

## KNOW THE POSITION

- Carefully review and understand the position description
- When a written description is unavailable, ask the hiring manager for details and/or speak with professionals you know at the organization or in the same industry
- Understand the desired/required qualifications, and be ready to share relevant examples from your experience

## KNOW THE ORGANIZATION

- Research the organization's mission, vision, and values
- Be familiar with the organization's products/services as well as recent news and trends
- Be prepared to share specific ways you will help the organization reach its goals

## KNOW YOURSELF

- Know what is on your resume and be prepared to elaborate and offer specific examples
- Create a list of strengths and skills you have to offer that relate to the position
- Come up with a few brief stories about your past skills, strengths, and accomplishments to illustrate your experience and skills; real-life examples provide evidence of your abilities

## GENERAL TIPS

- Arrive 10-15 minutes early and turn off your cell phone
- Use effective non-verbal communication: a firm handshake, friendly smile, and appropriate eye contact
- Remember that body language can help convey confidence, enthusiasm, and interest
- Be courteous to everyone and only speak positively about others (faculty, past employers, co-workers, etc.)
- Always be sincere and honest
- Prepare several questions to ask the employer
- Collect business cards from all interviewers and promptly send separate thank you notes (email and/or mail) and any requested materials
- If you have not heard from the employer by the date they said they would contact you, allow 1-2 extra days, then take the initiative to follow up

## COMMON INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

### PERSONAL

- Tell me about yourself.
- What do you consider to be your greatest professional strengths? Weaknesses?
- What three words would your peers use to describe you and why?
- Tell me about an important goal that you set in the past. Were you successful?
- Who or what influenced you the most, with regard to your career objectives?
- What is your greatest professional achievement?
- Where are your short-term (within one year) and long-term career goals (within 5)?

### EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE

- Describe your current or most recent job, internship, or leadership experience.
- How has your education prepared you for this position?
- Describe a project you have completed and the steps you used to complete it.
- What did you enjoy most about your last job or internship? Least?
- How would a former supervisor describe your work?

### THE POSITION

- What motivated you to apply for this position?
- Why do you want to work for our organization?
- What do you know about our company?
- How does your previous experience relate to this position?
- What are you looking for in a new position?
- What type of work environment do you prefer?
- Describe three skills or qualities you would bring to this position.
- What significant trends do you see in this industry?
- How do you like to be supervised?
- Why are you the best candidate for this position? Why should we hire you?

### QUESTIONS TO ASK EMPLOYERS

- What kind of characteristics are you looking for in the ideal candidate?
- What are some of challenges you think a new person in this position would face?
- What are your department goals for the coming year? Long-term goals?
- What are some common characteristics of successful employees?
- What is the greatest challenge facing your staff/department right now?
- How would I be evaluated in this position?
- What is most engaging about your work here?
- What are the next steps in the hiring process? When can I expect to hear from you?

## BEHAVIORAL QUESTIONS

**Behavioral questions** are used commonly by employers to evaluate if you have the skills and competencies needed for the job. By telling them how you performed in the past, they will have a sense of how you will perform in the future.

### COMMON BEHAVIORAL QUESTIONS

- Tell me about a time you worked with a difficult team member.
- Describe a time you worked in a team environment and encountered conflict.
- Tell me about a time when you demonstrated leadership skills.
- Describe a time you had a conflict with a supervisor.
- Describe a situation which you found a creative way to overcome an obstacle.
- What was the best idea you came up with at your last job?
- Tell me about a mistake you made. What did you learn from it?
- Tell me about a time where you had to assert yourself to get a point across that was important to you.
- Describe a time you went above and beyond the call of duty to get a job done.
- The CAR technique helps you keep your responses focused and concise, spending the most time on the pieces of the situation that are the most important.

### UTILIZING THE CAR TECHNIQUE:

#### CHALLENGE    ACTION    RESULT

The **challenge** gives your interviewer some **context of the situation**. This part of the question should be concise, only about 30% of your response.

*Example: While I was working in my part-time role at the music store, we noticed through our tracking that store visits and sales always dropped in the fall months, specifically October. In previous years, the owner had tried to run promotions to increase traffic, without success.*

The **action response** should focus on **what you specifically did**. If you were working on a team, make sure to highlight your role and contributions.

*Example: I approached the owner and asked if I could spearhead an initiative to bring customers in the door during our slower months. With a \$200 budget, I created marketing plan and event calendar, including collaborations with local musicians, nonprofits, and schools.*

The **result** should **always be positive and directly correlated with the action you took**. Try to quantify your results as much as possible.

*Example: Compared to previous years, our October sales increased by an average of 18% and foot traffic increased by an average of 63%!*