

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER BEFORE AN INTERVIEW

When preparing for an interview, determine your answers to some of these questions an interviewer may ask. These are also good to work into your résumé. Then, prepare some questions for the interviewer as well.

Qualifications

What qualifications do you have that relate to the position?

What skills or abilities have you developed recently?
Where have you shown initiative in a previous project?
What have been your greatest accomplishments?
What is important to you in a job?
What motivates you in your work?
What qualities do you find important in a team?

Work experience
What have you learned from your past jobs?
What are/were your major responsibilities?
What specific skills used previously relate to this position?
How does your previous experience relate to this position?
What did you like most/least about your last job?

Career goals
What would you like to be doing five/ten years from now?
How will you achieve success?
How will you judge yourself to be a success?
What type of position are you interested in?
How will this job fit in your career plans?
What do you expect

from this job?
When can you start?

Education

How has your education prepared you for this position?
What were your favorite classes/activities at school?
Why did you choose your major?
How do you plan to continue your education?

How to prepare for an interview

A job interview can be described as a mutual “exchange of information” because it provides the candidate with an opportunity to both gain information about the department and position, and to discuss skills and career goals in relation to the job.

Interviewing helps managers determine three things before they make a hiring decision:

Preparation is an important part of the interview process.

can you do the job, are you motivated to do the job and are you a good fit in the organization.

Managers want to know if you possess the necessary knowledge and abilities to successfully perform the duties of the job, if you are interested and if you will do the job with consistent effort and if your work ethic, values and goals are consistent with the organization. This should demonstrate if you will be a team player and how well you will work with the team.

Preparation is an important part of the interview process. The time you spend preparing prior to the interview will be time well spent in your job search process. The following are some tips on what you can do to prepare yourself before, during and after a job interview.

Before the interview

- Review the job announcement.
- Learn more about the department by visiting its web page and social media sites.
- Review your résumé and be prepared to discuss your relevant skills.
- Decide who your references are. They should be a current or past supervisor, coworker, teacher/professor or associate who has knowledge of your work history, skills, abilities, accomplishments, initiative, education and integrity. Get permission to use their name in advance and collect their current contact information (including email address).

After the interview

- Send a concise thank you letter within 24 to 48 hours of the interview. Reiterate your interest in the position, mention anything you know reinforces you as a good fit for the job and give your contact information.
- If you are not selected for the job, it is OK to politely ask an interviewer which area(s) you could improve on in the future. And don't give up hope. Every interview is one step closer to getting the right job for you. —Submitted by *Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw Indians*

- Be prepared. Bring extra copies of your résumé and a notebook to take notes. Make sure you bring everything they suggest, such as samples of your work or letters of reference.
- Dress for Success. Appearance should reflect maturity and self-confidence. Be neat, clean and dress in good taste.
- Find out where the interview will be, obtain clear directions and confirm the time. Plan to arrive early.

During the interview

- Relax — think of the interview as a conversation, not an interrogation.
- Be enthusiastic, confident, courteous, and honest.
- Listen to the questions carefully and give clear, concise, and thoughtful answers.
- Convey interest in the organization and knowledge of the position. Then, ask relevant questions about the job or department, such as Where does this job fit into the organizational structure? What qualities do the people possess that have already been successful in this job? What kind of orientation and training are available to new employees?
- Present a list of your references and any letters of recommendation or reference that you may have to offer.
- End the interview with a firm handshake and thank the interview panel for their time and consideration.

Is it time to consider a career change?

Around the start of the new year, many people resolve to leave their current jobs. Changing careers is a significant step, especially for people who are firmly established in their fields. A career change can be rewarding and life-changing, and there are some things professionals might want to consider before resolving to change careers in the new year.

Changing careers vs. switching jobs

Changing careers and switching jobs are not the same thing, and some people may want the former while others may only be in need of the latter. A full-fledged career change may require returning to school and a willingness to start from the bottom. A job change typically allows professionals to stay in their fields and move on to another position, whether it's with their existing employer or with another company.

Career trajectory

The direction of a person's career may also influence whether or not they want to make a career change. Established professionals mulling a career change should consider their willingness to start anew. Many mid-career professionals have worked for years to establish themselves in their fields and within their companies. Switching careers does not mean that experience and reputation is invaluable,



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People may choose to change careers at any stage in life. Putting in the right amount of preparation and forethought allows the transition to go smoothly.

but neither attribute may carry as much weight in a different line of work, and that can affect career trajectory and future earnings.

Effects on others

Established professionals must also consider the effect that a career change may have on their families. Married mid-career professionals should discuss changing careers with their spouse, and even their children if the kids are old enough to understand. Discuss the pros and cons of changing careers and the impact that making such a change may have on your family's daily

life. Will the family have to move? Will the family lifestyle change dramatically, if at all? Spouses and children may feel better about the change knowing they were involved in the decision, and talking things through with family may help working professionals determine if changing careers is the best decision for them.

Long-term goals

Long-term goals are another thing to consider before making a career change. That's especially true for mid- or late-career professionals who may already have made significant progress toward achieving their

long-term goals. Discuss long-term goals with your spouse or significant other and how changing careers might affect those goals. Long-term goals can change, and while the ability to realize those goals might not weigh heavily in your decision regarding a career change, understanding how such a change might affect your retirement or other late-life plans can only help you make the most informed decision possible.

Many people resolve to change careers, but such a decision requires the careful consideration of a host of factors. — Metro

Job hunting tips for young women

Young women preparing to enter the workforce may discover a job market that's difficult to crack — in many places, the business realm is still “a man's world.”

Getting a foot in the door in your desired field is not always easy, but young women looking to land that first job out of college can consider the following tips to help them take that all-important first step toward a rewarding career.

- Decide on a path. Blindly searching for work or any old job is a recipe for an aimless



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As the culture in the business world changes, women will have less problems entering the careers of their choice.

search that likely won't land you a job you enjoy. Choose what it is that you want to do and who you hope to do it for, and then you can proceed with a more refined search that does not include you spending time pursuing positions you don't want.

- Don't be afraid to seek advice. Once you determine some companies you may want to work for, don't be afraid to seek advice from people who already work for those companies. Even if such businesses don't have any

current openings, you might be able to schedule informational meetings. Treat such meetings like you would a job interview, asking questions about the industry and what you can do to get your foot in the door. Once such meetings have concluded, send a handwritten thank-you note to the person who took time out of their day to give you the informational meeting.

- Learn from each job interview. Many people, especially young people just starting out, go through many job inter-

views before finally landing a job. Each interview is not just an opportunity to land a job or hone your interviewing skills, but also a chance to learn what employers are looking for. Many interviews for entry-level jobs are similar regardless of the industry, so make note of your responses that went over well and those that might need a little more work.

- Be prepared to explain why you should be hired. Job seekers should be able to explain both their enthusiasm for the job and why they are right for that job. Keep your description of your capabilities concise, but don't be afraid to confidently state why you are the best possible candidate.

- Look for volunteering opportunities. After you have targeted a field you want to work in, you may find that there are few paying opportunities within that field. But you might be able to volunteer or even pursue an internship if you only recently graduated from college.

Volunteering or accepting an unpaid internship is a great way to start making some contacts and gaining some legitimate experience, and working for free might just indicate to prospective employers that you are serious about pursuing a particular career and not just landing a job.

Young women may be met with a difficult job market upon graduating from college. But there are ways to make job hunts easier and land the job of your dreams. — Metro

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