

Interviewing Guide



Congratulations! If you have been invited for an interview, it means you've made it past the first stages of screening. The employer wants to gauge if you would be a good fit for the position. Most of the tips here are focused on interviews outside academe, but many apply to academic interviews, as well.

How to Prepare

Research the organization. Have a thorough understanding of the organization's mission and the role you would play in it. Spend time on their website and social media pages.

Visit the LinkedIn profiles of your interviewers in order to learn more about their own career paths and interests.

Reach out to anyone you know at the company or organization to better understand the position and the company culture.

Print out the **position description** for the interview

so you can address how you would solve the employer's needs.

Prepare for behavioral interview questions. Use the **STAR** method: give specific examples of a **Situation** or **Task**, the **Action** you took, and talk about the **Results** you achieved.

If applying for an expanded career, **be prepared to explain your decision to leave academia.** Prepare answers on why you want to use the skills you gained in graduate school to benefit the company or the organization.

Schedule a **mock interview** to practice professional demeanor and answer unanticipated questions.

Prepare a list of **questions for your interviewers.** Develop thoughtful questions on the values and culture of the company and what they expect the new hire to accomplish. Avoid asking questions that could easily be answered from their website.

On the day of your interview, **dress professionally and appropriately.**

Give yourself plenty of time to **arrive early** to the interview.

During the Interview

Maintain **eye contact** with your interviewers. Eliminate distractions, such as cell phones.

Keep it positive. Don't talk negatively about your advisor, past work experiences, or issues with your graduate program.

Use language that your interviewers will understand. Avoid topics of a highly

technical nature unless the position involves work of a highly technical nature.

Listen to your interviewers. You are there not just to talk about yourself, but to learn more about the company.

Do not inquire about benefits, salary, or vacation time until the employer has offered you a position.

After the Interview

After the interview, send an email to thank your interviewer(s) within 24 hours of the meeting and re-iterate your interest in the position.

Interviewing Guide

Online Resources



ATTIRE

Interview Appearance and Attire: Tips, guides, and infographics for an appropriate outfit.

bit.ly/1dVo0Mv

Interview Outfits For Women: What to Wear to an Interview: 12 interview-ready options.

abt.cm/Naoow3

Interview Outfits For Men: What to Wear to an Interview: 11 interview-ready options.

abt.cm/1ewdacN

PRACTICE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

InterviewStream Online Practice Interviewing Service: A mock interview service provided through MSU.

bit.ly/1gnBDVU

Glassdoor Interview Preparation: Interview questions for a variety of job and interview tips.

glassdoor.com/Interview

Ready, Prep, Interview: Sample questions for a variety of career paths and tips for avoiding common pitfalls.

bit.ly/1gXUDOI

DOs & DON'Ts

Interviews- Dos and Don'ts: Helpful things to remember.

bit.ly/1ex8RjG

Five Things You Must Not

Do in an Interview and Five Things You Must (LinkedIn): What to say and what not to say.

linkd.in/J6h3wz

DURING & AFTER THE INTERVIEW

10 Steps to Interview With Confidence: Interview tips by GradHacker.

bit.ly/1hsdN8e

How to Prepare for and Rock a Behavioral Interview: Examples of how to formulate questions using the STAR method.

bit.ly/1cVh9EM

How to Answer Competency-Based Interview Questions: Specific tips on structure and content from the Guardian.

bit.ly/1jD3mRC

Before, During & After Interviewing (American Chemical Society): How to prepare, present, and follow-up.

bit.ly/OoBabd

ACADEMIC & OTHER INTERVIEWS

PhD Career Services Interviewing: Resources for academic, consulting, and other interviews.

careersuccess.msu.edu/phdcareers/search/interviewing

Stay connected with PhD Career Services!

careersuccess.msu.edu/phdcareers • hireaphd@msu.edu



@PhDCareersMSU



MSUGradCareerSuccess

For current events and opportunities for PhDs, subscribe to our monthly newsletter at

bit.ly/graddigest