Preparing for a Mock Interview

Overview

The mock interview is designed to increase your understanding and confidence in preparing for the real interview. The interview environment is simulated by a facilitator asking you a set of questions (usually lasting 20-30 minutes) followed by a period of feedback and an opportunity for the interviewee to ask questions (about 15-20 minutes).

The mock interview can be digitally recorded (and you can keep it for free). These DVD recordings may be reviewed directly after the interview as part of the feedback process, or they may be viewed by the interviewee at a later time in order to recall and reflect upon the experience. (Though smaller in size than a normal DVD, the discs that are used will work in any normal DVD player or computer with a DVD drive.)

Preparing for a Mock Interview

1. Reflect on the popular interview questions listed below.

2. Review these helpful tips for answering questions.

   Think about answering questions using this process:
   - Identify your skills, talents, knowledge
   - Describe an experience to illustrate or reinforce the above
   - Connect each experience to the position/organization

   Another way to answer questions is to use the SAR approach. To provide sufficient information, describe the Situation, Action, and Result

   Be prepared to ask the interviewer questions. Research on the company/position can provide insight to possible questions.

3. Dress professionally. This is a good opportunity for the interviewee to practice interviewing in formal attire.

4. Bring both a job description and a current resume (optional; but helpful for the interviewer). These items can be supplied when the appointment is initially made to help the interviewer better simulate the specific interview experience.

5. Arrive at the office a few minutes early to allow time to check in before the appointment.
Examples of Popular Interview Questions

Warm-Up Questions

1. What made you apply for this position?
2. Tell me about yourself.
3. Briefly, would you summarize your work history and education for me?

Work History

4. What is important to you in a company/organization?
5. Describe one or two of your major accomplishments.
6. Give an example of when you worked under pressure to meet a deadline.

Education

7. What special aspects of your education or training have prepared you for this job?
8. Why did you choose your major?
9. What job-related skills have you developed?

Self-Assessment

10. Which three adjectives would you use to describe yourself?
11. What is your greatest strength?
12. What is your greatest weakness?
13. How do you cope with conflict?
14. Describe a time when you overcame an obstacle.

Motivation

15. Where do you see yourself in five years?
16. How will this position enable you to reach your goals?
17. What will you bring to the company/organization that is unique?

Oral Presentation Skills

18. Have you ever done any group presentations?
19. How comfortable are you speaking in front of groups?
20. What is your experience with making presentations?

Leadership

21. How do you facilitate group communication?
22. Describe a time when you delegated responsibilities to group members.
23. How do you set an example to others?
24. How would you describe your basic leadership style?
25. Describe a time when you worked in a team.
Stress Tolerance

26. How do you cope with pressure?
27. Give an example of a time when you worked well under pressure.

Job Performance

28. What would you say are some areas that you need to improve on?
29. Do you prefer working alone or in groups?
30. How do you receive feedback?
31. Describe a time when you explained something complex to a colleague successfully.

Creativity

32. Of your creative accomplishments, what gave you the most satisfaction and why?
33. What kind of problems have people recently called on you to solve? Tell me how you solved them.
34. What methods do you employ while brainstorming?

Decisiveness

35. The last time you did not know what decision to make, what did you do?
36. What was the last major problem that you were confronted with? What action did you take?
37. How do you determine or evaluate success?

Questions to ask employers

38. What do you (the interviewer) like best about your job/company?
39. What is the next step in the selection process?
40. What kind of assignments might I expect during the first six months on the job?
41. Describe the company culture.
42. What training would I receive if hired?