



## Table of Contents:

Introduction .....	3
Do's .....	4
Don'ts .....	5
Preparation .....	6
Parts of the Process .....	7
Act I: The Entrance .....	7
Act II: The Performance .....	8
Act III: The Exit .....	16
Common questions with Tips .....	17
Practice .....	20

## Purpose

1. Predict interview questions
2. Prepare information to include in the answer
3. Practice answers to communicate effectively in English by exploring grammar patterns and structures, appropriate terminology and pronunciation
4. Polish up on interview etiquette

## “Five C’s” of a job interview

These adjectives describe an ideal candidate.

- ❖ Capable
- ❖ Confident
- ❖ Convincing
- ❖ Comfortable
- ❖ Concise

The Five C’s help students set goals for preparing and delivering their answers and also help their classmates give feedback when working together in class.

## **Job Interview Do's:**

1. Wear dress pants or skirt that reaches your knees. (Girls)
2. Pay attention to your personal grooming and cleanliness.
3. Know the exact time and location for your interview.
4. Arrive early; at least 10 minutes prior to the interview start time.
5. Treat all people you encounter with courtesy and respect. Administrative assistants and receptionists also have first impressions and frequently share their opinions with the interviewers.
6. Offer a firm handshake.
7. Show a positive attitude during the interview.
8. Maintain good eye contact during the interview.
9. Respond to questions and back up your statements about yourself with specific examples whenever possible. Ask for clarification if you don't understand a question.
10. Be thorough in your responses but don't ramble on forever. Be concise in your wording.
11. Be honest and be yourself. Dishonesty gets discovered.
12. Exhibit a positive attitude. The interviewer is evaluating you as a potential coworker.
13. Have intelligent questions prepared to ask the interviewer. The interview can be a two-way street. You can ask what kind of employee they are looking for and return with an explanation of how you fit that description.

## Job Interview Don'ts

1. Don't wear a blouse or dress too revealing. (girls)
2. Don't wear lots of jewelry.
3. Don't wear clothing with sequins, etc. It's better to be conservative. (girls)
4. Don't make negative comments about previous employers or others.
5. Don't falsify application materials or answers to interview questions.
6. Don't arrive late.
7. Don't give the impression you are only interested in salary; don't ask about salary and benefit issues until your interviewer brings up the subject.
8. Don't act as though you would take any job or are desperate for employment.
9. Don't be unprepared for typical interview questions. You may not be asked all of them in every interview, but being unprepared looks foolish.
10. Don't refer to the interviewer as "Dude!"
11. Don't go to extremes with your posture; don't slouch, and don't sit rigidly on the edge of your chair.
12. Don't chew gum.
13. Don't smoke or slurp any drinks you brought or are offered. Most work places are smoke-free environments and no-one wants to hear you slurp

## Vital things to prepare:

- Employer Information
  - Interviewers like candidates who are interested in their organization, not just any job.
  - Spend an hour reading the company website and take notes.
  - Mission, vision, and values
  - Hiring process
  - Benefits
- Annotate The Job Description
  - Review the responsibilities and qualifications in the job description. Compare them to your own skills and experiences.
  - Copy the job description to your document for easy reference, then add related comments and questions.
  - Your related experience
  - Gaps in your experience
  - Clarifying questions for the interviewer
- Answers To Common Questions
  - After a detailed review of the job description and your notes, prepare possible answers to common interview questions.
  - Use your notes and the STAR technique (Situation, Task, Action, Results) to write at least 5 stories from your experience related to the job description.
- Practice
  - Write down your answers and practice them out loud. This will help you remember them and pick the most relevant experience to share during the interview.
  - Collect questions from your notes
  - Group related questions

## **Parts of the Interview:**

**Act I: The Entrance**

**Act II: The Performance**

**Act III: The Exit**

### **Act I: The Entrance**

The Art of Meeting and Greeting

#### **Sample Conversation:**

**I:** Please, come in and take a seat.

**C:** Thank you, Sir/Madam.

**I:** Hello. What is your name?

**C:** Good morning, Mr./Mrs./Miss/ Last name of the interviewer. My name is your full name.

It's a pleasure/ Nice/Pleased to meet you.

**NB: first name first, last name last!**

**I:** Hello. Nice to meet you, too. Thank you for coming.

**C:** Thank you for having me.

**I:** How are you, today?

**C:** I'm very well, thank you. And you?

**I:** Fine, thanks. Would you like a cup of coffee or something to drink before we begin?

**C:** No, thank you. I'm fine.

**I:** Ok, then. Let's get started.

## **Act II: The Performance**

Core of the Interview

### **Question Categories:**

#### **A. Personal Questions**

1. Questions about you

- Tell us something about yourself.
- How would you describe yourself?
- Can you talk to us about yourself?

#### **Sample answer:**

My name is Jane Doe. I come from Mexico, but I live/am currently living in Italy.

I have conferred a BSc in Geology and hold an MSc degree in Physics. I am currently working towards a PhD in Geophysics. (I graduated in Geology from the University of Bari, in 2010)

My qualifications also include knowledge of petrol research and 3 years' experience in geological surveying.

I am single/married//separated/ divorced. I have one/two/three.... children.

#### **Useful Grammar:**

Present Simple to express permanent situations, habits, routines, facts

- Present Continuous to express temporary situations, actions in course
- Present Perfect Simple/Continuous to express: – general experiences in the past without detailing when and where – experiences which began in the past, but are still in course (unfinished actions)
- Past Simple to describe finished actions in the past at a given, specific, or implied moment and place.

2. Question about your strengths

What are/would you consider to be your greatest strengths?

- What would you say your strongest assets are?
- What are your most positive aspects?

**Include 3-4 positive character traits:**

trustworthy	tolerant	hard-working
honest	open-minded	reliable
persistent	adaptable	friendly
determined	flexible	loyal

**Include 3-4 proficiency traits:**

expert	competent	mediator
detail-oriented	multi-tasker	quick-learner
team-player	achiever	Leader
problem-solver	initiator	Efficient

**Sample answer:**

I would say I am an honest, reliable, hard-working person. I also possess a positive outlook towards my profession and life in general. People say I am friendly and good at giving advice.

I have very good leadership qualities, as well as organizational and time management skills, but my greatest strengths are my flexibility and ability to effectively handle multiple projects and meet deadlines.

**Useful Patterns:**

- I am...
- I have/possess
- My greatest strengths are/include...
- I would (I'd) say I am....
- I would (I'd) define/describe/depict myself as....
- I consider myself to be....
- I think/believe I am...
- People say I am....

### 3. Questions about your weaknesses

#### Sample questions:

- What are your greatest/strongest weaknesses?
- Which aspects or areas of yourself are you improving or would like to improve?

#### Sample Answer:

I am always working on improving my communications skills to be a more effective presenter. I recently joined Toastmasters which I find very helpful.

Sometimes, I have trouble delegating duties to others. I've since taken courses in time management and learned more effective delegation techniques.

#### Useful Grammar:

Linking words for contrasting:

- but, however, while, whereas, nevertheless

I am a little shy, but I am taking a recital course to improve my confidence

### 4. Questions about hobbies/interests

#### Sample questions:

- What are your hobbies/interests?
- Do you practice any sports?
- What do you do your free/leisure time?
- Do you belong to any clubs or associations?
- Do you do any volunteer work?

#### Sample Answers:

Well, I really enjoy travelling because it gives me an opportunity to appreciate new cultures. In the evenings, I unwind by playing the piano.

I am also keen on speed-walking and playing volleyball with friends.

I'm a member of the Rotary Club International where I put forth my professional aptitudes to serve others.

At weekends, I volunteer with the Autism Society where I spend time with children.

**Useful Grammar:**

Verbs to express:

- interests: like, love, enjoy, be fond of, be passionate about, be keen on, be interested in, be active in
- sports: practice/do/play
- musical instruments: play

**B. Qualifications, Work experience and Career goals**

5. Questions about the job you are applying for

Sample questions:

- Why are you interested in working here?
- Why have you applied for this post?
- What do you expect from this job?

Sample answer:

It would be a privilege to work in a reputable company such as yours. When I read about the opening, I found that my skills and qualifications matched the requirements, and I could make use of the experience gained in the past 5 years. Furthermore, I believe your company will allow me to grow both professionally and as a person.

**Useful Grammar:**

Verbs:

- be interested/attracted (by), appeal

Linking words to give reason:

- because, as, since, for

## 6. Question about hiring you

### Sample questions:

- Why should we hire you?
- Give us a good reason for taking you on.
- Why do you think you are the best person for this position?

### Sample answers:

- I think I am a great match for this position. My degree in Math coupled with 3 years of experience working in the field of computational analysis helped me to improve productivity by 30% . I believe I can do the same for your organization and would be a great addition to your team.
- As I am a fresher, I have theoretical knowledge, but I can work hard and learn the practical aspects quickly. Moreover, I will make a great effort to fulfill my duties and responsibilities and contribute to the good progress of the organization.

### Useful Grammar:

Conditional form and sentences to express:

- the likelihood of your working for them If I am hired, I I can/could/will contribute significantly to the progress of your company.
- the possibility of your working for them If I were hired, I would make a great effort to learn quickly

### Linking forms to state opinions:

- |                              |                               |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| • I believe/think that I.... | • I'd say that...             |
| • In my opinion, ...         | • I have no doubt that...     |
| • According to me,.....      | • I am sure/confident that... |
| • In my experience,....      |                               |

## 7. Question about what you know about the company

### Sample questions:

- What do you know about our company?
- Are you familiar with our company's current projects and future prospects?

### Sample answer:

I know it is one of the fastest growing companies in Europe and has many branches in different countries. The work environment is pleasant and people feel proud to be a part of the company.

I have read it provides full support to its employees on a professional front and offers many career growing opportunities. I know it is currently working on a large-scale project in Bahrain and that its major competitor is SA GeoSci.

### Useful grammar:

Superlative and comparative forms for comparing/contrasting:

I know it is one of the most successful companies in Europe with greater appeal to young prospective employees than other similar firms.

## 8. Questions about current and past work experience

### Sample questions (current employment):

- Who is your current employer?
- What are your duties and responsibilities?
- Why are you leaving your current job?

### Sample answer:

I am currently employed at SA GeoSci and have been working for them for the last four years. I have received great training and education there. I have been entrusted with international job assignments and a 10-member team staff.

However, I feel that the time is right for me to transition the outstanding skills and experience I have obtained there to a different job market, and I am confident I can bring these same skills to your organization.

**Sample questions (past employment):**

- Have you worked for a similar company before?
- Tell us something about your previous employer(s)?
- What were your duties and responsibilities?
- How long did you work for them?
- What major challenges did you face?
- Why did you leave your last job?
- What did you like and dislike about your former employment?

**Sample answer:**

I (have) worked for 3 years with the Saudi Arabia Gas Company where I am/was Surveying Director and am/was responsible for/in charge of conducting research on potential petrol reservoirs.

The average work-week consists(ed) of 38 hours, but I often put in extra hours to complete assignments and meet deadlines.

I enjoy(ed) this job quite a lot and my employer treats/ed staff with respect and always rewards/ed accomplishments.

However, I now feel it is time for me to move on and acquire further work experience in different fields ( or: I was laid off/ made redundant because the company relocated/ downsized/ needed to cut costs.

9. Questions about career goals

**Sample questions:**

- Where do you see yourself five years from now/in five years' time?
- What are your career goals?
- How do plan to achieve your career goals?

**Sample answer:**

Within 5 years, I would like to become the very best geologist your company has on staff. I want to work towards becoming the expert that others rely on. Hopefully, this will allow me to take on greater responsibilities with the company if the opportunity arises. I am also working towards additional certifications in the field to enhance my career prospects.

**Useful grammar:**

- Conditional Form to express future aspirations:

I would like to become Surveying Director.

- Future Simple to express future aspirations:

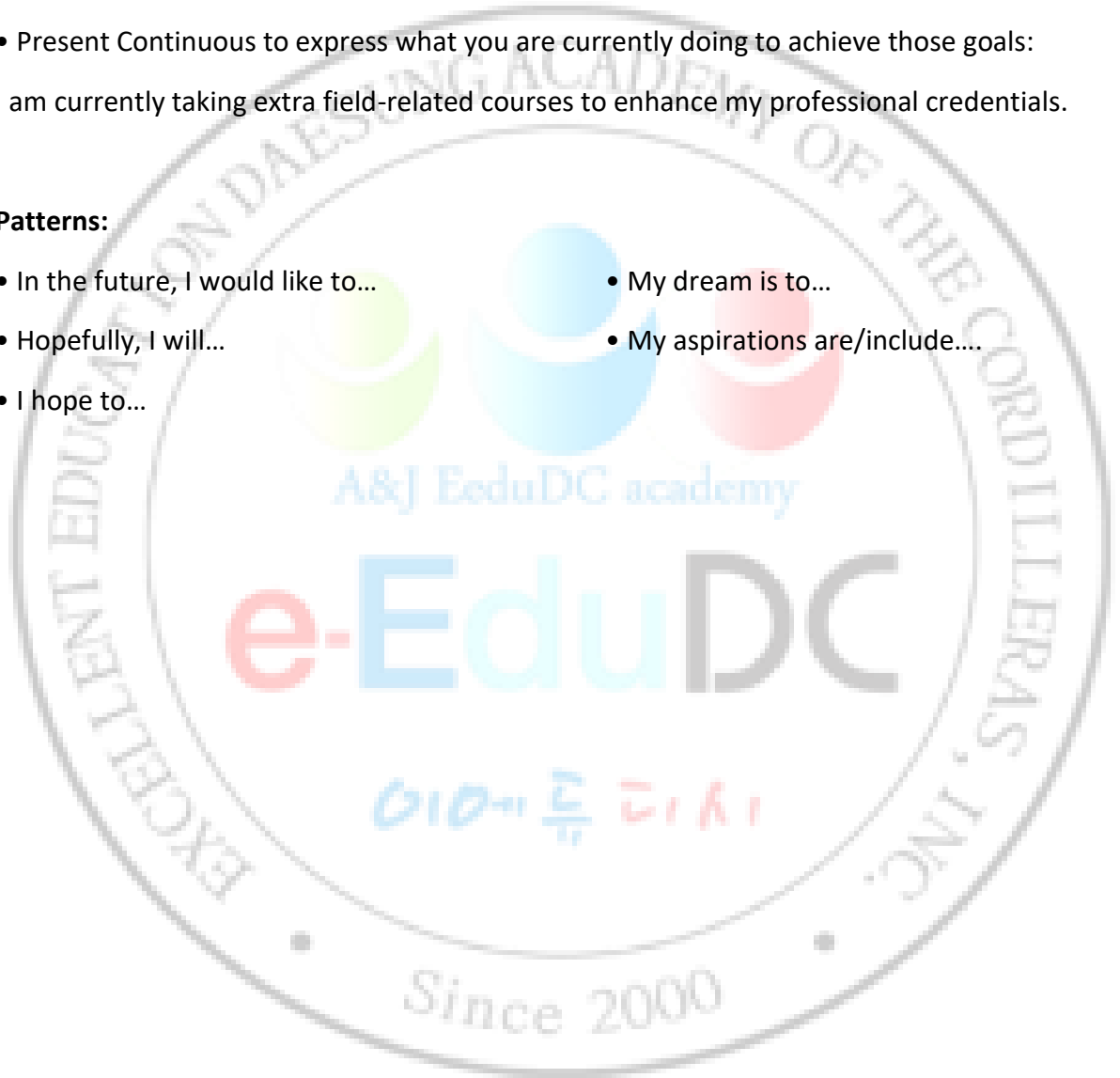
I hope I will hold a high-ranking position in the company.

- Present Continuous to express what you are currently doing to achieve those goals:

I am currently taking extra field-related courses to enhance my professional credentials.

**Patterns:**

- In the future, I would like to...
- Hopefully, I will...
- I hope to...
- My dream is to...
- My aspirations are/include....



### **Act III: The Exit**

#### Thanking and Taking Leave

##### A. Your questions about the job and company

###### **Sample questions:**

Interviewer:

- Do you have any questions for us?
- Is there anything you'd like to know about us?

Candidate (prepare 4/5 questions):

- How would you describe the company's management style?
- Is this a new position?
- What would my duties include?
- Is travel expected in this job position?
- What are the prospects for growth and advancement?

##### B. Thanking and asking about next steps

###### 1. At the end of the interview

- Thank the interviewers for their time.
- Ask about the next steps and when you can expect a response from them.

###### **Sample answers:**

I would like to thank you for having given me the opportunity to participate in this job interview and for making me feel at ease. I have found the experience constructive and very interesting.

When do you expect you will notify selected candidates?

If I am/were offered the job, when will/would I start?

# Ten Commonly Asked Interview Questions and Tips on How to Answer:

## ❖ **Tell me about yourself.**

Tip - Talk about a couple of your key achievements and the interviewer will likely select an accomplishment and ask you to talk more about it.

## ❖ **What is your greatest strength?**

Tip - Figure out what your number one strength or skill is, then talk briefly about it and provide a good example. Before going into an interview, write down several of your top strengths and examples of each.

## ❖ **Can you describe a situation in your past where you learned from a mistake?**

Tip - The best mistakes to share are those from which you learned something. Use your mistakes to show how you have matured and grown.

## ❖ **What is the most difficult situation you have ever faced?**

Tip - Pick an example in which you successfully resolved a tough situation. Tell your story briefly but try to reveal as many good qualities as possible. Your interviewer wants to hear about qualities such as perseverance, good judgment and maturity.

## ❖ **Is there anything you would like to improve about yourself?**

Tip - Pick a weakness (for example, not being comfortable with public speaking or even oral presentations in the class), then show how you're working to improve it (being part of a debating team). Your goal here is to provide a short answer that satisfies the interviewer.

## ❖ **What is the most important thing you are looking for in a job?**

Tip - Figure out what you want most in a job. You might value challenge, good working conditions, or friendly co-workers. Talk about one or two items and explain why they are important to you.

❖ **What are your career goals?**

Tip - The interviewer likes to see if you are a person that plans your future and if you might be someone that would meet the company's needs after you finish school. Your task is to talk about the goals that you think the company can help you achieve. You score points if you leave the impression, you are a growth-oriented person with realistic expectations. As a teenager, you may be working to earn spending money or to pay for a car and gas. That shows initiative and planning.

❖ **What motivates you?**

Tip - Challenge, creativity, success, opportunity and personal growth are most frequently mentioned. You can also mention specific skills that you are motivated to use, such as problem solving, decision-making, listening, writing, speaking, planning or counseling people.

❖ **Why would you like to work for us?**

Tip - This is a great opportunity to impress the interviewer with what you know about their organization. Talk about the positives of their organization.

❖ **Why should I hire you?**

Tip - This is a great opportunity to sell you. Talk about your strengths and how they fit the needs of the company. You can briefly talk about skills or strengths that haven't already been discussed.

## INTERVIEW QUESTIONS:

Answer each of the following questions and prepare for a “mock” interview.

1. Tell me about yourself.
2. What is your greatest strength?
3. Can you describe a situation in your past where you learned from a mistake?
4. What is the most difficult situation you have ever faced?
5. Is there anything you would like to improve about yourself?
6. What is the most important thing you are looking for in a job?
7. What are your career goals?
8. What motivates you?
9. Why would you like to work for us?
10. Why should I hire you?



## Practice with different questions:

### Basic interview questions:

- Tell me about yourself.
- What are your strengths?
- What are your weaknesses?
- Why do you want this job?
- Where would you like to be in your career five years from now?
- What's your ideal company?
- What attracted you to this company?
- Why should we hire you?
- What did you like least about your last job?
- When were you most satisfied in your job?
- What can you do for us those other candidates can't?
- What were the responsibilities of your last position?
- Why are you leaving your present job?
- What do you know about this industry?
- What do you know about our company?
- Are you willing to relocate?
- Do you have any questions for me?

### Behavioral interview questions:

- What was the last project you led, and what was its outcome?
- Give me an example of a time that you felt you went above and beyond the call of duty at work.
- Can you describe a time when your work was criticized?
- Have you ever been on a team where someone was not pulling their own weight? How did you handle it?
- Tell me about a time when you had to give someone difficult feedback. How did you handle it?
- What is your greatest failure, and what did you learn from it?

- How do you handle working with people who annoy you?
- If I were your supervisor and asked you to do something that you disagreed with, what would you do?
- What was the most difficult period in your life, and how did you deal with it?
- Give me an example of a time you did something wrong. How did you handle it?
- Tell me about a time where you had to deal with conflict on the job.
- If you were at a business lunch and you ordered a rare steak and they brought it to you well done, what would you do?
- If you found out your company was doing something against the law, like fraud, what would you do?
- What assignment was too difficult for you, and how did you resolve the issue?
- What's the most difficult decision you've made in the last two years and how did you come to that decision?
- Describe how you would handle a situation if you were required to finish multiple tasks by the end of the day, and there was no conceivable way that you could finish them.

**Salary questions:**

- What salary are you seeking?
- What's your salary history?
- If I were to give you this salary you requested but let you write your job description for the next year, what would it say?

**Career development questions:**

- What are you looking for in terms of career development?
- How do you want to improve yourself in the next year?
- What kind of goals would you have in mind if you got this job?
- If I were to ask your last supervisor to provide you additional training or exposure, what would she suggest?

### Getting started questions:

- How would you go about establishing your credibility quickly with the team?
- How long will it take for you to make a significant contribution?
- What do you see yourself doing within the first 30 days of this job?
- If selected for this position, can you describe your strategy for the first 90 days?

### More questions about you:

- How would you describe your work style?
- What would be your ideal working environment?
- What do you look for in terms of culture—structured or entrepreneurial?
- Give examples of ideas you've had or implemented.
- What techniques and tools do you use to keep yourself organized?
- If you had to choose one, would you consider yourself a big-picture person or a detail-oriented person?
- Tell me about your proudest achievement.
- Who was your favorite manager and why?
- What do you think of your previous boss?
- Was there a person in your career who really made a difference?
- What kind of personality do you work best with and why?
- What are you most proud of?
- What do you like to do?
- What are your lifelong dreams?
- What do you ultimately want to become?
- What is your personal mission statement?
- What are three positive things your last boss would say about you?
- What negative thing would your last boss say about you?
- What three-character traits would your friends use to describe you?
- What are three positive character traits you don't have?
- If you were interviewing someone for this position, what traits would you look for?
- List five words that describe your character.

- Who has impacted you most in your career and how?
- What is your greatest fear?
- What is your biggest regret and why?
- What's the most important thing you learned in school?
- Why did you choose your major?
- What will you miss about your present/last job?
- What is your greatest achievement outside of work?
- What are the qualities of a good leader? A bad leader?
- Do you think a leader should be feared or liked?
- How do you feel about taking no for an answer?
- How would you feel about working for someone who knows less than you?
- How do you think I rate as an interviewer?
- Tell me one thing about yourself you wouldn't want me to know.
- Tell me the difference between good and exceptional.
- What kind of car do you drive?
- There's no right or wrong answer, but if you could be anywhere in the world right now, where would you be?
- What's the last book you read?
- What magazines do you subscribe to?
- What's the best movie you've seen in the last year?
- What would you do if you won the lottery?
- Who are your heroes?
- What do you like to do for fun?
- What do you do in your spare time?
- What is your favorite memory from childhood?