

Skills

Interviewing

Although the interview process is an anxiety-provoking experience for many people, it is actually nothing more than a mutual exchange of information. This is your opportunity to learn about the job and the employer, as much as it is their opportunity to learn about you. Viewing the interview as a conversation, rather than as an interrogation, can help to put you at ease.

PURPOSE OF INTERVIEWING

Be aware that the purpose of interviewing are to market your skills, and to allow the employer to discover why you want to work there specifically, whether or not you can do the job, and if you are a good fit. The goal of a first interview is to get a second interview. Ultimately, the goal of interviewing is to get an offer.

PREPARING FOR INTERVIEWS

Preparation can make or break your opportunity, so do your research and be prepared.

RESEARCH

The Job/Industry — Be familiar with the job description and know about general industry trends.

The Employer — Utilize tools like Hoover's and Vault (available on NYUAD CareerNet) to learn about the employer. You should also familiarize yourself with the organization's website. Look for client information, the annual report and the company mission. Check to see if they have been on the news recently.

Cultural Context — Use resources such as Going Global and talk with an advisor about the cultural norms and possible regional differences that could impact the interviewing process.

Yourself — Be prepared to discuss your experiences, goals, and accomplishments. Take note of specific examples that effectively relay your expertise.

PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE!

Practice is the best way to ensure a successful interview. Schedule a mock interview with an advisor; practice with friends or in front of a mirror. The more you prepare, the more competitive you will be and the more natural you will come across in the process.

DETAILS ARE IMPORTANT

First impressions can make a big difference - so make them count!

Timeliness — Arrive 5-10 minutes early. Even in cultures where time is regarded with more flexibility, the interview candidate should never be late.

What to Bring — Bring extra copies of your CV/resume and a list of professional references, perhaps in a professional looking portfolio. Turn off your phone.

Attire — Attire varies by industry and culture. Utilize Going Global and talk with an advisor about culturally appropriate attire. As a general rule, attire should be conservative and nothing that you wear should distract from what you say during the interview. In the UAE, a suit is appropriate for most interviews.

Behavior — Follow the interviewer’s lead regarding handshakes, especially when gender differences exist. Be aware of cultural norms regarding eye contact, crossed legs, accepting coffee/tea when offered, personal questions, and other factors. In general, maintain good posture, be polite, allow the interviewer to set the tone of the meeting, and avoid making negative comments regarding the interviewer’s culture.

Delivery — Be as specific and concise as possible. Content and delivery both matter. Avoid irrelevant examples. Watch out for “ums,” “likes” and too much rambling.

COMMON QUESTIONS

Tell me about yourself? — Have a short competency based pitch prepared, focusing on relevant information about yourself, what has led you to where you are now, and why you are interested in this particular opportunity.

What are your greatest strengths/weaknesses? — Be prepared with at least three strengths and two weaknesses. Have specific examples to illustrate your strengths. For a weakness, explain what you are doing or have done to improve upon it. Always be positive/honest.

Behavioral Questions — For example: Describe a time when you demonstrated leadership; Tell me about a conflict you have dealt with and how you handled it, etc). Use the STAR interviewing response technique:

Situation/Task — describe the situation you were in or describe the task

Action you took — explain the action you took - focus on your action/contribution to the task.

Results you achieved — what did you accomplish/learn?

Off the Resume/CV — Be prepared to discuss specific items listed on your resume/CV in greater detail, articulating relevant skills gained from the experience.

Salary Requirements — Don’t address salary during your first interview. Do your research and be prepared to give a pay scale range. Understand that you’ll be expected to negotiate, especially in certain cultures

ADDITIONAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Why should I hire you?
2. Why do you want to work for us specifically? Who else are you interviewing with?
3. What are your short and long-range goals? How are you preparing yourself to achieve them?
4. Describe how you dealt with a major challenge in your life. What was the outcome?
5. Describe a mistake you made and how you learned from it.
6. Why did you choose to attend NYUAD? Why did you choose your major or this career path?
7. In what ways can you make a contribution to our organization?
8. What accomplishments have given you the most satisfaction? Why?
9. If you were hiring a candidate for this position, what qualities would you seek?
10. What academic subjects did you like best/least? Why?
11. What have you learned from participating in extracurricular activities?
12. How well do you work under pressure?
13. What do you know about our organization?
14. What would your previous supervisor say your strongest point is?
15. Tell me about a time that you had a conflict with a supervisor and how you resolved it.
16. Are you familiar with the cultural differences in (country)? How will these influence your work practice?

CLOSING THE INTERVIEW

Questions to Ask — Prepare at least five questions to ask that focus on the job, its responsibilities and its opportunities. Questions about salary, benefits, vacation, etc. should not be asked until you receive an offer. Examples of questions you might ask:

1. I noticed X on your website. Can you tell me more about that? (Shows that you’ve done research)
2. Why has this job come about? (if relevant)
3. What is [your] management style?
4. What are the dynamics of the current team?
5. How often and in what format are performance evaluations conducted?
6. What are the next steps in your hiring process? (Gives you a time frame for follow-up)

Thank You Notes — Always send a thank you note (email is most common) within 24 hours following the interview. Help the interviewer to remember you and distinguish you from the other candidates. This is also an opportunity to reiterate briefly why you are a good candidate.

Following up — As time passes after the initial interview, it is important to follow up and continue to express your interest in the position. Use your judgment and do not become an annoyance.