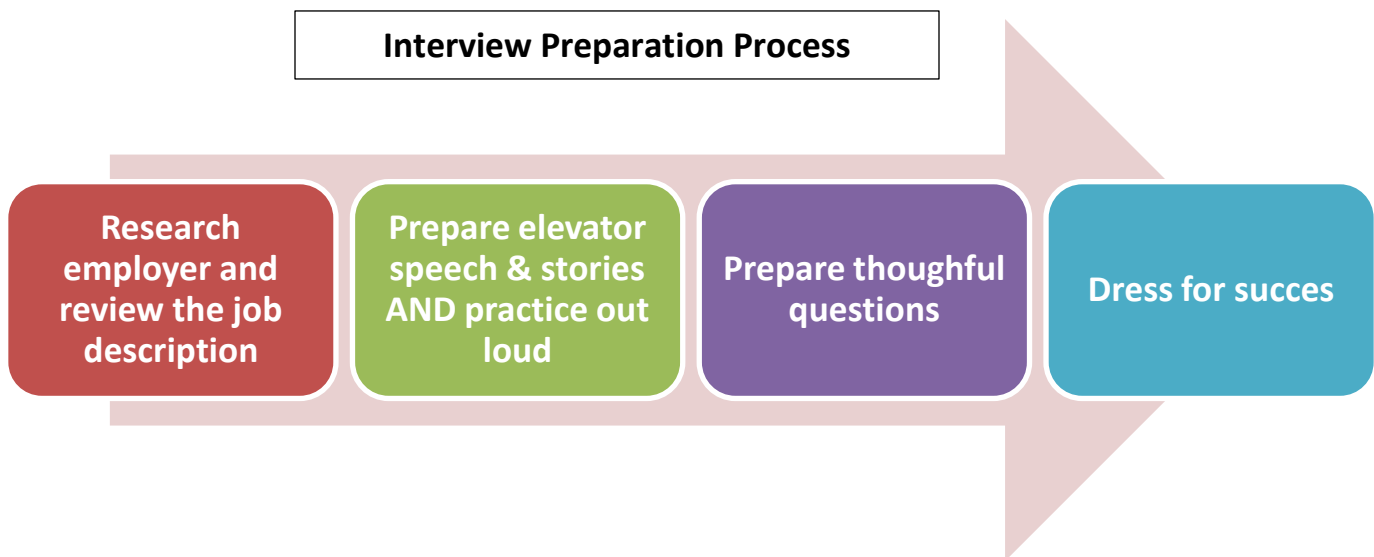


INTERVIEW PREPARATION STRATEGIES

Congratulations—you’ve been selected for an interview, which means you met the job qualifications, and the employer wants to get to know you better! Interviews are conversations which answer for employers whether or not you can do the job, how you’re a problem solver, what you’re passionate about, and how you will fit into their culture. At the same time, candidates are interviewing the employer to understand the same. Employers utilize several settings and types of interviews to evaluate candidates. Most hiring managers have the philosophy to hire for attitude and to train for skill; therefore, self-confidence, genuine interest, and motivation are key traits employers look for in candidates. This guide is designed to offer best practices and strategies to ace the interview!



BEFORE THE INTERVIEW

Research employer & review the job description

- ❑ Analyze the job description to understand the key skills and qualifications needed to accomplish the job. Once you know what the employer seeks and why, you can best develop interview question responses.
- ❑ Review the employer website to discover their mission, core values, products, and service offerings. Consider how you “fit” into the company culture and determine how your values and skills align to the job.
- ❑ Check social media and advertisements to understand how the company engages their target markets
- ❑ Look up and scan through the LinkedIn profiles of the hiring manager(s) and individuals with whom you will interview. If you do not have this information, ask the recruiter.
- ❑ Use online resources, such as Glassdoor and Vault, for insider information, candidate feedback, and industry insights.
- ❑ Read through the CMC’s **Salary Negotiations** guide to assess salary information. Also review Bureau of Labor Statistics, College Measures Economics Success Metrics, Vault, Glassdoor, Payscale, and/or Salary.com.
- ❑ Research the company’s current events, news articles and industry information because interviewers will ask questions around these topics.

Prepare elevator speech & stories AND practice out loud

- Review the **Interview Strategies** guide to prepare for and respond to commonly asked interview questions and interview types.
- Practice your elevator speech and interview response stories **out loud** so your responses sound natural and concise. Schedule a mock interview to receive interview skills feedback.

Prepare thoughtful questions

- Prepare a minimum of 5 questions to ask the employer based on your research. Your questions should help you learn more about the organization's goals, expectations, and current/future projects. Review the **Interview Strategies** guide for more details.

Dress for success

- Invest in a professional suit. Standard black and navy are considered the most professional.
- Wear the suit and shoes prior to the interview to break them in and help you feel more comfortable.
- Limit your use of perfumes and wear minimal jewelry.
- If you have long hair, ensure it is not covering your face or causing a distraction

Before the Interview

- Invest in resume paper to print resume and other application materials
- Prepare copies of application materials such as cover letter, writing samples, references/letters of recommendation, and/or examples of your work
- Utilize a portfolio to store resume, pen, business card(s), paper for note taking, and other application materials
- Ensure a good night's sleep to be at your best and energetic for the interview

THE DAY OF THE INTERVIEW

- Eat a healthy breakfast/lunch in advance of your interview.
- Arrive 15 minutes early and turn off cell phone.
- During the greeting process, smile and provide a strong handshake. Maintain eye contact and posture throughout the interview.
- Provide detailed examples of your experiences. Utilize the S.T.A.R. method for structuring your stories.
- Ask questions to demonstrate interest and to learn more about the organization and the position. Ask for the next steps in the interview process so you are aware of when they will contact you again.
- Ask for business cards for follow-up correspondence.

AFTER THE INTERVIEW

- Email a thank you note within 24 hours of your interview. Recent studies demonstrate that over 80% of applicants send thank you notes after each interview round. Affirm your interest in the position and reference the topics discussed in the email. Let the interviewer know when you will contact them again to check on the status of your interview.
- Maintain a journal and reflect on the experience. Consider areas in which you performed well and where you could improve. It is very likely you may be asked similar interview questions in the future.

INTERVIEW TYPES

In addition to traditional in-person interviews, you will likely experience phone, web conferencing, video, panel, group, and dining situations throughout the interview process.

Phone, Web Conference, or Video Interview

Employers often utilize phone screens to determine if the applicant meets the minimum requirements and is genuinely interested in the opportunity. Phone interviews are a cost effective way to meet several candidates in a short period of time. The majority of phone interviews are 15-45 minutes in length and include approximately 10-15 questions. The following strategies will help you have a more confident approach during the phone and/or web conference interview.

Phone Interview Strategies

- Schedule the interview for a quiet time and eliminate any background noise.
- Utilize a landline when possible to avoid cell phone connection issues and dropped calls.
- Dress professionally to help you avoid being too casual in your approach.
- The power and tone of your voice are essential. Therefore, stand up while speaking and smile when discussing your accomplishments.
- Demonstrate effective communication skills. Avoid fillers and awkward pauses; ask the employer to repeat or to rephrase challenging questions to allow additional time.

Web Conference or Video Interview Strategies

- Some common platforms utilized are HireVue, Montage, Skype and GoToMeeting.
- Expect a panel of interviewers with your image being broadcasted on a projector-sized screen.
- Avoid wireless connection if possible and test the quality of your webcam prior to the interview.
- Dress professionally and sit up straight in your chair.
- No pets in the room because they can become a distraction.
- Look into the camera to simulate eye contact with the interviewer(s). Avoid tendency to focus on the computer screen. You may or may not be able to see every interviewer in the room.
- Utilize a clean, neutral space to eliminate distracting objects located on the wall or behind you.
- Be aware of the pace and volume of your voice
- Adjust level of camera so that it's eye level – it should not appear that you're looking up or down at the camera.

On-Demand Video Interview

Companies are turning to video interviews to allow more job seekers and employers to connect earlier in the hiring process. Employers create a series of interview questions, and candidates receive an email invitation to record their timed responses remotely. Artificial intelligence may be used to analyze verbal and non-verbal cues in candidate responses before moving to the next round. Prepare for these interviews and apply best practices the same way you would for in-person or other interview types, in addition to the strategies below.

Strategies

- Although you may be given a few days to complete the interview request, make sure to complete it as soon as possible. Remember that many candidates have likely received the same request.
- Practice and time responses by recording yourself to see how you appear and sound like on video. Some on-demand video interview tools will immediately move on to the next question once time runs out.
- Be cautious in wearing eyeglasses as these can have reflective glares which can negatively impact your interview.
- Listen to interview questions carefully and be sure to answer each part of the question asked.
- Put a small picture of a person next to the webcam as a friendly reminder to look into the camera.
- Smile and let your personality shine!

Panel or Group Interview

Panel and group interviews allow for more than one interview to take place at the same time, where “panel” means the candidate will meet with multiple interviewers, and “group” refers to situations with multiple candidates. Group interviews allow employers to see how you interact with others and work in a team.

Strategies

- Engage all members of the audience. Your ability to communicate with everyone in the room is one of the skills being reviewed.
- Get to know your fellow interviewees in the waiting room. Be friendly and play it cool. Employers might be paying attention to how you interact with others—a great way to test your people skills!
- Include the other candidates in the conversation during group interviews, making eye contact with everyone—another great way to demonstrate your confidence and ability to work with others. Do NOT dominate the conversation.
- Listen to the other candidates’ responses and remember—regardless of their experiences and skills—you are *still* the best candidate. Pay attention to the conversation, and do NOT let their responses make you fade into the background.

Lunch or Dinner Interview

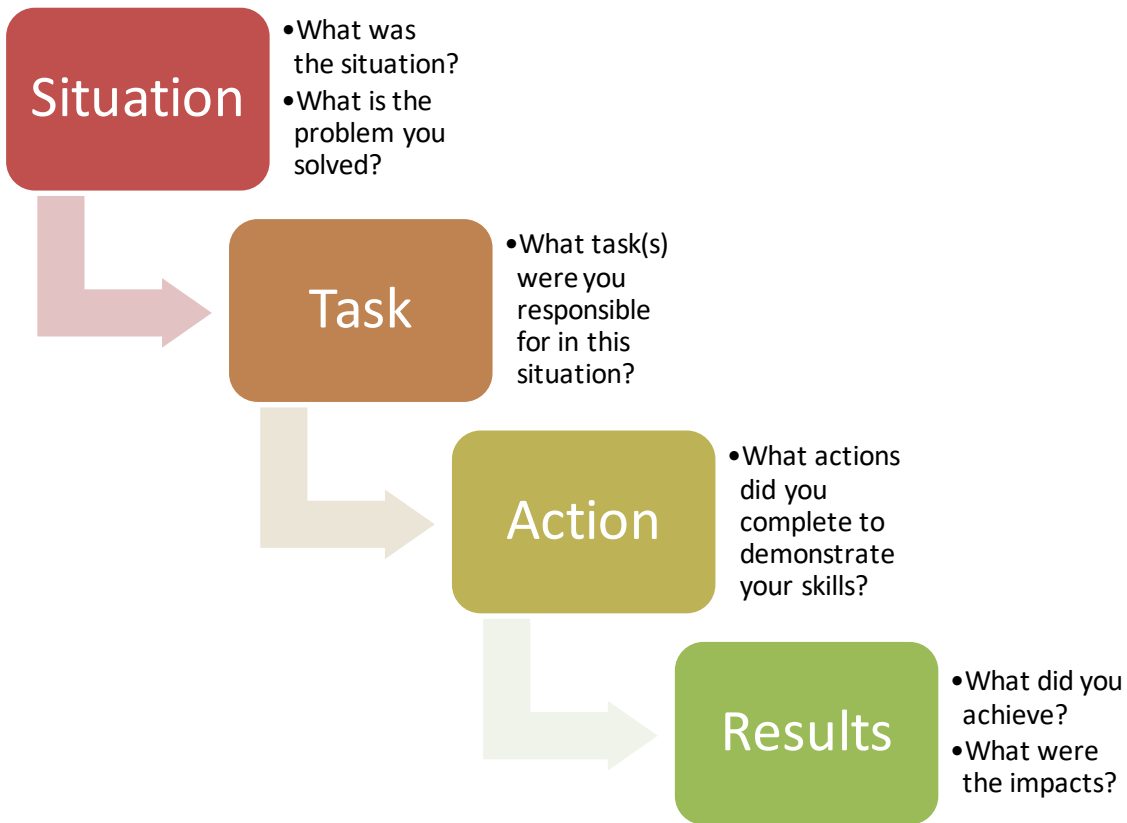
Lunch and dinner interviews offer unique engagements outside of the office and should not be mistaken for informal events. The same level of preparation applies as in all other forms of interviewing. Recruiters and interviewers request these interviews to get to know candidates better, see how they multi-task during interviews and determine basic social skills.

Strategies

- Approach the lunch interview with the same level of professionalism as in formal interviews.
- Base your ordering decision according to what your interviewer orders. Do not order the most expensive meal, nor is it appropriate to order beer, wine or other alcoholic beverages.
- If the event provides alcoholic beverages, limit yourself to 1 drink. Another option is to quietly refrain from alcohol consumption. Observe the room. Is anyone else drinking, or would you be the only one?
- Be decisive with your order, as this is something to which the interviewer will pay close attention.
- Food choice is important—do not order messy, smelly or high-maintenance dishes that will distract you from your interview.

- Remember your manners and brush up on table etiquette—do not talk with your mouth full, eat with your mouth open, or rest your elbows on the table. When finished with your meal, be sure to place your fork and knife together in the four o'clock position of your plate and fold your napkin next to your plate.
- Be courteous and friendly with the restaurant staff, even if they mess up your order. Your interviewer is also paying attention to how you interact with others.

BEHAVIORAL INTERVIEWING – The S.T.A.R. Method



Results Examples:

- Reduced Expenses
- Increased Revenue
- Resources saved
- Processing Efficiencies

- The purpose of the STAR framework is to help guide your job interview stories as you tell them. Every good story is engaging, interesting, and has a strong ending.
- You are the hero of your story! Remember to stay relevant, and talk about how your skills helped lead to positive results!

BEHAVIORAL INTERVIEWING – The S.T.A.R. Method

Behavioral interviewing assumes that your past experiences are good indicators of your future abilities. You'll be asked to tell stories about your past so that the employer can assess your skills and behavior. The behavioral interview is the most common type of interview so regardless of your industry of interest, you will likely encounter behavioral interview questions. These questions are also known as situational interviews and the questions require you to provide a specific, detailed example of a past experience and demonstrate how you handled the situation.

By having a good understanding the nature of the job and the organization, you can more accurately select examples from your life that have meaning to the employer. The best way to prepare for behavioral questions is to PRACTICE! You want to *learn* your stories, not just memorize them, so practice makes perfect. Remember though – this is storytelling, so you want your answers to sound natural, not like you've rehearsed them before.

The S.T.A.R. Method

The key is being able to talk about your experiences in such a way that employers can identify your skills and approach to problems. Behavioral questions often begin with "*Tell me about a time when you had to...*" One way to help organize your answers and experiences is to use the S.T.A.R Method, which helps you focus on the most relevant aspects of your experience in a structured way.

Situation: Like any good story, the beginning should set the overall scene. How did this story come to be?

Task: This is your opportunity to describe the end goal. What are you trying to accomplish?

Action: Use this as the climax of the story, and describe how you competed the goal. Be detailed and give examples that are related to the job you're interviewing for.

Result: A strong ending includes a description of the accomplishments and metrics to back them up. You may also include lessons you learned, and how you're preparing for the future.

S.T.A.R. Example

Question: *Tell me about a time that you worked in a team to complete a goal.*

Answer: **(S)** At the beginning of the spring semester, in my Business Communications class, I was given an assignment to work with others in the class on a company research project, and our teams were randomly assigned by the professor. **(T)** Although the assignment was due at the very end of the semester, it became clear to me that I needed to quickly connect with my new team members to make sure we could work together well, and that our schedules were in sync. I didn't want us to encounter any last minute problems, so starting early was a priority for me. **(A)** I set up a team meeting by the following week, and led a conversation between the 4 of us in an effort to set up a working schedule, and also delegated out parts of the project. Midway through the semester, each team member turned in their part of the assignment, and I organized the information into a formatted paper and PowerPoint presentation. **(R)** Due to our ability to communicate well as a team, we completed the project 2 weeks ahead of schedule, which gave us additional time to rehearse and make corrections. We ended up with an A on the final presentation. In the future, I learned that it's important to start long projects as soon as possible to avoid problems down the road, and that setting up a solid communication plan among new team members is essential to a successful group project.

BEHAVIORAL INTERVIEWING – The PARL Method

Behavioral interviewing assumes that your past experiences are good indicators of your future abilities. You'll be asked to tell stories about your past so that the employer can assess your skills and behavior. The behavioral interview is the most common type of interview so regardless of your industry of interest, you will likely encounter behavioral interview questions. These questions are also known as situational interviews and the questions require you to provide a specific, detailed example of a past experience and demonstrate how you handled the situation.

By having a good understanding the nature of the job and the organization, you can more accurately select examples from your life that have meaning to the employer. The best way to prepare for behavioral questions is to PRACTICE! You want to *learn* your stories, not just memorize them, so practice makes perfect. Remember though – this is storytelling, so you want your answers to sound natural, not like you've rehearsed them before.

The PARL Method

The key is being able to talk about your experiences in such a way that employers can identify your skills and approach to problems. Behavioral questions often begin with *"Tell me about a time when you had to..."* One way to help organize your answers and experiences is to use the PARL Method, which helps you focus on the most relevant aspects of your experience in a structured way.

P: the **PROBLEM** or situation ("What happened")

A: the **ACTIONS** you took ("What did you do")

R: the **RESULTS** or outcomes ("What was the result")

L: the **LEARNING** or KNOWLEDGE you gained ("What did you learn? How have you grown as a person?")

Sample Practice Questions

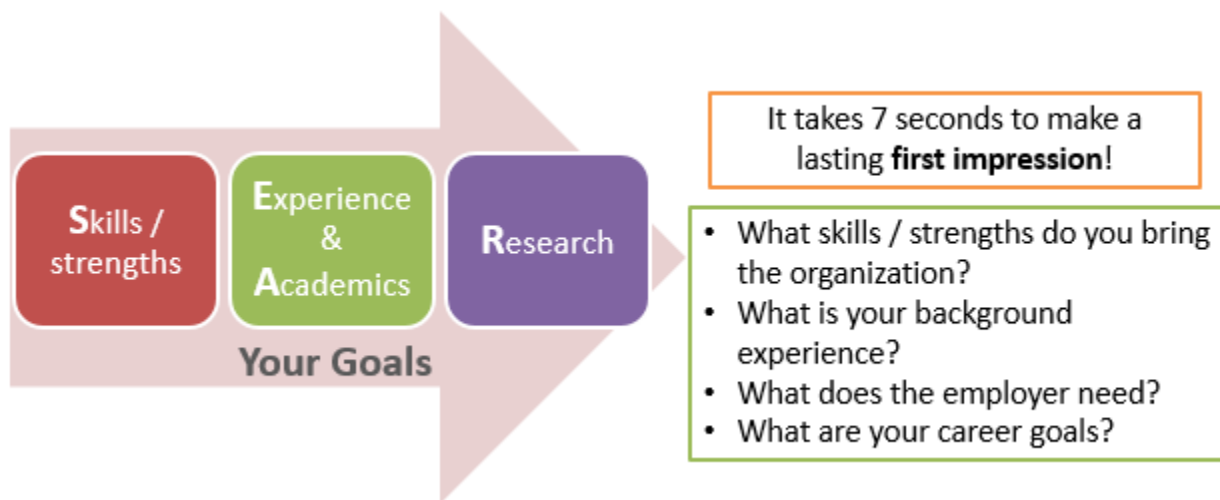
1. Describe a work situation in which you were not proud of your performance. What did you learn from this?
2. Describe an important goal you set and tell me how you reached it.
3. What is the biggest struggle you've experienced in the past 6 months, and what did you learn from it?
4. Tell me about a time when you had to motivate yourself to do something you didn't want to do?
5. Tell me about a time when things didn't go as planned, and how did you handle it?
6. Tell me about a time when you had a conflict and how you resolved it?
7. Give a specific example of a time when you used good judgment and logic in solving a problem.
8. Tell me about a problem that you solved in a unique or unusual way.

INTRODUCE YOURSELF: The 30-second Introduction (Elevator Speech)

The 30-second introduction is an essential tool for building your professional network, learning about career paths, and marketing your education and experiences to an employer. Your introduction is a conversation starter and should be concise and focused on your approach as well as demonstrate your knowledge and interest in the employer, industry, and/or opportunity. It can also be used in interviews when employers ask “tell me about yourself”. Utilize this Career Management Center resource to develop and perfect your introduction.

Smile as you introduce yourself and share a little about yourself. Keep this short and concise. You are trying to draw in the other person and start a conversation.

COMMON INTRODUCTION STRUCTURE - SEAR



SKILLS/STRENGTHS

Share specific strengths and skills that are most applicable to your target role. Where possible, integrate examples of specific accomplishments that showcase how you use those strengths to bring value to the organization.

EXPERIENCE/ACADEMICS

Provide a short description of your background. Focus on your most relevant and powerful experience(s), which may include education, work, internship, leadership, volunteer, community, military, and/or athletic experiences.

RESEARCH

Research information on target employers and positions to identify your most relevant skills and develop your pitch. Connect your skills and experiences to the interests of your target organization/opportunity.

YOUR GOALS

Describe your career and/or professional goals. If you are speaking with a specific employer, you will want to add how the organization or job opportunity fits with your goals.

EXAMPLE 1

Hello, my name is Joe Smith and I will be receiving my Bachelor of Business Administration degree in Finance from the University of Texas at Dallas in May of 2018.

During this past summer, I held an internship with Wells Fargo where I assisted customers with loan applications and other financial services. During the academic year, I worked an average of 20 hours per week as a math tutor on campus helping students with college algebra and statistics. In both instances I received very positive feedback from my clients on the level of service I provided.

As I look toward the future, I am very interested in using my analytical, communication and customer service skills within the financial services industry. From what I've learned about your company, I believe that I might be a good fit in an analyst role. I'd love to hear your perspective on this and any other suggestions you might have where my strengths might be of value.

EXAMPLE 2

Hi, my name is Jane Smith. I am a junior Bachelor of Business Administration candidate with a passion for numbers.

In my summer internship at Bank of America, I evaluated 200 dormant accounts, engaged with the clients, and recovered \$ 20,000. Feedback from the clients stated the process was helpful and guided them in the next steps to resolution.

I would love to apply my experiences and passion with Frost Bank as I know your clients consider your role as consultant vs. banker.

DISCUSSION TIPS & PRACTICE

The elevator speech represents a conversation starter only; therefore, keep your introduction to 30 seconds. Employers remember candidates that are confident and focused in their approach. Tell a memorable story that demonstrates your industry knowledge, enthusiasm, and preparedness. Utilize the space below to document and to practice your introduction.

SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Common Interview Questions

1. Tell me about yourself.
2. What do you know about our company/organization, and why do you want to work here?
3. Why did you apply for this position?
4. Why should I hire you?
5. Why did you select UT Dallas and your major?
6. Discuss your favorite class.
7. Discuss your most challenging course.
8. What are your career goals?
9. Where do you see yourself in 5 years?
10. What motivates you to succeed?
11. What are your strengths and weaknesses?
12. If you were to hire someone for this opportunity, what qualities would you look for?
13. Describe your ideal work/office environment.
14. What do you look for in a supervisor?
15. Do you value money or experience?
16. On a scale of 1-10, how proficient are you with MS Office products?
17. Do you have plans to continue your education or attend graduate school?
18. How do you know that our organization is the right place for you?
19. Are you open to travel and/or relocation?
20. What are your minimum salary expectations for this position?

Behavior-Based Interview Questions

1. A fellow employee told you what his/her salary is and wants to know yours. How would you react and what would you do? (situational)
2. Describe a conflict with an employee and how you handled it.
3. Describe a complex problem you solved.
4. Describe a work situation in which you were not proud of your performance. What did you learn from this?
5. Describe an important goal you set and tell me how you reached it.
6. Describe how you have been able to apply something you learned from your degree program to a real-life or work-related situation.
7. Describe a (recent) project in which you failed? What did you learn?
8. Describe a (recent) situation in which you asked for advice/help? Did you use the advice?
9. Describe a (recent) situation in which it took you several tries or approaches before you were able to figure out what was going on.
10. Describe a (recent) situation in which you had to quickly establish your credibility and gain the confidence of others. What did you do?
11. Describe a (recent) situation when you didn't know who you needed to speak with in an organization to get something done. What did you do?
12. Describe a (recent) situation when you were able to identify a conflict between two individuals and were instrumental in the solution to that conflict.
13. Describe a (recent) situation when you worked in a team environment.

14. Describe a (recent) situation in your last job that you did not handle as well as you might have.
15. Describe a (recent) situation that you just couldn't handle.
16. Describe a (recent) situation when miscommunication created a problem on the job.
17. Describe a (recent) situation when you were confronted by a difficult problem and how you solved it.
18. Describe a time when you had to take on something very new or different and you had little or no guidance and support in doing so. How did you handle it?
19. Describe a time when you organized a project where your directions were vague?
20. Describe a time when you simplified or clarified a situation by putting your finger on the key issue?
21. Describe a time when you went above and beyond the call of duty.
22. Describe a time when you accomplished a challenging goal.
23. Describe how you work under pressure. Do you anticipate problems effectively or react to them?
24. Describe how you would handle rude, difficult, or impatient people.
25. Describe a project that has required accuracy and attention to detail.
26. Describe a situation where you have been under pressure and handled it well.
27. Do you feel you can ask for help?
28. Do you feel you can assist others in their jobs?
29. Explain how you overcame a difficult situation.
30. Given a situation when you disagree with your supervisor, how would you deal with it?
31. Has competition had any positive or negative impact on your achievements? How?
32. How do you complete a boring job?
33. Have you prepared and communicated ideas in a formal setting?
34. Tell me about a particularly difficult or awkward conversation you needed to have with someone?
35. Tell me about a significant failure in your life.
36. What role do you take in a group situation? Please give examples.
37. Your supervisor left an assignment in your "inbox" then left town for a week; now you can't reach him and don't understand the assignment. What would you do?
38. Your supervisor tells you to do something in a way you know is ineffective; what would you do?
39. You've been with your current employer for a very short time. Is this an indication that you'll be moving a lot throughout your career?
40. You've changed jobs quite frequently; what assurances do we have that you'll stay with us?
41. When were you required to complete a task and you lacked all the necessary information?
42. When have you felt the most successful?
43. Describe a situation when you were the group leader, and your ideas were different from the team's.
44. Provide an example when you had to make a quick decision.
45. Tell me about a time you effectively delegated tasks within a project.

Critical Thinking & Other Challenging Interview Questions

1. Determine the number of baseballs utilized during a Major League Baseball season.
2. How much would you charge to wash all the windows in downtown Dallas?
3. You have eight balls, one of which is heavier than the others. All the balls appear identical. You have a balance-type scale, and you can perform trials on the balls. What is the minimum number of trials required to determine the heaviest ball?
4. Design an emergency evacuation plan for New York City.
5. How many balls would you fit into this room?

6. Finish this sentence: Successful managers are the ones who....
7. Are you applying for other positions?
8. How would your enemy describe you?
9. What kind of zoo animal are you?
10. Describe your ideal job.
11. Who is your hero and why?

Interview Questions to Ask a Prospective Employer

1. Why is this position open? Is this a new position? Was the previous job-holder promoted?
2. How often has this position been filled in the past five to ten years?
3. What has been the primary reason for people leaving?
4. Would you describe the duties of the job please? Or: what is your perception of my daily duties?
5. What are some of the objectives that you would like accomplished in this job?
6. What would you like done differently by the next person who fills this position?
7. What is the biggest challenge for someone new coming into this role?
8. What are the most critical and time consuming aspects of the role?
9. What would this person need to do in order to be declared a “successful hire?”
10. Is there anything unusually demanding about the position that I should know?
11. What is most pressing for your team?
12. What are the key deliverables you would like achieved in the first 30/60/90 days?
13. What are some of the longer-term objectives that you would like to see completed?
14. What do you consider the ideal experience for this job? What characteristics do you most like to find in people working on this assignment? Can you describe the ideal candidate for this job?
15. Could you please describe your management style?
16. In what ways has this organization been most successful in terms of products and services over the years?
17. What significant changes do you see in the near future?
18. What do you like best about working here?
19. How is one judged? What accounts for success?
20. Might this company be sold or acquired?
21. What are the primary results you would like to see this person produce in the near and long term?
22. How do you typically communicate with your team (one on one, email, phone, regular meetings, impromptu meetings, heavy detail, big picture guidance, etc.)?
23. Once you have delegated to your team member, how do you monitor their progress?
24. What kind of support does this position receive in terms of people, finance, etc.?
25. What freedom would I have in determining my work objectives, deadlines, and methods of measurement?
26. Could you show me where and how this position fits into your organization?
27. What are the career path options once someone is successful in this role? What is the expected timeframe for one to be in the role before being considered for their next step?
28. What are the average hours during the regular time period and busy periods? How much can be done remotely?
29. I noticed on your LinkedIn profile you’ve been with [the company] for [x] years—
 - a. What about the company gets you excited to come to work every day?
 - b. How has the internship program changed over the years?
30. What qualities really make a person successful here?
31. What additional questions do you have for me?
32. What are the next steps, and when will I hear back?
33. May I have your business card so I may follow up?

ACE THE CASE: Case Study Interview Strategies

A case study is most common with business and consulting firms. The employer presents a problem or situation and expects the candidate to thoroughly analyze the situation and provide a recommendation for improvement before a panel of interviewers. It is very likely that the case study will resemble a situation that the employer has previously encountered; therefore, we recommend reviewing the employer website for sample case studies and strategies for responding. Effective communication and analytical skills are being assessed during the case study.

The Career Management Center provides access to **Vault**, which features consulting firm profiles and guides and resources for learning more about case study strategies and sample questions. The Vault Guide provides information on the top US consulting firms and a new feature added in 2013 also ranks the top firms in Asia and Europe. Rankings are also available based on diversity, prestige, discipline/area, and best to work for.

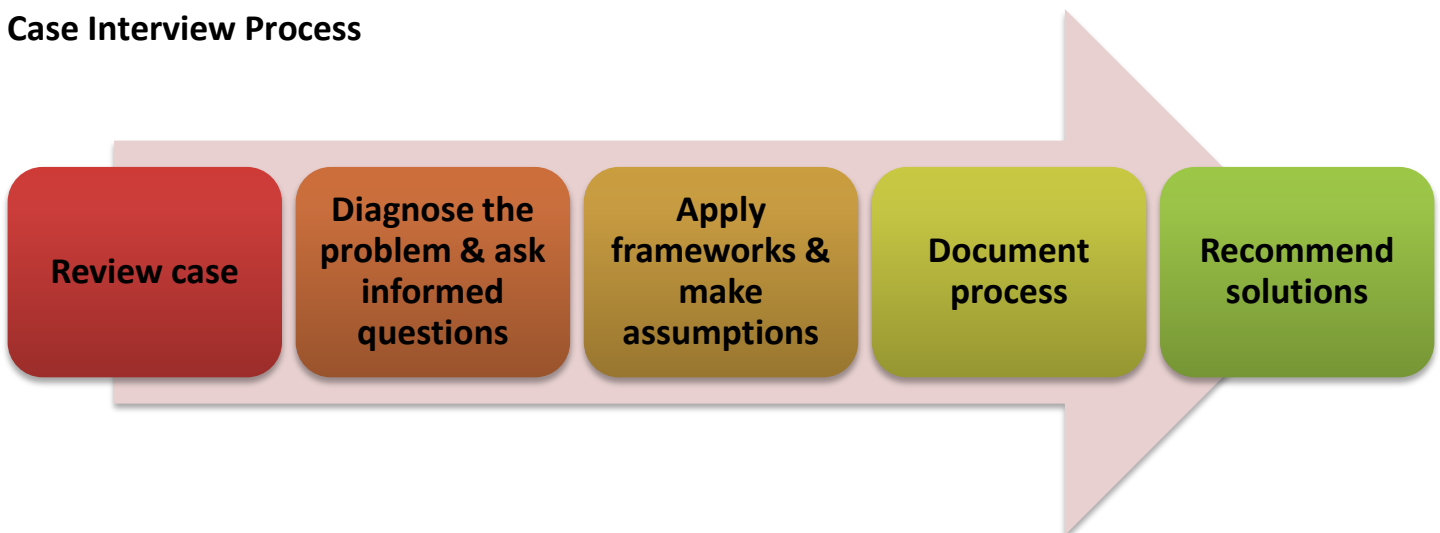
Case interviews determine the following skills:

- Effective communication
- Analytical thinking and problem solving
- Resourcefulness and initiative
- Confidence and cultural fit
- Self-leadership (how you react in pressure cooker situations)

Case Interview Preparation Strategies

- Stay abreast of industry trends and current events
- Review case interview resources offered by firms to understand their processes
- Create a case team and work through case problems together
- Participate in competitions
- Connect with consultants at your target firms for tips
- Practice math tricks and applying frameworks

Case Interview Process



Top 10 Case Interview Tips

1. Listen carefully to the question and take notes (there are often clues embedded in the question to help you get started). Understand what is being asked of you, and pay attention to your audience.
2. Repeat question to recruiter to ensure you have the information needed for a strong start.
3. Ask 1-2 clarifying questions if necessary – Begin to formulate a hypothesis in your head and test if they are reasonable. While asking these questions, you are buying yourself a few moments to postulate.
4. Structure the problem, i.e., begin to fit the problem into one of the frameworks.
5. Pick a branch to probe. Develop hypotheses, ask for relevant facts, defend/refine hypothesis based on new information, probe further and describe implications you see. *Key Note: if you find yourself running down a rabbit trail of random issues with no end, stop, think and go back up to 30,000 feet to see if you are even in the right ballpark. It is better to discover this halfway into the interview and leave yourself some recovery time, than to discover this when your hour is done.
6. Pick a second branch and so on.
7. Prioritize your response. Support your arguments with your strongest points first.
8. Put it all together. Try to answer overall questions (the big picture) with a reasonable and actionable conclusion.
 - Review where you have been and what you know
 - Clarify what you do not understand, and what, with more time, you would like to know.
 - Solidify and tender your recommendation (where appropriate, as sometimes the interviewer cares less about your recommendation and more about how you get to it.)
9. Demonstrate your ability to adjust your solution. The employer will sometimes provide additional information to lead to an alternative approach. At this time, consider alternative solutions to show your flexibility.
10. Get feedback. Each case is a learning experience, and understanding where you can continuously improve will present you a stronger consultant candidate.

Case Interview Preparation Resources

- **Case In Point: Complete Case Interview Preparation** - by Marc P. Cosentino
- **Case Interview Secrets** – by Victor Cheng
- **The Case Interview Workbook** – by Robert Mellon

- **Accenture:**
 - <https://www.accenture.com/us-en/blogs/blog-succeeding-at-case-study-interviews>

- **Bain & Co:**
 - <http://www.bain.com/careers/interview-preparation/index.aspx>

- **Boston Consulting Group (BCG):**
 - <https://www.bcg.com/en-us/careers/path/consulting/interview-process-tips.aspx>

- **Deloitte:**
 - <https://www2.deloitte.com/us/en/pages/careers/articles/join-deloitte-case-interview-prep-tool.html>

- **McKinsey:**
 - <http://www.mckinsey.com/careers/interviewing>
 - <https://igotanoffer.com/blogs/mckinsey-case-interview-blog/115672708-mckinsey-case-interview-preparation-the-only-post-youll-need-to-read>

- **Oliver Wyman:**
 - <http://www.oliverwyman.com/careers/entry-level/interview-preparation.html#Roleofthecaseinterview>

TOP 10 CASE INTERVIEW TIPS

1. Listen to the introduction – Do not think ahead of your answer(s).
2. Ask 1-2 clarifying questions if necessary – Begin to formulate a hypothesis in your head and test if they are reasonable. While asking these questions, you are buying yourself a few moments to postulate.
3. Do not ask for every piece of data. Some interviewers will try to overload you up front with meaningless data. If you ask for it, you may get the information, but later find it irrelevant.
4. Take notes. Some suggest this is a faux pas and others will think it is a great idea. Ask the interviewer if you may take notes. Keep in mind that every real consultant, in real life, will almost without fail take notes in an interview. If you can keep track of the entire minutia in a hour-long client interview, more power to you.
5. Structure the problem, i.e., begin to fit the problem into one of the frameworks.
6. Pick a branch to probe. Develop hypotheses, ask for relevant facts, defend/refine hypothesis based on new information, probe further and describe implications you see. *Key Note: if you find yourself running down a rabbit trail of random issues with no end, stop, think and go back up to 30,000 feet to see if you are even in the right ballpark. It is better to discover this halfway into the interview and leave yourself some recovery time, than to discover this when your hour is done.
7. Pick a second branch and so on.
8. Prioritize your response. Support your arguments with your strongest points first.
9. Put it all together. Try to answer overall questions (the big picture) with a reasonable and actionable conclusion.
 - Review where you have been and what you know
 - Clarify what you do not understand, and what, with more time, you would like to know.
 - Solidify and tender your recommendation (where appropriate, as sometimes the interviewer cares less about your recommendation and more about how you get to it.)
10. Get feedback. Sometimes this is appropriate, sometimes it is not. If the case was a real example, they may tell you what really happened. Each case is a learning experience. It might be good to know that you missed the boat completely and next time, you will do better. If you go out thinking you nailed it, but really missed the boat, next time you will make the same mistakes.

Salary Negotiation and Offer Review Strategies

The salary negotiation and offer review process can present unique challenges for new and experienced professionals. How do you know what a competitive salary is and when to negotiate? Review this guide to become an informed, confident candidate knowledgeable about realistic salary expectations.

Salary Research Resources before the Interview

- Research the employer website, company culture, schedule/hours, and travel requirements
- Review the job/internship posting and/or employer website for salary range
- The Career Insider by Vault (subscription resource provided by the CMC available through your NetID) may also provide salary information by employer and/or industry
- Research average salaries by industry and location listed on the Bureau of Labor Statistics at http://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_nat.htm
- The Texas Workforce Commission also provides salary statistics statewide and by region at <http://tinyurl.com/7a9cdml>
- The National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) provides a salary analysis for job seekers at <http://www.jobsearchintelligence.com/NACE/jobseekers/salary-calculator.php>
- Launch My Career Texas provides average salary information for graduates of select universities (UT Dallas is included): <http://launchmycareertx.org/>
- In addition, self-reported salary sites such as Salary.com; Glassdoor.com; and Payscale.com may provide additional insight. However, note that self-reported salary resources may be inflated and not as accurate as government provided resources.

The Total Compensation Package is Extremely Important

- Annual compensation is only one part of the compensation package
- Company culture and work environment (office vs. cubicle)
- Exempt or nonexempt position
- Medical and dental insurance employer coverage and employee out-of-pocket costs
- 401K and percentage of employer contribution
- Training or mentor program provided
- Tuition assistance for graduate degree or professional certification
- Relocation package (taxable income)
- Sign-on bonus (one-time payment, also taxable income)
- Amount of travel required
- Company benefits such as vehicle, cellular, laptop, iPad, flex time, telecommute privileges

Strategy for Responding to the Classic Salary Question: What Are Your Minimum Salary Requirements?

- First, thank the employer for their interest in you. If a salary range has already been provided, you may provide a specific amount you are seeking. Your number should be based on research conducted prior to the interview. When providing an amount, also reference your specific skills and contributions that would benefit the organization to justify your request.
- If no salary amount was posted or disclosed, tell the employer you are open or negotiable and can provide a specific salary when the range is provided.
- If no range is provided, base your salary requirements on the averages you discovered through your research. Take into consideration if you meet or exceed the position requirements and your performance during the interview.
- When the salary is nonnegotiable, ask about frequency of performance evaluations and if salary adjustments are connected. For example, a 5% salary increase may occur after 6-months of employment.
- When an offer is provided, thank the employer and ask about receiving the offer in writing. Reasonable time to consider the offer should be provided; however, if the employer expects a response on-the-spot, request time to discuss this opportunity with your family. “Shotgun” offers are not encouraged and the CMC should be notified if appropriate consideration time is not provided.
- Remember the individual providing the offer will likely be your future supervisor and/or colleague and professionalism during the salary negotiation process helps avoid awkward situations in the office.

CMC Guidelines when Receiving Multiple Job Offers

- The strongest counteroffer is having another offer of a higher amount; therefore, the Career Management Center encourages students to participate in on-campus recruiting activities.
- Consider the total compensation package when evaluating an offer.
- Research the potential career paths available within the organization and consider the skills you would develop for your next position.
- If more than one offer of employment is received, you must respond to every offer, whether you accept or reject it. Accepting multiple offers of employment is unethical and can permanently damage your and the university’s employer relationship. The acceptance of an offer is a contract and failure to honor that contract can result in potential academic consequences and loss of CMC/Handshake privileges. This policy also includes verbal acceptances.
- Communicate your acceptance or rejection as promptly as possible in order for the employer to notify other candidates about the status of their applications.
- ***When you accept an offer (verbally or in writing), your job/internship search is completed and should be discontinued per the JSOM Code of Conduct and Ethics Policy for Employment and Recruitment.***
- Notify the CMC immediately of your accepted offer.

SAMPLE THANK YOU NOTES

(highlighted words should be changed accordingly)

Good **afternoon First Name**,

Thank you for taking the time to speak with me **today** about the **Staff Accountant** position with **Company**. It was a pleasure speaking with you and I truly enjoyed learning more about the role and the company.

After our conversation, I am confident that my skills, desires, and experiences are a great match for this opportunity. Specifically, I believe my **Finance and Accounting** experience combined with my **technical** background will serve well in building efficiency for the company and enable me to become a key contributor in **Company's** continued growth. I am very enthusiastic about moving forward with the hiring process and the possibility of joining the **Company** team.

Thank you again and I hope to speak with you in the near future.

Best Regards,

First and Last Name

Good **afternoon First Name**,

Thank you for taking the time to speak with me **today** about the **Staff Accountant** position with **Company**. It was a pleasure speaking with you and I truly enjoyed learning more about the role and the company.

After our conversation, I am confident that my skills, desires, and experiences are a great match for this opportunity. Specifically, I believe my **cross-functional communication skills** and my **supervisory experience** will serve well in **engaging my colleagues and direct reports** as well as **implementing process improvements** for **Company**. I am very enthusiastic about moving forward with the hiring process and the possibility of joining the **Company** team.

Thank you again and I hope to speak with you in the near future.

Best Regards,

First and Last Name

Greetings **First Name**,

Thank you so much for taking time out of your day to meet with me about the opportunity with **Company**. Our conversation gave me confidence that my experience at **Current Company** has provided me with the **technical** and **managerial** expertise needed to successfully transition to **Company**. You all have compiled an intelligent, personable group of people and I would welcome the opportunity to join the team.

Thank you again for your time and for considering me for the position. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Best Regards,
First and Last Name

Greetings **First Name**,

Thank you for taking the time **yesterday** to meet with me about the **Staff Accountant** position. I appreciate all you had to say about the **Company** and what you strive to achieve there.

After talking with all of you, I am confident that my work at **Current Company** has given me the skills and experiences that you are wanting for this role. I have the knowledge, flexibility, and drive to be successful at **Company** and I am very excited about the possibility of joining the team.

Thank you again for your time and for considering me for the position. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Best Regards,
First and Last Name