



INTERVIEWING

Preparation for before, during, and after the interview



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SOUTHERN MAINE

Career & Employment Hub

231 Luther Bonney Hall, Portland Campus
(207) 228-8505

usmcareers@maine.edu

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WHAT IS AN INTERVIEW?

Interviewing for a job is an exciting component of the career process.



- This is a time for you to get to know the employer, the company and the environment.
- An opportunity for the employer to understand what skills, abilities, and qualifications you would bring to the position.



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PREPARING FOR THE INTERVIEW

In most cases, the interviewing process has several predictable steps.



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STEP 1: DETERMINE THE TYPE OF INTERVIEW

A Screening Interview

- Often done over the phone by a person in human resources (HR). Many small organizations under 50 employees may not have a dedicated HR department, so the call may be made by a manager.

A Hiring Interview

- Usually done by the hiring manager, the person you would be working for, but occasionally by HR.



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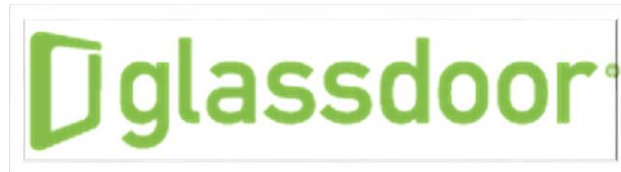
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WHERE TO FIND INFORMATION

- Information can be obtained on the organization's website, annual report (if public), and from employees you know who work there.
- Conduct a search on the Internet, you might find some articles about the organization.
- Other sources included
 - [LinkedIn](#)
 - [Live & Work In Maine](#)
 - [Glassdoor](#)



DID YOU KNOW...

A survey of 1000 employers revealed those who do not ask questions in an interview hurt their chances of getting the job.



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STEP 3: PREPARE QUESTIONS TO ASK



- An interview should be a **dialogue** with both the interviewer and the interviewee.
- Think about the things you really want to know about the organization. This will demonstrate to your interviewer that you have done your homework and are serious about the organization.
- Prepare 6 to 10 questions to ask.



SAMPLE QUESTIONS

1. Can you walk me through a typical day in this position?
2. How will I be trained?
3. Who would be my direct supervisor?
4. Is there an employee performance review process? How often does that occur and can you walk me through a typical one?
5. Where do you see the company in five years? 10 years?
6. Can you tell me what the career paths are for this department and what sort of advancements I could work towards?
7. Will I be working with a team? If so, can you tell me a little about each of them?
8. What do you love most about working here?
9. How would describe the work atmosphere here? Is work done in a collaborative style or are employees more independent?
10. What is the next step in the interview process?

These are just a few, look online for more.



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STEP 4: PREPARING ANSWERS TO ANTICIPATED QUESTIONS

This is challenging. It can be difficult to know what questions will be asked of you.



WAYS TO HELP YOU PREPARE QUESTIONS

- ❑ Learning a lot about the position can help you predict many questions.
- ❑ Request a full job description ahead of time. You can prepare questions based on the requirements of the position.
- ❑ Think about the types of questions you would ask if you were interviewing someone for this position.
- ❑ Think about your resume and how your accomplishments would be important for the interviewer to know.

STEP 5: BEFORE THE INTERVIEW

Bring copies of these items:

- Resume
- Typed list of references
- Questions to ask during the interview
- Note pad for notes

Plan your clothing attire:

- Suits/dresses – conservative colors (dark blue, black, gray, or tan). Skirt length just above the knees.
- Shirts/blouses – simple style, not revealing.
- Hair - conservative hairstyle to ensure it does not distract you or the interviewer.
- Jewelry – keep it simple.
- Perfume/Cologne – minimal or none.

Get there on time:

- Get directions – know how much time it will take to get there.
- Arrive 15 to 20 minutes early to allow yourself time to mentally prepare.
- Practice your personal introduction.
 - “Your elevator speech”
 - Focus on your positive skills and strengths.

STEP 6: DURING THE INTERVIEW

- Ask if its okay to take a few notes.
- Begin the interview with your personal introduction.
- Listen carefully and avoid thinking about your next response while the interviewer is talking. You might miss something important.
- Speak clearly, use complete sentences.
 - Answer questions fully and do not over answer or ramble.
 - Use proper English –no slang or jargon.
- Think before you speak.
 - If you need to think about an answer, say so.
 - If you don't know an answer, admit it.
 - Don't try to bluff the interviewer.



YOUR PERSONAL INTRODUCTION

THINK OF THIS **BEFORE** THE INTERVIEW



Why Do They Ask This Question?

- To get a sense of who you are
- How you handle yourself
- To see how articulate you are
- How confident you are
- What type of impression you will make
- Highlight your most important accomplishments.

How do you Answer This Question?

- Describe yourself positively
- Focus on your strengths
- Focus on what interests the interviewer
 - How you can do the job
 - How you fit into the team
 - What you have accomplished in your prior positions
 - How can you help the organization
- **Keep it Brief!**



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BECOME A GREAT STORYTELLER...

- Convey your strengths and abilities.
- Maintain your personality - don't change yourself.
 - You want to be evaluated and hired for who you are.
- Give examples when answering questions.
- Speak of your accomplishments.
- Maintain your enthusiasm.
 - It is important that your interviewer know how much you want the position.





Remember!

Non-verbal communication sends **75%** of your message. Pay close attention to your body language:

- Firm handshake
- Carefully listen for everyone's name as you shake hands firmly.
- Make eye contact with everyone in the room
- Confident posture
- Clean, professional dress and grooming
- Remember to smile



STEP 7: CLOSING THE INTERVIEW

- When asked, “Is there anything else we should know about you?”
 - Reconfirm your qualifications for the position and your enthusiasm for joining the organization.
 - Ask if there is anything they need to know about you that would help them make a decision about next steps, and then ask what the next step is – Will there be a second interview, and if so when will it be?
- Obtain a business card from each of the interviewers.
- After the interview, jot down anything pertinent that you want to remember from the interview, particularly anything you neglected to mention that would help you get the position.



STEP 8: AFTER THE INTERVIEW

WRITE A THANK YOU NOTE



- Mention how much you enjoyed the interview and learning about the company.
- Restate your qualifications, and mention anything you neglected to say in the interview that could help you get the position.
- Your thank you note could very easily make the difference in whether you get the position if you are as equally qualified as other candidates.
- It is important that your interviewers get it quickly – in time for them to make next step decisions. We often suggest hand delivering the note a few days after the interview.

An e-mail thank you note is ok, ONLY if you know that they are making a decision soon.

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO SET UP AN APPOINTMENT



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REFERENCE PAGE

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