
THE INTERVIEW

If you've been invited to interview for a position, pat yourself on the back! It's an achievement to get this far in the process. But now you have to shine, either in person, on the phone, or through Skype or ZOOM. During an interview it's easy to let your nerves get the best of you, so just remember that the employer wants to find the best candidate and they want it to be you! So just relax, get prepared, and remember to be yourself.

Phone & Video Interviews

Chances are, you will have to do a phone or video interview before you make it to the in-person round. Employers want to narrow down the field so they only have a small number of candidates to bring on-site. ***Here are some things to consider:***

- Know the job description inside and out.
- Research the church, organization, or company, and the people interviewing you.
- Research the most common interview questions and prepare answers
- Know what your strengths and weaknesses are and be able to articulate them in a positive light
- Make a list of the accomplishments and skills you want to bring up.
- Know why this position excites you.
- Come up with 3-4 good questions to ask
- The room/background - What is directly behind you that will show on the screen? Does it distract in any way? Does it appear professional?
- Stand up or remember to sit up straight in a chair.
- Double-check your technology and make sure your lap top battery is charged.
- Prevent disruptions, like a dog barking or people coming into the room.
- Avoid using a speaker phone unless you know the sound quality is excellent.
- Dress appropriately if it's a Skype interview, and sit close enough to the screen so that your head and shoulders are seen.
- Exude enthusiasm. This is harder to do through technology, so you have to make a concerted effort.

In-Person Interviews

Final candidates who have made it to the in-person round have demonstrated they have the skills to do the job. What employers are looking for, then, is how well you "fit" with the company culture.

They also want to assess your soft skills. How well you communicate and interact with others, in addition to explaining what you have to offer.



Before the In-Person Interview

- Know the job description inside and out.
- Research the church, organization, or company, and the people interviewing you.
- Be prepared to expand on your list of the accomplishments and skills.
- Know why this position excites you and why you could be a good fit for the company.
- Come up with 3-4 good questions to ask. See below.
- Pick or shop for an outfit that is appropriate for the company. If the company seems formal, go all out. If the company culture seems laid back, wear something that shows you understand this.
- Know exactly how long it will take to get there and give yourself plenty of time in case of traffic or parking challenges.
- Print off enough copies of your resume for each interviewer plus two extras just in case. If things go well, they may add additional staff interviews on the spot. Always, put these in a portfolio or folder and bring a notebook, a pen, and list of references.
- Practice answering questions. See below for some examples.

At the Interview

- You only have one chance to make a great first impression! Give a firm handshake, make eye contact, and show some enthusiasm.
- Keep your phone out of sight.
- Be friendly to the person greeting you and/or the person at the front desk.
- Be your authentic self.
- Answer questions thoroughly with stories and examples but don't ramble.
- If you're thrown for a loop, it's okay to take a minute to collect your thoughts.
- Ask good questions that reflect the research you've done on the church or organization.
- Ask them what kind of skills do they think the

After the Interview

- Send a hand-written thank you note or email within 24 hours to everyone on the interview team. You can even do this in the car right after the interview and either hit send or drop the note off with the receptionist before leaving.
- A thank you should thank the interviewers for their time, and it can also be a place where you reiterate your interest in the position and/or company.
- Send LinkedIn connection requests to the people who interviewed you.
- Touch bases with your references to let them know they might be contacted.

Typical Interview Questions

- Why are you interested in this position?
- Why are you interested in this company?

- Tell me a little bit about yourself. *This is a common question that you should have a clear, concise answer for. Think about an answer in three phases: what you do now, what you did previously, and what you want to do next.*
- What are your strengths? *Don't just ramble off a list, but give a short example for each strength you mention.*
- What are your weaknesses? *This is a time to show your capacity for introspection and your potential for improvement.*
- How do you handle mistakes? *Employers want to know that you are someone who can learn from their mistakes.*

Behavioral Questions

Behavioral interviewing is a technique used by employers to learn how you handled situations in the past, since past behavior is a good predictor of future behavior. Be prepared for this line of questioning with questions like these:

- Tell me a time you worked hard to accomplish something.
- Describe a time when you had to deal with a personality conflict with a boss or co-worker.
- Give me a specific example of a time when you used good judgement and logic to solve a problem.
- Give an example of a goal you reached and tell me how you achieved it.
- Tell me about a successful presentation you gave and why you thought it was a hit.
- Tell me about a time when you went above and beyond to get something done.

TIP

Everyone loves a story, so when answering questions, consider using the STAR method. Set up the Situation or Task. Describe what you did (Action) and what you achieved (Result).

Questions to Ask the Interviewers

When an employer asks if you have any questions, they are trying to gauge whether you're informed, interested and engaged. If you don't have any questions, that's a definite red flag. First, ask anything about the position that hasn't been covered in the interview. Some other good ones are:

- What does a typical day look like for someone in this position? *When they answer, this gives you another chance to explain why you would be a good match.*
- What are the skills and experiences you're looking for in an ideal candidate?
- What are the most immediate projects this person will be involved with?
- What is the company culture like?
- Where do you see this company in the next few years?
- Ask more personal questions, like: How long have you been with the company? What's your favorite part about working here?
- What is the next step in the interview process?