

TITLE: JOB INTERVIEW SKILLS

Introduction

A job interview is an exchange of information between a job seeker and an employer. The employer uses this time to evaluate the job seeker's suitability for the job. An interview is a two way process between the employer and the job seeker. It is important for job seekers to be prepared for interviews. Interview skills are learned, practiced and developed.

Preparing for the interview

Preparing for an interview starts after application submission. It is necessary to prepare for the interview by looking at the following areas:

1. Self Knowledge

- Who are you?
- What are your strengths and weaknesses?
- What technical or practical skills do you have?
- Review your interests and values in relation to the advertised post.
- Give examples to back up every claim that you wrote about yourself in your CV.
- Arrange for a mock interview.

2. Know the employer and the position

- Do a thorough research of the organization before the interview.
- Find out the mission, vision, weaknesses and strengths so that you can respond to questions in an informed manner.
- Read the company's literature. Talk to some of the employees.
- Locate the interview place. Visit the company before the interview to make sure you know the exact place where the interview is to be held.

3. Know the different phases of an interview

- **Opening Phase:** After exchange of greetings they may ask you to introduce yourself to verify names and position applied for.

- **Question Response Phase:** You will be asked different questions. Make sure you answer them precisely using the language used.
- **Closing Phase:** You might be asked to ask some questions. Be prepared to ask or wrap up.

4. Possible Interview Situations

- **General Interview:** This interview may be done over the phone or a chosen place. It usually lasts for one to one and half hours. The interview requires general information.
- **Screening Interview:** A 30-40 minutes interview which is meant to screen and eliminate in order to pick the best candidate.
- **Selection Interview:** The interview may be one hour or a day long. This involves more in-depth discussions. It may be a series of interviews by more than one person.

5. Question Types

- **Open ended questions:** These are broad and general questions that allow maximum answering freedom.
- **Hypothetical Questions:** Questions related to the practical or theoretical knowledge.
- **General Questions:** General information about yourself or the job such as;
Why do you want this job? Or Why should we hire you?
- **Closed Questions:** Questions that require a yes or no answer or just a brief answer.

EXAMPLES OF POSSIBLE QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES

The questions you are asked in an interview are not always predictable, but here are some of the most commonly asked questions and response guide;

Question (Open): Please tell us about yourself.

Response: The interviewer is not interested in long personal history. Confine answers to career related information. Emphasize those aspects of yourself that are relevant to the job.

Question (Hypothetical): Describe a problem you encountered, the action you took to resolve it and the results of your action.

Response: Demonstrate how you used a skill or attribute, which is related to the position for which you are being interviewed.

Question (General): Why should we hire you?

Response: Reflect on your skills and accomplishments, match these up with your understanding of the position, responsibilities as well as company goals and values.

For further information, contact:

Careers and Counseling Centre

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Location: The Centre is in Block 244 H. Entering the University from the South Gate and near Student Hostel Block 478

Consultation is from 0830hrs -1300hrs and 1400hrs to 1600hrs hours. Clients can be assisted after these hours on request.

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To call each extension of staff directly from outside the University, please dial 355 and the extension number.

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