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Alumni Association of the University of Michigan

INTERVIEW GUIDE



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ASSOCIATION

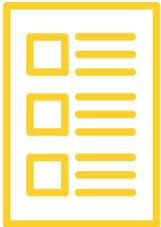
INTRODUCTION

The job interview is one of the most crucial steps in your career search process. It is the organization's opportunity to determine mutual fit. This guide brings you up to date best practices and step by step instructions for mastering the conversation..

There are three critical questions you need to be able to address in preparation:



WHY YOU? ARTICULATING TELL ME ABOUT YOURSELF



WHY THIS POSITION? UNDERSTANDING THE ROLE DEMANDS VIA JOB DESCRIPTION AND ONLINE RESEARCH



WHY THIS ORGANIZATION? UNDERSTANDING THE ORGANIZATION AND INDUSTRY

BEFORE THE INTERVIEW: POSITIONING

Research will allow you to position yourself in terms of your future employer's needs, not simply in terms of what you want from the job. Become familiar with the following:

EXAMPLE/RESOURCES

The job description

The company website- specifically 'About Us' tab. If possible try to find out about challenges, new initiatives or programs.

If publicly traded, financial statements and other information might give you a perspective on overall goals, business philosophy, etc.

INTERVIEW: USE FRAMEWORKS

TELL ME ABOUT YOURSELF

INCLUDE

- Professional identity and areas of expertise
- Most recent position
- Key achievement with # scope or result
- Degrees, job titles, relevant skills
- Passion for role

EXAMPLE

"I'm a (list professional identity), with expertise in _____, _____ and _____ (list three core skills as identified in description).

Most recently with _____, in _____ role (list current or previous role and company).

I'm proud of the fact that _____ (list most recent accomplishment with metrics)

A little on my background _____ (list degrees, additional credentials or experience)

I'm really excited for the opportunity to make contributions to _____ (tie back to current needs/team)

WHY THIS POSITION/ORGANIZATION/INDUSTRY?

Assertion

Proof

Why do you want to work in healthcare operations improvement?

Assertion: I have been interested in operations improvement and healthcare ever since I was a child.

Proof: I still remember trying to speed up patient intake processes as I watched my mom volunteer as a nurse at a major church conference. I love figuring out the best and most efficient way to do things, and provide the best service. My Lean Six Sigma Black Belt certification project at the Riverside University Hospital (RHS) was a highlight for me that combined my analytical strength and my values in seeing how improved medical services changed people's lives and health for the better.

Tieback

Tieback: Finally, I understand that the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, as well as the aging US population, are affecting major change in the healthcare industry, in response, I understand RHS has some new operations initiatives in the works (including your Emergency Room Initiative and Grand Rounds) and I would be very excited to contribute to their success through my Lean Six Sigma expertise.”

WHY DID YOU LEAVE YOUR LAST POSITION? FRAMING TRANSITIONS

Hiring Managers are most interested in transitions. If you lost a job due to downsizing or are a career switcher make sure your response addresses the following:

Make peace with yourself

Depersonalize your response (never speak poorly of previous employers or supervisors, a commonly repeated interview error)

Add a moving on statement

“I started my career in finance so I could apply my analytical skills with my interest in investment and trading. I loved the fast and dynamic pace of X. However, I missed the more consistent operational aspects of business management. I thought operations efficiency in the financial sector would not only allow me to maintain my interest in pricing, costing and financial modeling but allow me to apply this expertise in the banking sector in a slightly more consistent manner. That is why I joined X (current employer) two years ago. I’m very excited to continue my interest in financial operations by working for X (Prospective Employer) and believe I have much to offer in streamlining your financial systems and operations (moving on statement)”

BEHAVIORAL QUESTIONS: MASTERING 3-4 STORIES

Use ACTION-CONTEXT-RESULT framework for each story

Match stories to job description requirements (keeping in mind same story can be matched to varied requirements)

TELL ABOUT A TIME WHEN YOU APPLIED ANALYTICAL SKILLS?

The order entry processes at an auto parts manufacturing company where I worked as a consultant was up to ten days late in shipment dates (Context). Through assessing large amounts of data and conducting root cause analysis (hypothesis testing, graphical and regression analysis, pivot tables) and solution generation techniques (FMEA, structured innovation, designed experiments, trials) I uncovered a sub-optimization flaw. I reengineered sales and order entry (Action), saving the company \$678, 000 per year (Result).

INTERVIEW: YOUR QUESTIONS

DO NOT OVERLOOK WHEN PREPARING:

Strategic

Job specific

Wrap up

AFTER THE INTERVIEW: FOLLOW UP

Send thank you email/s to your interviewer/s within 24 hours following the interview (phone, informational or final round).

Stick with email to be assured your note arrives in a timely manner.

Send separate emails if interviewed by a panel

WHAT TO INCLUDE:

Thank the interviewer

Reference one key exchange in the interview

Reiterate your interest in the position and commitment to contribute to the organization's success

FEEDBACK

We recommend not asking for feedback from interviewers. Many companies have a 'no feedback' policy due to legal implications. If you must, do not argue. Accept the outcome and instead ask the interviewer for advice as to how you might improve

EXAMPLES

From your perspective, what are the most important trends (or challenges) affecting the company?

With these trends and challenges in mind, what are the implications for this team?

What are the key accomplishments you'd like to see in this role over the next year?

Is there anything else I can clarify for you regarding my candidacy?

EXAMPLE

Dear Mr. Smith,

Thank you for taking the time to meet with me earlier today. It was a genuine pleasure to speak about your needs at X (company name) and how I might contribute. I also really enjoyed discussing the challenges facing the X industry. I believe I could make a genuine contribution to the success of the team (name of team) and organization (name organization). Feel free to reach me at any time if you have further questions and thank you again,

Nathalia Medina