

the interview preparation workbook

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What is in this workbook?

The majority of top businesses look for employees who stand out because of their experience, willingness to have fresh ideas, and pleasant personalities that would benefit the company.

In this workbook you can prepare for your upcoming interview in a clear step by step process and get ready for answering the typical questions used by interviewers to check for aspects of personality, skills match and job match.

Your job in the 20-60 mins of typical interview is to establish credibility as well as match of skills and experience with the job's requirements. You also need to show your willingness to do the job.

This work book will guide you through the steps and various questions you can prepare for so that you can show forth a good performance.

Let's start then....

The first step important step is to do a self-assessment and evaluation so that you have a good understating of yourself and how your skills match the job requirements.

Get the job description

To start with you need to have a copy of the job description. Usually, it is on the job posting or you may have to get it from the company website or even call up he company and get the detailed one. This is important as you will be able to understand the requirements only if you have the job description and job eligibility specifications the employer has created.

With the job description in hand now check your resume. Which of the requirements listed in the job description are a match? If you have a print out of would be good to use a colour pen and underline the ones that are matching and make note of any requirements that you fulfil but is not listed in the resume.

List out your knowledge-based, transferable, and personal skills that match the job

Examine your resume and make a list of all the skills you've used in each previous work experience to provide an impressive presentation. Make a detailed list of your abilities and strengths, including personal characteristics, knowledge-based skills, and transferable skills. This will serve as the foundation for your personal marketing strategy. You'll be able to face the interviewer after you've completed the lists below. Employers are interested in your achievements, so keep that in mind. Make use of words that are special.

Skills are grouped into three kinds – knowledge-based, transferable, and personal skills.

1) Knowledge-based skills are those learned from experiences. These may include educational attainment, additional training, seminars attended, and other practices that you have studied to enhance your expertise.

Knowledge-based skills include computer and communication skills, marketing or managerial knowledge, product development, and many more. These skills vary depending on the field of industry of each job candidate.

List your knowledge-based skills relevant to the job you are looking for here:

2) Transferable or portable skills are those you bring to a specific job. This is the reason why interviewers ask, “What could you offer the company?”

Transferable skills are important because companies strive to look for quality employees that would improve the development of the workforce.

Portable skills include problem solving, team leader potential, organized, writing and communication skills, customer service oriented, time and project management, and good with numbers and budget. This kind of skills varies depending on the experience and versatility of each job candidate.

List your portable skills relevant to the job you are looking for here:

3) Personal traits determine who you are. In a job interview, one of the most common things an employer says is “Tell me something about yourself.” Your response is vital because it would set the tone for the rest of the interview.

Personal traits include good judgment, well organized, analytical, goal oriented, flexible, creative and many more. Try to sell yourself in as modest as possible within a limited time.

List your personal traits here:

Although many companies require a unique set of skills, you should still highlight your technical skills in the interview. These skills, which top companies usually seek, include leadership, communication, confidence, flexibility, problem solving and energy.

Emphasizing all of your strengths and skills on job interviews would increase your chances of landing the desired job.

Common Interview questions & how to answer them

Preparing for the most common interview questions will help you answer the questions better and in a impressive way. If you can memorize the answers

beforehand it would make you less nervous and increase your chances of succeeding in the interview.

Tell us something about yourself?

This is a standard question where the employer wants to know general information about you, your background and experience. The ideal answer is one where you briefly introduce yourself and then talk about your unique skills in a way relevant to the position. Try not to brag or let your ego show through. Frank, jovial and honest manner of speaking will always win people to your side.

Imagine you have been asked this question; write your answer in space below:

What is your experience in— — —?

This is more specific. The employer wants to know whether you have the necessary experience to do the job. He/she wants to know if it is worth their time to interview you extensively. Again, give an honest answer but give a picture of how your experience can be useful to the company.

List your answer here:

How would you rate yourself on the scale of 1-10 on—?

Again, a specific question to qualify you for further interviewing.

Rate yourself honestly. If you are lacking in whatever skill, explain what actions you are taking or have taken to improve that. If you are good at the skill then rating yourself around 8-9 would be ideal.

Why did you apply for this position?

This is a competency testing question. How you answer the question gives the interviewer hints about your intelligence and ability to handle situations

How would you answer such a question? List it below:

Why do you want to work with our company?

Another competency testing question. Answer this intelligently and you are sure to make an impression on the interviewers.

List your answer below:

What would you say are your strengths? What are your weaknesses?

This is a competency question again. By how you answer this, the interviewer can determine your self-esteem levels and confidence.

Write down how you would answer the question, below

This is again to check you experience level and your suitability. Each responsibility you talk about the interviewer will compare with the requirement they have and then judge whether you have the required skills and experience the job requires. So, you have to know the job description for the role you are applying for to ensure the right answer.

Write your answer below:

Why are you looking for a new position?

Here they are checking to see if you had issues at the other job. Is it just money you are looking for? What are your priorities? Are you the kind who they can retain for some time or are you going to jump ship soon? Even your ethical standards.

Why is there a gap in your resume?

They don't mind the gap but they just want to know whether you were still productive, if they need to train extra, or if you are out of touch.

What are your salary requirements?

Now this is the tricky question. If you want too less, they will think that you might not be good enough. If you ask too much, they will reject you because they cannot afford you. The best thing to do in these cases is to know exactly how much you want and how much will realistically be paid. Ask how much you want maybe a little higher. But it is always better to ask what does the company

offer to someone of my skills and competence? Usually a company does not mind paying a little higher salary if they know that the person can do the job. But always know how much you would want and why? And do not settle for less.

Write down below how much you want as salary and why:

Do you have any questions for us?

If they ask you this that means the interview is over and they have formed an opinion. This is a chance to show your interest, intelligence and hard work.

Some will have various backgrounds and various questions. Since you have already done your research on the company you can ask them company performance, revenues, policies, leaves etc. But always try to ask intelligently if you are asked this

Remember that an interview is very much like a sales meeting. Don't try to dominate the conversation, instead ask a lot of questions, smile a lot and express a positive attitude.

9 reasons why you might not get hired even if you have the qualifications:

1. You have presented yourself improperly and your skills are not shown in the light of what the job requires
2. You lack the attitude and may not be the right fit
3. You might not be available soon enough
4. You are lacking in adequate communication skills
5. Your salary requirements are higher than budgeted
6. Your history might show that you do not stick to a company for long
7. You might seem intimidating or a problem causer to the manager
8. You might be over qualified
9. Your references may not be credible enough

Common Interview Questions for practice

About the position

- Why did you apply for the position?
- How did you hear about this position?
- What do you know about our company?
- How do you think working with us will benefit you?
- Describe your ideal job.

Career Ambitions

- Tell me about your career goals.
- What are you looking for in a career?
- Do you have plans to gain further qualifications?
- Where do you see yourself in 5 years' time?
- Describe your ideal employer

Skills Check and Requirements Matching

- Why should we hire you?
- Mention any achievements you have had till date.
- Were there any challenges/problems you had in the previous jobs?
Explain how you handled it.
- Mention how you have used your skills in the previous job.

Personality

- Describe yourself
- What motivates you most?
- What are your strengths/weaknesses?
- How do you spend your spare time?
- Problem/Sticky Questions
- What salary are you looking for?
- Why are you looking for a different job?
- Why is there a gap in your work history?

Some questions to ask the Interviewer

- What kind of a person are you looking for?
- What are your expectations from the candidate?
- What is the management style and reporting policies?

Questions typically asked to students and fresh graduates.

- What made you choose your degree?
- What subjects do you enjoy?
- Is there a weak subject you had?
- What projects did you do?
- Tell me how your background suits this position.
- What are your career goals?
- Describe your ideal job.
- Where do you see yourself five years from now?
- Any plans of further studies?
- How do you spend your spare time?
- Mention any extracurricular activities you were involved in.
- Do you have any leadership experience?

Before the Interview

- Prepare by knowing what the job requires and how you are qualified to do the job.
- Research the company and the job description. Try to understand why they are hiring. Is it replacement, expansion, addition?
- Practice the questions and become comfortable answering the questions.

- Take time to relax see the interview as a discussion rather than a question answer session.
- During the Interview
- Smile
- Focus on your message and the employer needs not on yourself
- Give a strong, steady shake hand
- Pause before answering the questions.