

APPEARING FOR AN INTERVIEW



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Interviews have become an important part of our lives. From early childhood we face interviews. When you are young your parents are eager that you perform well. As you grow older, you yourself wish to do well at interviews. In this lesson you will be given some guidance in facing interviews.



LEARNING OUTCOMES

After completing this lesson, the learners:

- Recognises the importance of extra-linguistic cues in face to face communication;
- Prepares themselves better for an interview;
- Organises to persuade through logic and argument;
- Plans to open and close an interview appropriately.

27.1 PREPARING FOR AN INTERVIEW

To prepare to perform well, you must engage in some pre-interview activities. Pre-interview planning involves learning something about the company/organisation, analysing your strengths and weaknesses and making sure your appearance and behaviour create the right impression. Given below are some of the ways in which you can prepare yourself for an interview.

(a) Studying the Company

You must gather information about the company. This will convince the interviewer about your sincerity. The interviewer will not waste precious interview time

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providing you with information that you should have gathered. Your sources of information are:-

- i) the advertisement
- ii) employees of the company
- iii) other candidates who have been interviewed
- iv) newspaper and journals
- v) Internet

(b) Study yourself

After you have gathered information about the company the next step is to assess your own abilities. Do I like to work with people or do I prefer to work on my own? Do I like detailed work? Can I develop a career plan that I can achieve with the company? The answers to these questions about yourself can provide you with lots of material to use during the interview. If you can't see a relationship between yourself and the job or company, you won't be able to demonstrate the interest or enthusiasm necessary to market yourself. A good method is to list the company and job characteristics in one column and attempt to place your qualifications in a corresponding column as in the following illustration:

Company and Job Requirements	My Qualification and Needs
i) Do I like to work with people or do I like to work alone?	
ii) Is there scope for advancement?	
iii) Is the pay scale adequate?	
iv) Do I have the necessary educational requirements?	
v) Do I like to travel?	
vi) Does it offer job security?	

Of course, you'll probably never find the job and the organisation that will satisfy all your needs and meet all your requirements. This analysis will help you with each interview.

(c) Plan your appearance

You should dress in such a way that you do not create a negative impression. For example your finger nails must be neat and clean, your shoes well polished and your hair well groomed.

Avoid gaudy, casual or party wear. Find out the company's dress code. If you dress and look like the people who already work at the company, the interviewer will find it easier to see you working there.

(d) Plan Your Time

One of the worst things you can do is be late for an interview. Plan your time so that you arrive early. This planning allows you to unwind and prepare yourself for the interview.

At the same time, don't just sit around making yourself nervous. Move around a little and talk to the other candidates. Should something prevent you from reaching on time, do telephone your apology.



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INTEXT QUESTIONS 27.1

1. Say whether the following statements are true (T) or false (F). Correct the false statement in the light of what you have read:-
 - i) To prepare for an interview, we must buy new clothes.
 - ii) Knowing about the organisation is a mark of a serious candidate.
 - iii) You should aim to get a job that gives you a high pay.
 - iv) A study of your own skills against the job requirements can give you useful work.
 - v) Being punctual for an interview may give the impression that you are out of work.

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2. Study the advertisements given below and make a table like the one given in section 27.1. Have two columns: i) Company and job requirements and ii) My qualification and needs. Do this exercise in your exercise book.

Shristi Finance Ltd.	Tara International Pvt. Ltd.
<p>We are the leading DSA of HD finance in car loans & Personal loans having our branches in Delhi, Noida & Ghaziabad. We require:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Marketing Executive (10) ● Tele Marketing Executive (5) ● Office Assistant (10) <p>(Knowledge of computers necessary) The remuneration will be best in the industry Experience, conveyance would be an added advantage. Meet Mr. M. Sharma for a walk-in interview on 2nd & 3rd July 2001 at E-914, Kailash colony between 10 a.m. and 1 p.m. Phone 26246719.</p>	<p>Walk-in interview (team members)</p> <p>We are looking for enthusiastic and self-motivated young men and women who enjoy having fun while delivering our world-wide standards of service and hospitality. You should be between 18 and 25 years of age with a senior school certificate, good communication skills and a team player. (having a valid two-wheeler licence would be an added qualification).</p> <p>Walk-in for an interview with your resume on 3rd or 4th May, 2001 between 10 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. at, Hotel Hindustan 31, Community Centre, New Alipore, Kolkata, Phone 24740477</p>

27.2 MEETING FACE TO FACE INTERCHANGE

Now that you have gone through the planning stages, you are ready for the interview. Your job is to sell yourself so successfully, that you are selected at the interview.

Given below are some points to remember while facing an interview.

(a) Opening Formalities

When you meet the interviewer, greet him/her and address him/her as ‘Sir/ madam’. If the interviewer initiates the handshake, wait for the interviewer to invite you to sit down. Carry your certificates in a file and place them on the table.

(b) Interviewing guidelines

Much of the information about you will appear on your resume or company

application form, already available to the interviewer. Thus, the interviewer will most likely seek to assess your attitudes towards work and the probability of fitting you successfully into the organisation.

The best way to prepare for the interview is to answer such questions as these:

1. Why do you want to work for us?
2. Why should we hire you?
3. What are your greatest strengths?
4. What is important to you in a job?

Your answers to these and other variations of the same questions can help you proceed to the next step. First of all, your education is your foremost attribute if you are a student. You should point out its relationship to the job for which you are being considered. Even more important, the fact that you have succeeded in school indicates that you have the ability to learn, because most companies expect you to learn something on the job. So your most important response to the interviewer's questions may be about your ability to learn. Even no experience may be an asset.

Second, a degree of humility is important in all interviews. You should not make tall claims about your previous job or what you will do if you get the present one. Anyone who says he will turn the company around in six months, proves his lack of experience. Make realistic and achievable claims,

“Why do you want to work for us?” is really not a difficult question. While answering this question refer to information you have gathered from the literature of the company or speaking to someone who works for the company or the information you have gathered while visiting one of their offices. This will convince the interviewer that you are strongly interested in the company and not just taking an interview for practice. Note, the interviewer not only attempts to develop an impression of you, he or she also evaluates you in comparison with others being interviewed for the position.

Why should the company hire you?

You have the proper education, you have proved that you have the ability to learn, and you are enthusiastic about working for the company. Relate your skills and knowledge to the job.



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When asked about your greatest strengths, your study of yourself will help. Your greatest strengths probably are easy to identify: (1) the ability to learn (2) the ability to work with others and to assume leadership roles, (3) skill in problem solving.

Finally, what is important to you in a job? While we are all interested in a good salary that should not be your primary concern. Rewards such as personal job satisfaction, the feeling of accomplishment, and making a contribution to society are things you should discuss in an interview. You should look forward to a challenge. A job that will satisfy these needs is important to almost everyone.

(c) Handling Salary discussion

For most entry-level positions the beginning salary is fixed. However, if you have work experience, excellent scholarship records, or added maturity, you may be able to obtain a larger salary. The interviewer should initiate the salary topic. What you should know is the general range for candidates with your qualifications so that your response to a question about how much you would expect is reasonable. If your qualifications are about average for the job, you can indicate that you would expect to be paid the going rate or within the normal range. If you have added qualification, you might say, "With my years of work experience, I would expect to start at the upper end of the normal salary range."

If you have other job offers, you are in position to compare salaries, jobs, and companies. In this case, you may suggest to the interviewer that you would expect a competitive salary and that you have been offered X rupees by another firm. If salary hasn't been mentioned, and you really want to know about it, simply ask courteously how much the salary would be for someone with your qualifications. In any case though, don't attempt to make salary a major issue.

(d) Closing the interview

The interviewer will provide the cues indicating that the interview is completed by rising from the chair or making a comment about the next step to be taken. At that point, don't prolong the interview needlessly. Simply rise, thank the interviewer for the opportunity to meet, and close by saying you look forward to hearing from the company. The neatness with which you close the interview may be almost as important as the first impression you made.



(e) **Practising for Interviews**

Although most of us tend to be nervous during our first interview, we gain confidence with experience. Therefore, practice and rehearse. Work with someone else in mock interviews, alternating roles as interviewer and interviewee. Then follow each practice interview with a constructive critique of each other's performance. A few such mock interviews will give you some experience and will make the first real interview more effective.

The job interview may be the important face-to-face interaction you will have. You will be selling yourself in competition with others. How you listen and how you talk will be measured by the interviewer. Since practice leads to perfection, you will never regret the time you spend rehearsing your interview.



INTEXT QUESTIONS 27.2

1. What key areas should you focus on when preparing for an interview?
2. Why is it important to demonstrate humility during an interview?



WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNT

The job interview is one of the most important events in your life. In this lesson you have learnt how to prepare for success in this event. You have to plan your dress, postures and answers to likely questions.



TERMINAL QUESTIONS

1. State whether the following statements are True (T) or False (F). Correct the False statements.
 - i) Open an interview by calling the interviewer by his/her first name.
 - ii) Sit up straight and bend forward slightly to show interest.
 - iii) One of the main aims of an interviewer is to assess the candidate's attitude to work.

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- iv) Be prepared to answer questions on your strength.
- v) A candidate who makes tall claims will be considered dishonest and insincere.
- vi) The primary and only motivating factor in choice of jobs is the pay cheque.
- vii) Don't be in a hurry to close an interview.

2. Study the advertisement given below. Imagine that you have been called for the interview. Give brief points for your answer to the following questions:-

- i) Why should the company hire you?
- ii) What is important to you in a job?
- iii) What are your greatest strengths?

**ANSWERS TO INTEXT QUESTIONS****27.1**

1.
 - i) False. Dress in neat, clean clothes is needed.
 - ii) True
 - iii) False. There are other criteria like job satisfaction, career path, socially useful work.
 - iv) True
 - v) False. You won't be late or nervous and will get time to find out more about the organisation.
2. Individual answer

27.2

1. When preparing for an interview, focus on key areas such as understanding why you want to work for the company, highlighting your strengths and abilities, articulating what is important to you in a job, and practising responses to common interview questions.
2. Demonstrating humility during an interview is important to avoid making unrealistic claims about your abilities or achievements. It's essential to be honest and realistic about what you can offer and achieve in the role.