

Interviewing Skills

**“How To” Tips on Telling Your Story
and Preparing for a Good Job Interview**



Joanne

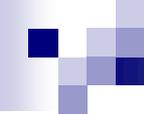
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The Interviewing Soundbite

*“Make them believe you’re
THE ANSWER to their problem”*

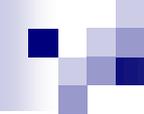
That means:

- Know your strongest assets
- Show how well your skills and abilities fit with their vacant job
- Connect the dots between what they need and what you have to offer



Getting Started: Self Assessment

- **Identify and understand your skills**
- **Be able to TALK about your skills**
- **Just like a business does an inventory on their goods, you have inventory YOUR skills so you tell them why they should hire you!**
- **This way, you can “tell your story” with confidence**



Why Self Assessment Works

- **You identify and understand your skills, strengths and abilities**
- **You'll be better equipped for the interview because you'll know how to talk about your skills, strengths and abilities**
- **The better equipped, the more confident you will be**

Getting Started: How to Prep

Q: How can I do well in an interview?

A: Do self assessments, homework and practice sessions

Q: How can I prep for an “unknown”?

A: Study the job bulletin, from that think about what they may ask. Ask others in that job if they remember what they were asked.

Four Qualities Employers Look For

- Technical Skills – things you were trained to do like gardener or electrician
- Functional/Transferable Skills – things you can do anywhere, like using good communication or leadership skills
- Strengths – things that you're “hardwired” to do. Example: Are you “natural” mechanic?
- Traits – words that describe your work style and who you are as a person. Example: Are you patient, dependable, independent?

Before the Interview

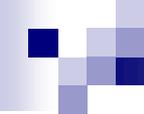
- Do Your Research: surf the WEB to find out information about the workplace.
- Rehearse and Rest: Do practice “mock” interviews
- Location: Know the exact location and time of the interview and how to get there. No excuse for being late
- Supplies: Take a pad of paper & a pen

Create Skill Cards

- These are “Grown Up Flash Cards”
- On 3 x 5 cards, write down each of your skills and an example of a situation when you used them
- Before each interview, study your skill cards so you get comfortable describing your skills. Practice – practice – practice!

Practice Doing Mock Interviews

- **Get friends and family to help you**
- **Devise interview questions based on your research**
- **If you can, use a video camera to tape your Mock Interview – you'll learn a lot about how you interview**
- **Even practice in front of a mirror**



Other Tips to Ace an Interview

- Think of Interviewing as **TELLING A STORY** – with a little more structure and organization
- Don't wear cologne or perfume – one of the interviewers may be allergic
- Get enough sleep the night before
- The day before and morning of the interview, eat protein, veggies and good carbs. This is what will fuel you during the interview!

When You Get to the Interview

- **An interview is just like an audition – like any good actor, you have to get “in character” when you get there**
- **Be nice to the reception staff – they are often asked how applicants behaved while waiting!**
- **Stay focused and review your Flash Cards while waiting**

During the Interview

- **Know your strongest assets**
- **Show how your skills and abilities relate to their job opening**
- **Show how they will benefit if they hire you**
- **Be prepared to discuss what you've done in the past – it's a strong "tell" on how you'll perform in the future**
- **Give examples**

MORE: During the Interview

Be able to talk about:

- **Key Accomplishments**
- **Technical and Transferable Skills**
- **Personal and Professional Strengths and Traits**
- **And – Be Specific – Give Examples**

Tips During the Interview

- Don't rush too fast – average answers can go 1-3 minutes
- It's OK to say "I'm going to take a moment to fully organize my thoughts" and jot down some key words
- If you choke, say "Can we return to this question at the end of the interview?" That will help you remember
- If you think you haven't given them "your best stuff", ask if you can make a closing statement

Use the S T A R

Situation = Circumstance or state of events

Task = Overall tasks to deal with situation

Action = Actions you took to complete each task – the details

Results = Outcomes as a result of your actions – what happened

Why S T A R Works

- Helps you organize your thoughts
- Helps you “tell your story” with some logical structure, so . . .
- The Interviewer gets a clear picture of your skills, strengths and what you can do
- Also gives the Interviewer an idea about your behavior as well as your skills and expertise

How to Practice with S T A R

- Make a list of past accomplishments
- Create a S T A R for each accomplishment
- Revise and edit until they're complete
- Have friends and family help you – they'll remember things you forgot or “blow off” as unimportant

“Tell Me About Yourself”

- **The question everyone loves to hate!**
- **Answer by preparing a “Positioning Statement” where you match your skills, strengths and traits with their needs, based on the job bulletin**
- **This will help connect the dots between what they want and what you have to offer**
- **Next slide gives you a template**

How to Answer “Tell Me About Yourself”

**I was born in _____ and went to school at _____ OR
served in the Military from _____ to _____**

Currently, I work at _____ for the last _____ years

Before that, I worked at _____

People tell me I’m the kind of person that _____

I believe my strengths are _____

My interests are _____