Can you do the job? Will you do the job? Will you fit in?

**Preparation**
Before spending hours searching the internet for questions and “right” answers, read the job description and research the company. Consider how your skills, knowledge, and personality fit with the company. SCHEDULE A MOCK INTERVIEW OR INTERVIEWING ASSISTANCE APPOINTMENT WITH CAREER SERVICES.

**Types of Interviews**

**Screening Interview**
Usually conducted over the phone, you will be asked general questions and specific questions aimed at assessing your ability to do the job and fit with the organization. These are generally short interviews, 10-20 minutes.

**Behavioral and Situational Interview**
The purpose is to see how you have handled work related situations in the past. The premise is that your past behavior will determine your future behavior. These kinds of interviews are common. You will be asked general and specific questions aimed at assessing your ability to do the job and fit for the organization or company. See STAR method on page 2.

**The Panel Interview**
This kind of interview can be intimidating. Think of it as a way to connect with several people at once and improve your chances for success. Even if you are not connecting with one person, chances are you will connect with others. Shake each person’s hand as they are being introduced. Make pleasant eye contact. Look at each person as you respond to questions. Start your response by looking at the person who asked the question, then look at the other members of the panel. No one likes to feel left out.

**Points to Remember**

**Internet Connection**
It is common to conduct an interview using the internet. Programs such as Skype, GChat, and Slack allow employers to interview candidates from afar. Make sure you have the appropriate technology and internet connection. You should pick a quiet room away from roommates, barking dogs and other distractions. The screen should be level with your eyes not up your nose. Look at the camera, not the screen so it appears you are looking at the employers. Remove and inappropriate items from view of employers. Also, check your lighting so your face isn’t shadowed.

**Dress appropriately**
Although many employers are becoming more liberal in their standard of dress and appearance, let basic good taste be your guide. Research the company and dress expectations for the field of work.

**Watch your body language and tone of voice**
Crossing your arms in front of you might mean you are feeling defensive. Good eye contact is important. Don’t scratch that itch under your arm, play with your hair, or fidget. Be aware of your posture—sit up straight with your shoulders back—it will make you look and feel more confident.
Dreaded Interview Questions

Tell me about yourself
Keep it brief—two minutes. Write it down and practice. Include information such as, your leadership and interpersonal skills, dependability, and your inspiration to get into the field. Tie it all in to how these qualities align with the job description and what the specific company will value.

What are your strengths and weaknesses?
When preparing for your interviews, start by doing some solid, honest self-assessment. Analyze your strengths and weaknesses related to the job, your background, academic performance, vocational interests, career aspirations, and values. When asked about your weaknesses do not feel compelled to share personal information such as going through a divorce, family problems, or illness. These are not supposed to be used against you, but can influence how an employer may “feel” about you. Always provide evidence of strengths, awards given, or promotions. See Common Questions on the back for examples regarding how to answer the “Strengths and Weaknesses” question.

What are your major strengths?
Think about what the company needs. Is it an ability to work with a wide range of people? Communication skills? Attention to detail? Persistence? Provide evidence of you skills. Did you receive a promotion, supervise employees, accolades or recognition that your references can further explained?

What is your major weakness?
Possibly the most dreaded interview question. Keep it short. Do not try to explain it away. Are there relevant skills that you feel are a weakness. Is there something you are proactively working to improve?
- “I tend to take work home with me. I’m learning to make my work time more productive and efficient.”
- “I’m learning how to be a better listener. I tend to want to jump in and express my opinion.”
- “I have a tendency to be over-organized. I’m learning how to let some things go and concentrate on the more important aspects of my job by prioritizing my assignments.”

How do you deal with conflict?
“I have confidence in my ability to handle conflict. If I have a problem with a coworker, I’ll do everything I can to work it out with that person. Conflict with customers can usually be easily resolved. I’m an excellent communicator; I listen to what the customer is saying and acknowledge his/her concern. I paraphrase back to the customer what s/he said to make sure I understand the situation. I explain what I can do to help—if I am unable to help, I will find someone who can.”
Common Interview Questions

Personal
1. Tell me about yourself.
2. What do you know about our organization (products or services)?
3. Why did you choose to interview with our organization?
4. What do you consider your greatest strengths?
5. Have you ever had any failures? What did you learn from them?
6. Of what accomplishments are you most proud?
7. Who are your role models? Why?
8. What motivates you most in a job?
9. Have you ever had difficulty getting along with a former professor/supervisor/co-worker and how did you handle it?
10. Why should we hire you rather than another candidate?
11. Where do you want to be in five years? Ten years?

Education
1. Why did you choose your major?
2. Why did you choose to attend your college or university?
3. In which campus activities did you participate?
4. Which classes in your major did you like the best?
5. Do your grades accurately reflect your ability? Why or why not?
6. What job-related skills have you developed?

Experience
1. Did you work while going to school?
2. What did you learn from these work experiences?
3. What did you enjoy most about your last employment? Least?
4. Have you ever quit a job? Why?
5. Give an example of a situation in which you provided a solution to an employer.
6. Give an example of a time in which you worked under deadline pressure.
7. Have you ever done any volunteer work? What kind?
8. How do you think a former supervisor would describe your work?
9. Do you prefer to work under supervision or on your own?
10. What kind of supervisor do you prefer?
11. Would you be successful working with a team?
12. Do you prefer large or small organizations? Why?
13. How do you feel about working in a structured environment?
14. Are you able to work on several assignments at once?
15. How do you feel about working overtime?
16. How do you feel about travel?
17. How do you feel about the possibility of relocating?
18. Are you willing to work flextime?

STARR Method of Answering Behavior Questions
S – Situation and/or
T – Task
Explain the specific situation you were involved in and/or task you were completing. This should typically be the shortest part of your response. Provide enough detail so the interviewer will have a solid understanding of your situation, but not so much that the interviewer is distracted by details.

A – Action
In this part of the response, talk about what you did in response to your situation. How did you react? What did you do to solve a potential problem? Be specific about skills/abilities you used.

R – Result
Tell the interviewer about how the situation was resolved. What happened as a result of your action/response to the situation?

R – Relate
Tell the interviewer about how this experience will benefit you and the employer in the position for which you are applying. What did you learn that could be applied?
Questions you may want to ask

1. What are the opportunities for personal growth?
2. Tell me about your initial and future training programs.
3. What are the most challenging facets of the job?
4. Describe the typical first year assignments.
5. What is the overall structure of the department where the position is located?
6. Identify typical career paths based on past records. What is the realistic time frame for advancement?
7. How does this company evaluate and promote employees?
8. What is the retention rate of people in the position for which I am interviewing?
9. What are the company’s plans for future growth?
10. What industry trends will occur in this company?
11. How has this company fared during the recent recession?
12. What makes your firm different from its competitors?
13. What are the company’s strengths and weaknesses?
14. How would you describe your corporation’s personality and management style?
15. Is it company policy to promote from within?
16. What kinds of career opportunities are currently available for my degree and skills?
17. What are your expectations for new hires?
18. Describe the work environment.
19. Why do you enjoy working for your firm?
20. What qualities are you looking for in new hires?
21. Why should I want to work for your organization?

Illegal Question

What is the right answer?
Various federal, state, and local laws regulate the questions a prospective employer can ask you. An employer’s questions on the job application, in the interview, or during the testing process must be related to the job for which you are applying. For the employer, the focus must be: “What do I need to know to decide whether or not this person can perform the functions of this job?”

Options for answering
If you are asked an illegal question, you have three options.

1. You are free to answer the question, but if you choose to do so, realize that you are giving information that is not job related. You could potentially harm your candidacy by giving the “wrong” answer.

2. You can refuse to answer the question. By selecting this option, you’ll be within your legal rights, but you are also running the risk of coming off as uncooperative or confrontational.

3. Your third option is to examine the intent behind the question and respond with an answer as it might apply to the job. For instance, if the interviewer asks, “Are you a U.S. citizen?” or “What country are you from?” You’ve just been asked an illegal question. You could say, however, “I am authorized to work in the United States.” Or if your interviewer asks, “Who is going to take care of your children when you have to travel?” You might answer, “I can meet the travel and work schedule that this job requires.”

On the next pages are some examples of illegal questions-and their legal counterparts.
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<th>Inquiry Area</th>
<th>Illegal Questions</th>
<th>Legal Questions</th>
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| National Origin/Citizenship | Area you a U.S. citizen?  
Where were you born?  
What is your “native tongue?” | Are you authorized to work in the United States?  
What languages do you read, speak, or write fluently? (As long as it pertains to the job in question) |
| Age                       | How old are you?  
When did you graduate from State University?  
What is your date of birth? | Are you over the age of 18?                                                                                                                    |
| Marital Status/Family     | What’s your marital status?  
Who do you live with?  
Do you plan to have a family?  
When?  
How many kids do you have?  
What are your childcare arrangements? | Would you be willing to relocate if necessary?  
Travel is an important part of the job. Would you be able and willing to travel as needed by the job?  
(As long as all applicants for the job are asked it.)  
Are you able to work overtime as the job requires it? (Again, only as long as all applicants for the job are asked it.) |
| Affiliations              | What clubs or social organizations do you belong to?                             | List any professional, trade groups or other organizations that you belong to that you consider relevant to your ability to perform this job. |
| Personal                  | How tall are you?  
How much do you weigh?              | Are you able to lift a 50-pound weight and carry it 100 yards, as part of your job?                                                         |
| Disabilities              | Do you have any disabilities?  
Please complete the following medical history.  
Have you had any recent of past illnesses or operations? If yes, please give dates.  
What was the date of your last physical exam?  
How’s your family’s health?  
When did you lose your eyesight?  
How? | Are you able to perform the essential duties of this job with or without reasonable accommodation?  
Can you demonstrate how you perform the following job related function?  
As part of the hiring process, after you have been offered a contract, you will be required to undergo a medical exam. |
| Arrest Record             | Have you ever been arrested?                                                      | Have you ever been convicted of_____? (The crime name should be reasonably related to the performance of the job in question.) |
| Military                  | If you’ve been in the military, were you honorably discharged?                    | In what branch of the Armed Forces did you serve?  
What type of training or education did you receive in the military? |
Additional Types of Interviews

Multiple Mini Interview (MMI)
This type of interview is often used in healthcare-related academic programs such as Medical School, Nursing School, Pharmacy School, and Physician’s Assistant programs. Candidates are interviewed multiple times by either an individual or a small group. This type of interview can be exhausting. It is highly recommended to prepare and be well rested for this style of interview. Remember you will be under a microscope for the entire time. Stay engaged and professional. Leave your cell phone and other distractions in your vehicle or at home.

Technical Interview
This type of interview is often used in Computer Science, Information Systems or Accounting related careers. Candidates are asked to problem-solve or code a solution to a provided scenario on a whiteboard. Make sure you are also talking or telling the interviewers what you are doing. Often the correct answer are not nearly as important as the skills you implement to solve the problem.

Stress Interview
The purpose of this interview is...you guessed it—stress! They want to see what you are really made of and how you react in stressful situations. The purpose is to make you feel confused and caught off guard. It is an interrogation to cut through the bull and get to the heart of your skills and knowledge. How will you survive? Recognize it for what it is and don’t be intimidated. Be aware of your body language and voice tones. Take a few seconds to gather your thoughts before you answer a question. Keep your eyes on the interviewer. Don’t cower or avoid eye contact. You can be cool under fire.