude that makes the difference in this position?
9. If you hire exactly the person you want for the position, what will happen as a result?
10. What constitutes success or failure in this position?
11. What kind of support does this position receive in terms of people, finances, etc?
12. What is the extent of the positions authority?
13. What are your objectives for this job? If I were to perform well, what would you expect me to have accomplished in 6 months or a year?
14. Assuming I will do well, what would be the next likely career step for me after this position?
15. Who will evaluate my performance? On what basis will I be evaluated? (Do you have a performance appraisal system? If so how does it work?)
16. How am I likely to be developed?
17. Please tell me about your (this position's supervisor's) management style.
18. As you evaluate my candidacy, is there anything that is problematical for you? If so, please tell me your concerns.
19. I find this position very attractive. Do you have any reservations about me at this point?