

Interview Skills Guide

Amica Center for Career Education, Bryant University

<http://career.bryant.edu>

INTERVIEWING

RESEARCHING SELF AND COMPANIES/ORGANIZATIONS

An interview is simply a conversation between yourself and an employer to discover if you are the right match for their position and they are the right match for your professional growth. Knowing what you want is a key factor in successful interviewing. Take the time to assess your passion, values, interests, skills, talents and career goals. Career counselors are available if you need assistance.

To ensure an organization is right for you, be sure to research them before the interview. You should know basics like their mission, purpose, products, services and key leaders.

INTERVIEWING BASICS

A **first or screening interview** helps a recruiter assess whether your qualifications match the position. Recruiters may interview you on campus, at the company, by phone or through Skype or video conferencing.

A **more in-depth, second interview** may last from one hour to an entire day with one person or a variety of professionals. This interview may result in an offer.

A **final interview** is required for some positions. It allows additional professionals to determine if you will be a good fit, provides an opportunity for more in-depth skills assessment and, in some cases, gives a senior leader the opportunity to approve a selection.

HOW TO PREPARE/INTERVIEW FORMATS

Recruiters use a variety of interviews to assess your qualifications including: **Traditional Interviews, Behavioral Interviews, Test or Task Interviews, Case Interviews, Panel Interviews, Group Interviews or Interviews Over a Meal.** Check out our handouts in our Resource Area in the Center and on our website under Guides and Resources that address each of these interview formats specifically and provide strategies on how to be successful.

AFTER YOUR INTERVIEW

Be sure to send a “thank-you” following any interview. You can send an email, a typed letter or a hand-written note. Remind the recipient of the purpose of your meeting and comment on something that was discussed during your conversation that confirmed your thoughts on a position, increased your knowledge, sparked your interest or demonstrated how you are the right candidate. Make every “thank-you” unique when sending to multiple individuals at the same company or organization.

HOW TO PRACTICE

The Mock Interview allows you to practice with a career counselor prior to your interview. Mock interviews are filmed and you and a counselor view your interview together to help you improve your interviewing skills. Call the Center to schedule this one hour appointment.

Career Spot provides a variety of short videos offering advice and demonstrations related to interviewing and other career topics. You can access the link on our website under Guides and Resources.

SAMPLE QUESTIONS

Traditional

- Tell me about yourself.
- What do you know about our company/organization?
- What about the position appeals to you?
- Talk about your professional strengths and weaknesses.
- How do your qualifications match our position requirements?
- What can you bring to this position that is above and beyond other candidates?
- Talk about your internship/previous work history/leadership role.
- Where have you acquired transferrable skills for this position?
- Why did you choose your major/career?

Traditional Questions Continued:

- How did you choose Bryant University?
- How has your degree prepared you for this position?
- What college classes did you excel in? Struggle with?
- What are your short-term and long-term career goals?
- What rewards do you hope to receive from your career?
- What have been your greatest successes?
- Ideally, what characteristics would you like to see in your supervisor?
- Describe a coworker you would find difficult to work with.
- Are you willing to relocate? Do you have a geographical preference?
- Is there anything on your resume that we did not discuss that you would like to comment on?
- Do you need to be paid for this internship?
- What salary are you looking for?

Behavioral Questions

- Tell me about a time when you helped a team be successful.
- Talk about a time when you had a conflict with a team member.
- Do you consider yourself a leader? Give an example.
- Share a time you had to work under pressure to meet a deadline.
- Tell me about a time when you solved a problem.
- Talk about a time that you failed at something and how you handled it.
- Tell me about a time when you had a conflict with a person of authority.
- How have you been a motivator for others? Give a concrete example.
- Talk about a research project you contributed to and what role you took.
- Give an example that demonstrates your analytical skills.
- Tell me about a time your communication skills contributed to a success.
- Share a time you had to make a difficult decision.
- Discuss a situation where you needed to be flexible or compromise.

Questions for the Interviewer

- Describe a typical day or week on the job?
- What are the day to day work responsibilities?
- Are there special projects or cross-team collaboration?
- Is this a newly created position?
- How do you define success as it relates to this position?
- What is the organizational structure and how does this position fit into the organization?
- What do you like about your organization and what do you wish would change?
- Who would evaluate my work? What is the management style of my supervisor?
- What is the work environment/corporate culture like?
- Does your company encourage professional development? Tuition benefits?
- What is the typical career path for someone in this position?
- Do individuals typically advance from internships to fulltime?
- What is the potential growth of your organization?
- How much travel is required?
- What are you looking to get accomplished in this position during the first six months — first year ?
- What are the strengths/personality types of the current team members?
What improvements or changes do you hope the new candidate will bring to this position?
- Is there a formal training program? Employee mentor program?
- Can I provide you with any other information to help you in the decision-making process?
- What are the next steps in the interview process?
- May I have a business card?