

GE Appliances

Interviewing Skills

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Purpose of Interview: Gather information about qualifications and history

- **Qualifications**

Reveals information for comparison to job and person specification

- **History**

Reveals information about patterns

- Successful and unsuccessful life patterns tend to repeat
- Past and recent behavior helps predict the future

Ensure proper match of individual and position

The Job Market ... A Reality Check

- **Most college age job candidates have terrible interview skills ... most will shoot themselves in the foot.**
- **People sometimes get hired, because they are good at interviewing ... not because they are more qualified than the next applicant.**
- **Candidates with great qualifications lose out -- not because they can't do the job or lack confidence. They lose out, because their confidence does not come through in the interview!**
- **The prime error made by job seekers is going into an interview unprepared.**

Four “Knows” Before the Interview ...

- **Know yourself.** An interview is about one thing, YOU. Advanced preparation is critical ... inventory yourself so that you can competently express who you are, what you want and whether you are a fit for the job.
- **Know the interview process.** If you don't know what to expect, you won't know how to prepare. Read a couple of books and speak with your Career office to learn everything you can about interviewing... role-play with another person acting as the interviewer.
- **Make sure the interviewer knows about you.** EVERYTHING is a reflection of you. If your resume or emails are laden with errors, an interviewer may conclude that you will also approach your job in this manner.
- **Know the organization.** Research the organization and the position ... it makes you stand out from candidates who haven't. Understanding the “culture” of the organization/ group is also important.

A Few “Do’s”

- **Do talk about yourself.** It’s important to talk very positively about the contributions you can make for the team. When asked a question, don’t just answer yes or no ... elaborate.
- **Do take advantage of silences.** There may be a point in the interview when you need time to reflect on the question. Although awkward, take the time you need to answer.
- **Do be honest.** If you exaggerate your experience you may find yourself in “hot water” when the reference checks are completed or in a job you are unqualified to do.

A Few “Don’ts”

- **Don’t try to be someone you aren’t.** Be yourself. You will be far more successful if your abilities match your self-assessment output.
- **Don’t leave the interview without** making sure that you have communicated your interest in the job. Sell yourself!!
- **Don’t leave the interview without getting your key questions answered.** Find out if the job is the right fit for you. Get the information you need to make the right decision.
- **Don’t forget to write a thank-you e-mail or note.** Not only is this a professional courtesy, but the opportunity to mention some follow-up facts about your interest and qualifications.
- **Don’t be too casual.** Remember, you are interviewing for a professional position, dress in business attire.

First impressions count!

- Demonstrate business professionalism- Dress the part.
- Carry a padfolio, decent pen, extra copies of resume.
- Smile- Non verbals are critical.
- Direct eye contact, good posture.
- Firm handshake, when you meet and when you leave.
- “Hi, I’m (Full Name). It’s a pleasure meeting you!”
- Voice- Volume, rate of speed, smile in the voice

What interviewers look for

- **A lot of facts in a short time.** The interviewer needs enough information to make a decision.
- **Your interests.** What you want to do and why you want to do it. Your career goals, interest in continuing your education, geographic preference, willingness to relocate, etc.
- **Your qualifications.** Work experience, grade point average, extra-curricular activities, roles and hobbies are all important. Examples of past behaviors are the best indicator of your future success.
- **How to help your chances.** Take the time to ask one or two questions. Be prepared to offer relevant information that you may not have had an opportunity to share.

Types of Interviewers

- **The Hypothetical Questioner**
This individual wants to know what you would do in a hypothetical situation. This method rewards the articulate, smooth talking person. The responses given have not been validated by specific experiences.
- **The Checklist Questioner**
This individual is on a mission to get as much information in as short of time period as possible. Their method feels much like completing a health form for a life insurance policy. The responses they are seeking are “yes” or “no”. At the end of their interview, they have very little information.
- **The Intuitive One**
This person “knows” if you’re the one within the first five minutes. They think they know how to “read” people. You may be discussing your new job within the hour, or you may be out the door.
- **The Non-Listener**
This interviewer wants to tell you about the company, the job, and themselves. It’s possible that you will have talked 10% of the time to their 90%. Now, how do they make an informed decision about your capabilities?
- **The Chronicler**
This interviewer wants to know your story -- life and work. They will ask where you went to college and why, what community organizations you participate in and why you made the jump from one company to another. Are they just casting out their lines or do they know exactly when and where the fish will bite?

Most & interview are behavioral based interviews.

Behavioral Interviewing

- A process of looking for behavioral examples of specific life history events...that can be used to determine the presence or absence of a job-related skill or competency.

Skills

- A leadership skill can be knowledge, process skill, action and thought pattern that differentiates between average and superior performers in a job.

Competencies

- Leadership competencies are defined and demonstrated through specific, observable behaviors -- what superior performers do more often, in more situations and with better results than average performers.

Behavioral vs. Traditional Interviews

- Instead of asking how you would behave in a particular situation, the interviewer will ask you to **describe how you did behave**.
- Expect the interviewer to **question and probe** (think of “peeling the layers from an onion”).
- The interviewer will ask you to **provide details** and will not allow you to theorize or generalize about several events.
- The interview will be a more **structured process** that will **concentrate on areas that are important to the interviewer**, rather than allowing you to concentrate on areas that you may feel are important.

Behavioral Interviews

What was the situation?

What did you do?

What was the outcome?

Behavioral Based Questions

The behavioral interviewer has been trained to **objectively collect and evaluate information**, and works from a **profile of desired behaviors** that are needed for success on the job. Because the **behaviors** a candidate has **demonstrated in previous similar positions are likely to be repeated**, you will be asked to share situations in which you may or may not have exhibited these behaviors. Your answers will be **tested for accuracy and consistency**.

If you are an entry-level candidate with no previous related experience, the interviewer will look for behaviors in situations similar to those of the target position:

“Describe a major problem you have faced and how you dealt with it.”

“Give an example of when you made a decision that backfired.”

“What class did you like the most and why? What did you like about it?”

Follow-up questions will test for consistency determine if you exhibited the desired behavior in that situation:

“Can you give me an example?”

“What did you do?”

“What did you say?”

“What were you thinking?”

“How did you feel?”

“What was your role?”

“What was the result?”

Leadership Behavior Questions

- Give me an example of a change you have made as a result of performance feedback.
- What was your highest visible presentation in the last few years? Most trying moment/outcome?
- Has anyone in your work group ever failed on the job? How did you handle the situation?
- Describe your biggest failure/disappointments in your job and how you handled it.
- What are some of the most significant changes you implemented in your position; how did your team respond and how did you deal with that?
- Can you give me an example where quick action in solving a business problem was critical?
- Have you ever experienced a situation where a business plan which you put a lot of effort into was rejected or substantially revised? How did you deal with that situation?
- Describe a situation in which you had to reconcile conflicts in your work group.
- If your peers described your leadership style, what words would they use? Your clients? Superiors?
- How would you describe your strengths and weaknesses?

Work Experience

- What have you learned from your past jobs?
- What were your biggest responsibilities?
- What specific skills acquired or used in previous jobs relate to this position?
- How does your previous experience relate to this position?
- What did you like most/least about your last job?

Education

- How do you think your education has prepared you for this position?
- What were your favorite classes/activities at school?
- Why did you choose your major?
- Do you plan to continue your education?

General Qualifications

- What can you do for us that someone else can't do? What makes you the best candidate?
- What new skills or capabilities have you developed recently?
- Give me an example from a previous job where you've shown strong initiative.
- What have been your greatest accomplishments to date?
- What is important to you in a job?
- What motivates you in your work?

Career Drive

- What would you like to be doing five years from now?
- What type of position are you interested in?
- How will this job fit in your career plans?
- What do you expect from this job?
- Do you have a location preference?
- Can you travel?
- What hours can you work?

Job Interest

- Describe the job you are interviewing for as you understand it
- Why is it attractive to you?
- What are your concerns about it?
- What is your interest level?

Previous Positions

- What were your most significant accomplishments?
- Why were these accomplishments important?
- What difficulties did you have to overcome?
- Did you have a lead role in the project, a key role, a support role, etc?

Abilities & Confidence

- What would you say is the most likely reason you might fail in this position?
- What is one thing that, if you did better, would dramatically increase your effectiveness?

How to Prepare for a Behavioral Interview

- ✓ **Recall recent situations that show favorable behaviors or actions**, especially involving course work, work experience, leadership, teamwork, initiative, planning, and customer service.
- ✓ **Prepare short descriptions** of each situation; be ready to give details if asked.
- ✓ **Be sure each story has a beginning, a middle, and an end**, i.e., be ready to describe the situation, your action, and the outcome or result.
- ✓ **Be sure the outcome or result reflects positively** on you (even if the result itself was not favorable).
- ✓ **Be honest.** Don't embellish or omit any part of the story. The interviewer will find out if your story is built on a weak foundation.
- ✓ **Be specific.** Don't generalize about several events; give a detailed accounting of one event.

Core Leadership Competencies

High Confidence Level

A Can Do Attitude
Decisive and Action Oriented Decision Maker
Demonstrates Authority and Assurance in Dealing with People
Shares Credit for Accomplishments and gives Recognition
Accepts responsibility for mistakes

Initiative

Takes responsibility for needed action
Sets and meets aggressive commitments
Takes calculated risks
Is self- motivated, 4 E's

Analytical Ability

Demonstrates planning and problem solving skills
Is extremely inquisitive and quick-minded
Combines diverse information, intuition and common sense

Change Orientation

Initiates constructive conflict and change
Challenges the status quo
Demonstrates a passion for excellence
Continually looks for better ways to get things done
Reacts to change as a positive challenge

Interpersonal Skills

Strong Team Player
Demonstrates integrity and responsible behavior
Shares information- comfortable with debate
Communicates candidly and openly

Guide the Discussion

- Be honest and open. Give a 5 dollar answer to a 5 dollar question. Read your audience.
- Have a conversation versus a cross-examination.
 - Sell your qualifications.
- Demonstrate a sincere interest
 - Use all of your senses and instincts to share information
 - Ask questions about the company -- its organization, culture & employees

Last impressions count too!

- Smile
- Direct eye contact
- Solid, firm handshake
- Ask for the job. Show enthusiasm and energy.
- Close....”This position sounds like a great opportunity and I believe it fits well with my background and career interests”.

When the Decision comes

- Yes? Congratulations!!

- No? Move on to get the next interview
 - Every interview boosts your experience and will strengthen your next performance

 - Perseverance is a necessary ingredient to a successful job search

 - Send a thank you note even if you didn't get the job.

Some past employees put their own experiences into words... what were their challenges interviewing on campus?

What is their advice?

Interview Questions

- What is a personal goal you have for yourself?
- If you had to pick one word to describe yourself most comprehensively, what would it be?
- Where do you see yourself in 5 years?
- How do you communicate with others?
- What one word would you use to describe yourself?
- Describe a project you worked on that failed and how you handled the situation.
- Describe a time you went above and beyond expectations in your personal or professional life.
- Why do you want to work for this company? What do you know about GE? from the company rules because you believed it was the right thing to do.

Sample Interview Questions

- Tell me about yourself. (Sometimes from the Dick Fear interview)
- What's the hardest thing you've ever done?
- What is the one thing you're most proud of?
- What motivates you?
- Tell me about a time when you weren't able to achieve your goal?
- Where do you see yourself in 5, 10, & 15, years?
- What did you do in _____ position?
- Tell me about a difficult situation you had with a person and how you handled the situation.
- What are your strengths and weaknesses?
- What do you want to do? Not want to do?
- Provide examples of times you demonstrated strong leadership.
- Tell me about a time you thought or acted outside of the box.

Advice

- Get involved. The more activities you are involved in, the more you have to talk about in interviews.
- Be honest. .., both with the interviewer & yourself. You don't want to sell yourself as someone you are not & then get in a job making great money but either not doing something you enjoy or struggle to make sense of things day in and day out. Really try to think about what is important to you in your life & be ready to communicate it in the interview. They will appreciate your honesty & be impressed you have contemplated your skills and values
- Be knowledgeable regarding the company. Research their business portfolio and try and find out as much as possible about their culture. With the internet, there is no excuse for not knowing about a company before you interview.
- Network, network, network. You never know when a distant school chum could become a valuable business contact.
- Always have several questions prepared to ask the interviewer(s).