



INTERVIEW PREPARATION

The day before your interview:

Identify the skills you have acquired in part time jobs, playing sport and school activities and then think how you would use these skills in the new job. Concentrate on communication skills, teamwork experience, and ability to quickly learn new procedures as these are uppermost in the employer's mind. Prepare some sample answers to the questions they are most likely to ask (see below).

Plan what you are going to wear. Make sure it is clean and not rumpled. No rips or tears, no stains. Clean your shoes, trim your nails, get a haircut if necessary.

Work out how to get to your destination, check the Journey Planner website to estimate how long it will take to get there.

Try to have an early night and set your alarm.

The day of your interview:

Shower and try to eat some breakfast. Then clean your teeth and make sure you leave home on time to arrive 10-15 minutes early.

Switch off your mobile before you enter the building and then don't touch it again until you leave. Nothing irritates an employer more than a person who interrupts an interview to take a call or even glances at a text message.

Make good eye contact and speak up. Shake hands when you meet your interviewer...firm and brief!

Be concise when answering questions but avoid just saying 'yes' and 'no'. Make sure that your answers are one or two sentences and clearly explain your previous experience and responsibilities. Mention any of the following experience:

- Leadership or committee experience including sporting activities
- Volunteering experience- remember, this is work experience...it just happened to be unpaid.
- Any other community service such as scouts

Also, ask questions about the employer and the tasks involved in the job on offer. A job interview should be a two-way process. Use the interview process to find out about a typical day on the job, what training is offered, who your direct manager would be and a bit about them and to get a sense of the workplace culture.

As a general rule, avoid asking about money. If you are offered the job, that is the time to ask about the money.

Remember that the more flexibility you show when it comes to hours of availability, the more likely that they will offer you a position.

"Tell me about yourself"

This is a typical question school leavers will hear in an interview and is often the opening question. Be prepared for this question and rehearse your answer the day before. Be concise but friendly. Focus on your skills, abilities and your interests. The interviewer wants to know about you and what your plans are for the



present and the future. If they think that you will not stay in the job for long, they are not likely to offer it to you. Aim to combine a little personal information with traits that will appeal to an employer and suit the job you are going for. Don't talk about things which are not related to the job you are applying for.

“Why do you want to work for us?”

Here's your chance to tell the interviewer why you chose to apply for the job. Your answer will reflect whether you have bothered to research the company. Don't say because of the pay. This is your opportunity to talk about why you think you'd fit in really well and what you could bring to the team.

“What extracurricular activities do you participate in?”

This is your chance to talk about you and show your personality - but again, keep it short! Your extracurricular activities should reflect your best traits and your interests. Employers are keen for evidence that you are a good team player, and have an understanding of what good team work is.

Job Behavior

While you may be a teenager, your prospective employer is going to expect you to act like an adult. You can expect questions that ask how you would behave in certain situations. Give the interviewer a brief example of a time when you handled a major problem either between friends or with an adult. The prospective employer is looking for answers that indicate you know how to act in a mature manner. They are also looking for examples of you interacting positively with other individuals.

Technical Training

Be prepared to discuss the different software programs you have used and a summary of your computer skills so that your prospective employer can quickly evaluate if you can use their equipment and systems.

Excellent Sample Answers

1) Question: Why do you feel you are the best candidate for this job?

Answer: Because I'm responsible, reliable, and a hard worker.

2) Question: Do you have any experience in this type of work?

Answer: Not exactly, but I am a fast learner and want to learn as much as I can about (blank).

3) Question: Tell me about a strength of yours.

Answer: I'm a good listener and I like to be around people.

4) Tell me about a weakness of yours.

Answer: I've been called a perfectionist, but I like to do things right.



5) Question: Are you available on week-ends?

Answer: Yes I am. And if ever I'm not, I'll be sure to let you know in advance.

6) Tell me about how you would handle a difficult customer.

Answer: I would politely listen to their complaint without interrupting them, and then try to help them solve the problem.

7) How would you handle working with someone you didn't particularly like?

Answer: I get along easily with people - I don't think that would be a problem.

8) What position do you think would fit you best?

Answer: I would like to learn as many different positions and jobs as I can. I'm really flexible.

9) Do you have your own transportation?

Answer: Yes I can ride my bike, but my parents have agreed to drive me to work.

10) Why should I hire you?

Answer: Because I have a positive attitude and I'll work hard every day.