

Interviewing

**911th Airlift Wing
Family Support office**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Types of Interviews	1
Information Exchange Questions.....	3
Research.....	3
Research Information.....	4
Setting Up the Interview	5
The Interview	5
Interview Questions & Answers	7
Appearance	10
Negotiating Salary	11
Negotiating Benefits	12
References.....	13
Legalities.....	14
Interviewing the Interviewer.....	15
Post Interview Tips	15
Do's & Don'ts for Interviewing.....	16
Interview Evaluation.....	18
Sample Thank You Letter.....	19
Sample Follow-Up Letter	20
Sample Letter Rejecting an Offer	21
Sample Letter of Acceptance	22

CONGRATULATIONS

You have reached the last step in finding yourself a job. Getting an interview does not mean you have the job. It means the prospective employer liked your resume or application form, and now they want to meet you in person to see if you are as good as you said you were. The interview is the most crucial step in the job search process, so it is very important to be well prepared. In this

book you will find some helpful hints on how to make an excellent impression when faced with several methods of interviewing.

TYPES OF INTERVIEWS

Interviews can be classified into five types: **screening, selection, group, serial,** and **information exchange** (although these are occasionally known by different names).

The Screening Interview

Inappropriate applicants are “screened out” from becoming potential candidates. These interviews are considered preliminary discussions, and it is expected that many applicants will not be called back for a second interview. Feel free to ask general questions to get a feel for the job and the workplace but pay attention to the interviewer for any signs that things should be wrapping up.

Telephone Interviews

Occasionally a recruiter conducts an interview by telephone. Two common situations are when a national company is hiring for a regional office, or when the applicant is being recruited from another city and can’t leave home for an interview. Make sure you have all of your employment information near the phone so you can refer to your resume or other documents as needed.

The Selection Interview

This is the critical interview during which the employer will evaluate your work and school history, your determination and goals, what motivates you, your potential, and so on. The interviewer’s perception of your personality will be determined by what you say and do. It will be the most detailed and in-depth interview you have. This type of interview is probing and wide-ranging.

You are now being compared against other candidates with similar backgrounds. This is your opportunity to impress the interviewer with the quality of your questions and your comments about the company. **YOU HAVE TO MAKE YOURSELF STAND OUT FROM ALL THE OTHER APPLICANTS.** This is the time for you to ask about the goals of the company and department, the company’s philosophy, the job description and how it might be enhanced. You might be asked about your attitude regarding specific work situations and how you relate to co-workers and supervisors. You may also be asked to state your long term goals.

It is important that when you leave, both you and the interviewer feel that everything was said that needed to be said, and that you have all the information you need to make a decision about taking the job if it is offered to you.

The Group Interview

For some individuals, a group interview is the most frightening. You should prepare for this interview just as you would any other. Remember, you will be asked questions by several people (usually people you would be working with), so they may not be asked in any particular sequence; they might not even be related. This method of interviewing may easily derail your train of thought, so you should prepare yourself mentally beforehand, and concentrate on relaxing. Interviews are conducted in this manner to see how you react under the pressure of talking to several personalities at one time.

Serial Interviews

This is simply a series of interviews of varying types with different people. It may start with a screening interview with a recruiter in the human resources department, and then move on to a selection interview with the vice president of that division, for instance. You might then be sent to the supervisor of the department in which you hope to work. You may be asked to meet some of the people or a group of people from other departments with whom you'd work.

The important thing to remember is that you may be asked the same questions over and over again. Each person will think their question is an original, however, so you must remain fresh and stimulating throughout the entire process and make each meeting seem like it is the first.

Information Exchange

An information exchange is somewhat the opposite of a screening interview in that the applicant sets up the interview to screen the company as a potential place to work. If you want to change fields or careers, call potential employers to ask whether someone there would be willing to meet with you on an exploratory basis. This is one of the best ways to find a position, even though nothing may be open at the time of the interview. If you leave a good impression with the company, it is possible that when something does come open, they will remember you.

You will most definitely have to do your homework if you are going for an information exchange. You should ask a wide range of questions about the company and types of positions available. YOU asked for the interview and will be taking up their valuable time, so it's up to you to keep the conversation going.

Convey as much positive information as possible about yourself and your skills in order to create a favorable overall impression. If you sense you are taking up too much of that person's time, wind up what you have to say and thank him or her for the meeting. Make sure you have a copy of your resume with you in case the person you are talking to shows an interest in you. See possible questions below.

INFORMATION EXCHANGE QUESTIONS

- * What 3 things does the company want to be known for?
- * What is the company mission or philosophy in regards to clients, services, products, employees?
- * Where does this company fit in the industry?

- * How is your organization structured?
- * What are your services, products, sales volume, market share, assets/debt ratio?
- * How many employees, branches, divisions?
- * What special interest areas is the company into? What special projects?
- * What direction is the company going in the future? New interests?
- * Why do you like working here? Why are you in the industry?
- * What advice would you give someone in my position?
- * How did you network? What advice would you give me in job search?
- * How would I get into the industry? What qualities would it take?
- * What are the characteristics of the ideal candidate for this company (not focused on a particular job)?
- * What qualifications skills, education, experience are needed?
- * Can I stay in touch? (Call back every 2 months).
- * Don't ask for a job!

At the end, if the employer says there is a job open:

- * May I have a copy of the job description?
- * May I leave my resume & cover letter?

RESEARCH

It is very important to research the company you are going to interview for, beforehand. If you come into an interview armed with information it will enable you to ask intelligent questions and supply specifics about how you can benefit that company. It will also leave the impression that you are both well informed and willing to take initiative.

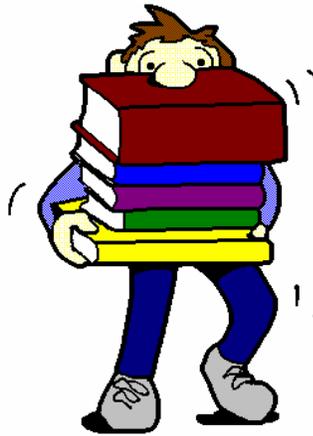
There are different ways to obtain useful information. If it's a large corporation, familiarize yourself with its products or services. Many organizations have brochures and publicity material available to the public, or you can use the reference desk of your public library to find articles that have been written in newspapers and magazines. For current financial information, try to obtain an annual report. This may also outline a company's goals for the next year. There is also a lot of information on the internet about different companies.

Try talking to an employee or former employee of the company. You can learn a lot from these people, but you should keep in mind that what you're told may well be colored by his/her own experiences (possibly negative).

Collect information that gives you a sense of the company's goals and identity, and that will prompt you to ask pertinent questions during the interview. These questions can cover everything from the background of the company to its plans for the coming years. These should always be general questions about the company, not ones that relate to you personally.

The questions listed below may help you to gather most of the information you need.

RESEARCH INFORMATION



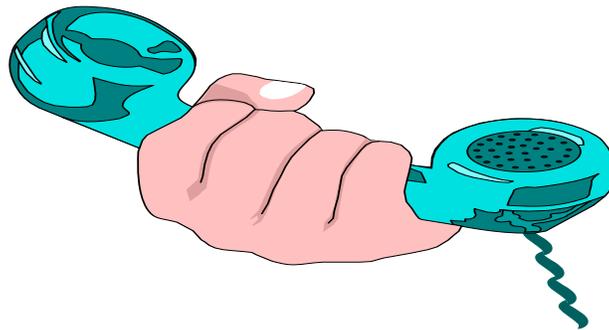
- 0 What is the product produced or the services rendered?
 - 0 Where are the products sold and to whom?
 - 0 How many years has the company been in business?
 - 0 How has the focus of the company shifted since its foundation?
 - 0 Has management been fairly stable or has there been excessive turnover?
 - 0 Is the company publicly or privately owned?
 - 0 Has the company remained stable and strong or does it fluctuate often? What affects the stock prices?
- 0 Have there been any takeover attempts of the company?
 - 0 Are the products or services seasonal? Are employees hired accordingly?
 - 0 Has the company realized a profit from the product or services in the last year? In the last five years?
 - 0 Has the company laid off employees in the last three years? Why?
 - 0 Is the company part of a conglomerate?
 - 0 Is the company highlighted in the press? Is it positive or negative press?
 - 0 What new ventures are the company planning to undertake?
 - 0 Is the company based solely in the United States or does it have interests overseas?
 - 0 Is the company part of a growing industry? And what are the projections for the industry?

SETTING UP THE INTERVIEW

When you arrange an appointment for your interview make sure you treat the caller with courtesy and respect. Professionalism and civility in the workplace are very important to the smooth operation and reputation of an establishment, and your interview process is a good place to start!

Don't forget to ask for any information you may need in order to arrive at your interview on time. Good directions and parking instructions will save a great deal of time if you are unfamiliar with the area. Demonstrating punctuality is a good step in the right direction towards a positive evaluation of your reliability. Consider going over the route a few days before the interview at the same time you would be going to the interview so you know how much traffic to expect and how long it takes.

Always call to confirm your appointment the day before.



THE INTERVIEW

Once you have arrived at your interview location (early, of course), you may be required to fill out an application form of some kind. It may be lengthy, and contain information redundant to your resume. If possible pick up an application ahead of time so you can fill it out neatly and completely at home.

Once you've met the interviewer or recruiter and sat down to begin the interview, they will likely begin with some small talk. This is meant to be an icebreaker, to give you a chance to relax if you are nervous and to make you feel comfortable with the interviewer. If small talk drags on help to focus the conversation by bringing them back to the skills needed for the position.

Listen carefully so that you pick up important information. Let the interviewer guide the course of the conversation if it appears he/she has a definite agenda. Though you'll be anxious to provide positive information about yourself, try not to be so busy rehearsing what you want to say that you miss what is being said. Focus on what the boss and company need and describe how you fulfill those needs.

From time to time, paraphrase their question in your answer – this shows you’re listening to them. Check back to make sure you’re on the right track with skills and experience. Speak in accomplishments – answer questions by bringing up your skills and accomplishments in those areas.

After you have answered a question completely don’t let a pause by the interviewer unnerve you. If you feel you’ve answered the question completely let the interviewer direct further conversation.

Remember, the interviewer may actually have less experience in interviewing than you do and you may have to guide the discussion.

Telling the Truth

You should always tell the truth during your interview. You just can’t sound as confident when discussing what you don’t really know. Inevitably, follow-up questions will get you in deeper and deeper, either exposing your lie, or setting you up for a different problem later. You may be convincing *now*, but if you start the job, you’ll need to deliver eventually.

Most applications state that falsifying information can lead to immediate dismissal from your new job. Don’t lie; it will come back to haunt you in some way.

Answering Questions On Problem Areas In Your Background

- First of all, you must anticipate what problem questions may be asked and then decide how you will handle them. Review embarrassing questions you have been asked in previous situations or interviews such as reasons for being discharged, personality conflicts with other personnel, lack of transportation or child care. State, in a positive manner, what you have learned from the situation or how the situation has been resolved.
- Emphasize your ability to get the job done, quickly and effectively. If you made a mistake in you’re past job, admit it; and let the interviewer know clearly that you will not make the same mistake twice.

Preparing for Questions

There is no way to prepare for every question that you’ll be asked, but you can have an idea of how you’ll answer general and commonly asked questions. Sample questions on the following pages will give you a basic idea of what may be asked of you. Don’t memorize these questions, or over-rehearse them. In fact, your interviewer might have a very different set of questions that are more specific to the job you are applying for, and you don’t want to sound like you are reciting from a script, especially if it’s for the wrong play!

Don’t fall into a common trap for a lot of people by using words or phrases that have become cliché in the job market: for example, “I’m a people person,” or “I’m interested in working where there is opportunity for growth.” These statements may be true, but conveying the

meaning in a more original and helpful way will be well appreciated. Try to be more concrete; offer examples that illustrate *how* you acted on a good interpersonal basis with others by telling the interviewer that you listened constructively to customers, or that you were a part of a successful cooperative work group. Or demonstrate *how* you've taken advantage of growth opportunities in the past by taking on special projects or training that have enhanced your skills.

Know Yourself!

As you review your background in the following areas, it will prepare you to answer the interview questions with self-confidence and conviction. The better you know yourself, the more relaxed you will be during the interview and the interviewer will receive a positive impression from you. Think about your **interests, abilities, education, experience, values, strengths, weaknesses** and **goals** and how they relate to the job.

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

- *Tell me about yourself.* Concentrate on your relevant work history, qualifications and skills.
- *Why do you want to work for us?* Be sincere and make your answers personal, but incorporate the knowledge you have about the company into your response.
- *Why did you leave your last job?* Possible answers: To move ahead in my field; my project was completed; reduction in force; relocation; to pursue work related training; financial advancement; promotion; to devote some time for self-development; to prepare for pursuit of a new kind of work.
- *How long do you expect to work for us?* Assuming you like the job opportunity, you might simply say that you want to stay as long as possible.
- *What are the most important factors you require in a job?* Think ahead on this one. What are your job values or what do you get job satisfaction from. Do not apply for jobs that do not meet your job values.
- *What do you consider your greatest strengths? Weaknesses?* Toot your own horn. Since many weaknesses are simply strengths carried to extreme pick some of your strengths and turn them into a weakness or show how you have triumphed over a particular weakness. "At my last job I was having trouble managing my time so I took a course on time management. I started putting into practice some of the techniques I learned and found that my work went much smoother."
- *Where do you want to be in the next five to ten years?* Since interviewers use this to get you to open up and talk, don't let it overwhelm you. Many folks who have been employed for years do not have long term goals. Possible responses to this question: "It has always been very important to me to do the best job possible and to continue growing and achieving."

Therefore in five to ten years I plan on moving steadily ahead.” **Or** “I would like to be in your job because I know you’ll be moving up the ladder.”

- *Salary Questions.* Salary should not really be discussed until you are in the selection interview and it is obvious they are interested in you. (Refer to Negotiating Salary section.)
- *Based on the number of places that you have lived, I presume your spouse is in the military? I do not regularly hire military family members, why should I hire you?*

One approach: “You are concerned that I will not be able to fulfill the requirements of the job. I understand that.” Be prepared to offer convincing reasons why your skills and attributes would be valuable to the employer. To make the best case, you might go to the local chamber or to the economic development commissions to check out statistics on job turn over. Spouses of military members often stay on the job longer than local people as military spouses often view the job as lasting the duration of the assignment.

- *How far do you think you can go in our company? Why?* “Eventually I would like to work my way up to _____. Of course, this will depend on a number of factors. I think the environment in this company is conducive to the development of its employees. I’m interested in contributing to its goals and know my efforts will be recognized.”
- *Why should we hire you?* This is where you need to enumerate your skills and how the company would benefit from them.
- *Can you work under pressure and deadlines?* “I’ve been particularly successful at working under pressure. For example, in my last position as (job title and description of a pressure situation).”
- *What kinds of people do you dislike?* “People who say one thing and do another. Differences of opinion will occur but honestly discussing them with another person can go a long way toward resolving them.”
- *Why didn’t you do better in school?* I guess I was involved with other activities and growing up. “Since I’ve started working I have always used training to better myself and improve my job performance.”
- *Why did you change jobs so frequently?* Make sure you have a plausible reason for each move and keep it positive.
- *How long would you stay with our company?* “From all I’ve been able to find out, this should be for a long time. The personality of this company appears to match my own, and I think the relationship would work out well.”
- *Are you willing to relocate?* If the answer is Yes, show what you know about the company by indicating which of their locations you might be willing to move to. **Or:** “Not unless the

opportunity is really exceptional, since it would mean uprooting my family. However, I 'd like to keep my options open. If the potential is there, I'll consider it seriously."

- *Are you willing to travel?* Give an honest answer as to how much traveling you would be willing to do. Take this opportunity to ask how much is usually required.
- *What do you think of your previous boss or What did you like most/least about your previous jobs?* Both of these questions need to be answered in a positive manner. Negative comments about former supervisors or jobs may lead the interviewer to believe that you would say negative things about him or the company.
- *Would you describe a few situations in which your work was criticized?* "I really can't recall major criticisms. If anything, I have been complimented on it regularly." "I would accept any constructive input on how to do my job better."
- *What was the last book you read?* If you are not an avid non-fiction reader, read a popular how to book to discuss.
- *What was the last movie you saw?* If you are not a regular moviegoer, mention a popular uncontroversial movie on television.
- *What interests you most about this position?* "The opportunity it presents for someone to (indicate your skills again)."
- *Are you creative? Give an example.* Yes. There's almost a job that cannot be done better. For example, in my last position, I _____.
- *Have you hired/supervised people before? What do you look for?* Make sure you have examples ready. There is a possibility you will be given a situational supervisory question to answer especially, if you are applying for a supervisory position. Make sure you have thought about your supervisory methods and philosophies.
- *May we contact your present employer?* Yes, after we get together. For obvious reasons, I'd appreciate the contact not be made until we've agreed to a position. It is likely I'll receive a counter-offer and I would prefer to be the first to tell them. They would appreciate that, I'm sure.

Consider applying for temporary, part-time work to support yourself while you search for a job tailor-made for you. Many great job offers have come out of temporary jobs, and you may feel less desperate if you are earning a little money and occupying your time while you wait and look for the kind of job you really want and would be happy with.

APPEARANCE

As you get ready for your interviews, you'll probably be trying to anticipate everything you want to say, and how you'll act, but the first impression you make will be how you look. Before you even have the chance to open your mouth, you will have been evaluated automatically by the interviewer as to how you appear. Your appearance will be affected by two things; most importantly, what you are wearing, and also how your body language may be advertising certain qualities about you.

Dress

While you research a company, either through acquaintances or other references, you may receive some sort of impression of what the dress policies may be. You may be informed that the prevailing attitude is casual, or that everyone is very conservative. Either way, your interview is an important occasion, and you should dress accordingly. *Whatever* you may learn beforehand, the best rule is to overdress and lean toward the conservative. If it turns out that jeans and T-shirts are standard, or that you will be given a uniform, you can dress the part once you have the job.

Men should wear a suit and tie. The suit doesn't have to be dark, three-piece, or pinstriped, but it should be somewhat conservative in color and style. There are certain times when extremely conservative suits would be appropriate, like at a law firm or a financial institution.

Women have more choices in dress so they can make more mistakes. Suits and conservative dresses are best for women. Avoid extremes in length, color and frills. You can personalize your clothes with tasteful understated jewelry and accessories; like earrings and a scarf with a skirt, blouse and suit jacket, or a necklace and dress. Stay away from miniskirts, sweaters, anything overly trendy or casual, and gaudy jewelry. Keep perfumes/colognes to a minimum.

You need to look professional, confident, and competent. The idea is to look like you belong in the organization, to suggest you are ready to work.

Decide the evening before what you will wear, press it, and make sure it looks neat and tidy. Comfort is as important as image in dressing for the interview. Avoid the temptation to wear new shoes on the interview day. You don't want to be distracted by pinching shoes or uncomfortable clothing: you want to concentrate on the interview.

Try to think ahead to the interview. If there is a possibility you will be required to perform, make sure you go to the interview prepared. For instance, if you are applying for a position as a welder, you may be asked to demonstrate your skills on the spot, so you should take your work clothes and tools with you to the interview.

Body Language

A firm handshake is the first actual contact you will make with your interviewer. Make sure that it is a confident impression; a cold, clammy hand won't be, so make sure that your hand is dry, even if it means keeping a napkin in a pocket! Accompany your firm handshake with a genuine smile and direct eye contact as you greet them; appearing calm and comfortable despite whatever

inner thoughts or nervousness you may be experiencing. The interviewer will get a nonverbal message that you are a confident and straightforward person.

It is important to consider your body language throughout the entire interview. Remember to sit in natural positions, though not as if you are on your own couch at home. Avoid the habit of crossing your arms tightly across your chest. This will be perceived as a sign of fear, nerves, or a tendency to close people out.

Make eye contact during the interview as well. If you notice that you look down a lot, fight this inclination and make an effort to look at your interviewer. This will indicate that you are paying attention, and that you are not timid or shy.

You may wish to try a few practice interviews with a friend. Many people have nervous habits that they are unaware of. What do you do unconsciously? Maybe you pick at your hair or nails, or twitch your foot, or perhaps you say “um,” a great deal. Have your friend point out any unwanted habits, and then find ways to avoid them. Fold your hands, keep both feet on the floor, practice speaking--do *whatever* is necessary to appear calm and professional.

NEGOTIATING SALARY

Many people find this to be the most uncomfortable part of an interview, but it doesn't have to be that way. There is nothing to be ashamed of when discussing your salary, you will deserve one if you get the job, and you should not be afraid to discuss it.

Prepare for your interview with a few figures in mind: what you're currently making, what you would like to make, and the minimum you'll accept. Make sure that you are familiar with the salary associated with a given position. Your experiences in prior jobs may help, but also keep in mind that wages vary a great deal depending on where you are geographically. It is important to do a little homework otherwise you may be quite embarrassed if you ask for a salary ridiculously higher than the one they are prepared to offer. You also don't want to cheat yourself, and settle for something less if you are moving from a rural area to a large city or a state like New York where the wage scale may be higher than what you are used to.

- In case you get a salary question during the initial interview (usually this doesn't happen initially) make certain you have calculated the rock bottom amount you can live on, as well as what you believe the top pay for this field is. If this subject comes up too early in the interview try to deflect it by saying, “Before we discuss salary I would really like to make sure we have talked about all of the skills you are looking for and how I can fit your need.” Find out about salary ranges in your area by:
 - Asking your contacts
 - Calling personnel departments and asking about ranges for a field of work or a job.
 - Reading employment ads.
 - Using the America's Job Bank or Internet resources that mention salary.
 - Asking employment agencies.
 - Reading publications in your field.

If your research shows a range of \$15,000-\$17,000 let them know you are looking for something in the range of \$16,500 to \$18,500. Bracket within their range and above what you hope to settle for. You can state “I believe that my productivity and skills are such that they would justify a salary in the range of \$16,500 to \$18,500.”

Keep fringe benefits in mind. Is the company going to pay for health insurance or other important benefits or are you expected to. This can have a major influence on what salary you are willing to accept.

If the salary offered is lower than you hoped for ask for an assurance of guarantee that if you do superior work a raise will follow shortly. Ask for this in writing: “If I accomplish this job to your satisfaction when could I expect to have my salary raised and by how much?”

OR

Ask for a couple of days to think about it as it’s lower than you expected. This does two things for you. 1) Lets them know you won’t accept just any offer to get a job. 2) Allows you to call back and give a figure more in line with what you want. Say – “This is lower than I expected but the positions sounds interesting. What could I do quickly to become more valuable to your organization?”

Even if you do turn the offer down do not close the door. Say – “The salary is lower than I’d like so I cannot accept. Perhaps you would consider keeping me in mind for future openings that might allow me to be worth more to you.” Don’t use this technique to get a higher salary. Once you say no the deal is off and you must be willing to lose that job forever.

Again, remember to be honest about your salary history. If they feel you’ve exaggerated, they may be less likely to negotiate a higher salary for you.

NEGOTIATING BENEFITS

Allow the interviewer to bring up the subject of benefits. Otherwise you may be perceived as someone who’s far more interested in the paid holidays than in the job itself.

Benefits have come to mean a number of different things over the years. In the pursuit of the best applicants, many companies have added more and more innovative benefits or “perks.” In today’s competitive job market, the list can include:

- Medical insurance/HMO options
- Dental insurance
- Vision plan
- Prescription plan
- Life insurance/dependent life insurance
- 401K plan
- Retirement/pension plan
- Profit sharing
- Paid holidays and vacation days
- Sick pay and long and short-term disability
- Training programs, management training, or tuition reimbursement
- Child care, Flex days, or employee exercise facility

- Van pooling and/or paid parking

Most companies will offer only medical and life insurance, sick pay, and vacation days. Other benefits are considered too expensive. It is important to check with people you know, or to research what may be available to you in certain job markets and in certain locations.

The needs and preferences of applicants in the area of benefits vary, depending on their lifestyles and priorities. The key is to determine your priorities before the interview so that you can find out about the benefits that mean the most to you and your family.

Remember, when you are negotiating or discussing benefits, ask who will *pay* for the benefits and how comprehensive they are. Are they covered 100% by the employer, is dependent coverage paid for? If the benefits are going to cost *you* too much, you may need to ask more questions, or negotiate further.

REFERENCES

Though your skills and previous experience will have the most weight in the final evaluation of whether or not you are the best candidate for the job, other pieces of information will be important as well. One of these will be your references.

When considering someone as a reference, check with them to make sure they are willing to give a positive reference. Remind them of something you have accomplished which they could talk about.

It may also be advisable to speak to previous employers who you know think favorably of your job performance and ask them if they will write you a letter of reference. This is especially helpful if you travel or will be moving a lot, or if you know that your employer may be moving, or for whatever reason will not be available for reference calls in the future.

Be sure to bring the names, phone numbers, and addresses of your references with you to your interview so that you can make this information available if the interviewer requests it.

LEGALITIES

The following list contains areas of personal information about which an interviewer may try to ask you. It is a general sampling of some common subjects that you should consider before your interview. It may eliminate some surprises, or help you decide beforehand what you will or will not feel comfortable answering. It also should help to define your understanding of what topics your privacy should protect, and what criteria are not to be used in the interviewing process. Remember, though, that your goal is to get hired, and that it is essential that you are informed of your rights, but not so that you can point fingers at the slightest provocation. If someone fears that you'll sue at the slightest hint of discrimination if you are not hired, they will not be likely to have a favorable opinion of you, especially if you have a history of this behavior.

Questions that should not be asked directly or indirectly regarding:

Your marital status, number and/or age of children or dependents, provisions for child care, or your maiden name. Pregnancy, childbearing, or birth control.

With whom you reside.

Your race or color, or the color of your skin, eyes, or hair.

Your birthplace, or that of your parents or spouse.

Your citizenship, nationality, or ancestry; unless inquiring if you have the right to work and remain in the United States. (1987 Immigration Bill.)

Your height and weight.

Your general medical condition.

Whether you have received Worker's Compensation.

Your religion or the religious holidays you observe.

Whether or not you have a criminal record.

Your military service (if any), including specific dates and type of discharge, as well as foreign military service.

Your current or past assets, liabilities, or credit rating, including bankruptcy.

Requests that you list the organizations, clubs, societies, and lodges to which you belong.

INTERVIEWING THE INTERVIEWER

If an interview is to go well, the *applicant* always asks questions as well, both pre-planned and spontaneous. The timing and content of these questions will be important in your evaluation. It is even appropriate to bring a notepad with questions on it, and write the answers down if you like. Even if everything you had planned to ask or wanted to know has been covered during the interview, try to come up with something else if you can, because it will be considered a sign of interest and analytical ability.

What are the goals of this department? Are evaluations based on these goals?

Who will make the final decision about hiring me?

Who will I report to in this position? Will that person handle my reviews and evaluations?

Who will report to me (if anyone)?

Is there a defined job description? Is it one that I may be able to expand with time?

What will the training period be like?

How much travel is normally expected?

Post Interview Tips

- Immediately after an interview, send a thank-you letter to each person you met with, being sure to spell all names properly and to use correct titles.
- Remember, even if you are not really interested in the position, you may apply with this company again.
- For a screening or selection interview, thank the individual for meeting with you and describing the position to you. Express your interest in the position and the company.
- Do not use the thank you note as another opportunity to discuss your qualifications. The letter should be short and concise, and should merely convey your appreciation for their time.
- A tip that may help is to purchase enough paper when you print your resume to allow you to write your thank you notes on matching paper. When your resume and correspondence is pulled from the files, it will look like one complete, neat package.
- If you asked at the interview about calling at a certain time to check on the job, make sure you follow through.

DO'S (AND DON'TS) FOR INTERVIEWING

(A QUICK REFERENCE CHECKLIST)

Trying to remember all the do's and don'ts of interviewing would be impossible. This list was created to provide a quick reference guide of all the reminders of the most vital preparations to make.

- Research the position, company and field.
- Practice interviews with a friend to ease your nervousness and pinpoint habits that need to be changed.
- Ask for parking instructions and directions.
- Set aside enough time for the interview.
- Confirm your appointment ahead of time.
- Arrive alone. Do not bring a friend or family member with you.
- Arrive early.
- Be prepared with references and ways to contact them.
- Prepare your references for receiving a call.
- Understand the different types of interviews so that you'll know what to expect from each one.
- Have ideas about salary before the meeting.
- Overdress rather than under dress.
- Treat the receptionist or secretary, and everyone else connected with the company, with respect.
- Remember everyone's names and correct titles.
- Complete the application or any forms required of you.
- Clock's ticking. Don't waste time! Brief answers early – longer later.
- Call interviewer by last name. Don't get personal or "Good ole boy."
- Take cue from interviewer on handshake and seating.
- Make eye contact during the interview.
- Body language – Shoulders back, open, comfortable posture.
- Give answers that are concise and relevant.
- Don't say you can't do something. Use "similar" and "related" experience.
- Don't take copious notes or read resume.
- No negatives – turn negatives to positives.
- Don't argue, confront, interrupt or get defensive.
- Ask questions of the interviewer.
- Allow the interviewer to guide the course of the conversation.
- Tell the truth, and be prepared to back up what you say.
- Avoid pat and cliché-ridden answers.
- Try to appear selective, even if you are anxious or need a job badly.
- Be prepared to discuss your former employers and positions, even if the experience was negative.

- Be prepared if you are interviewing for a position where there's little or no room for salary negotiation.
- Ask about benefits that you may be interested in.
- Use benefits as a negotiating tool when possible
- Be sure not to be pushy or desperate when discussing wages or benefits.
- Mention work experience and extracurricular activities while in college, especially if you are a recent graduate.
- Follow up with a thank you letter once you've had an interview.
- **MOST IMPORTANTLY**, do everything you can to appear relaxed, confident and capable!

INTERVIEW EVALUATION

Company Name _____ Interviewer's Name _____

Date of Interview _____ Call Back Date _____

TO BE FILLED OUT IMMEDIATELY AFTER INTERVIEW

1. Were you on time? Yes___No___
2. Did you maintain eye contact? Yes___No___
3. Did you speak clearly? Yes___No___
4. Did the interviewer seem interested? (Did he/she take a personal interest in you?) Yes___No___
5. Were you relaxed? Yes___No___
6. Did you give specific answers to direct questions? Yes___No___
7. Did you present your qualifications well? Yes___No___
8. Did you pass up clues which gave you openings to "sell" yourself ? Yes___No___
9. Did you talk too much? Yes___No___
10. Did you talk too little? Yes___No___
11. Did you interview the employer rather than let the employer interview you? Yes___No___
12. Were you assertive? Yes___No___
13. Did you feel encouraged even if you may not have been hired? Yes___No___
14. Did the interview make you want to try again? Yes___No___

HOW CAN YOU IMPROVE THE NEXT INTERVIEW?

SAMPLE THANK YOU LETTER

Your address
City, State , and Zip Code
Telephone Number
Date

Employer Name
Title
Department
Organization
Address
City, State, and Zip Code

Dear Mr./Ms. Employer,

I want to thank you for the time you spent with me on Monday describing the activities of the Shipping and Receiving Department and your requirements for additional staff.

I am enthusiastic about the prospects of working for (Employer Name) and believe my experience is relevant to your needs, especially my most recent work with (previous company). I have enclosed a copy of my annual inventory control report that I developed for the (previous company) Board of Directors. From this you will be able to see the various aspects of material flow I dealt with there.

Please contact me if you want more information about my education or experience.

In the meantime, please thank Mr. Sims and the other members of your staff for the tour of your facilities. I will be out of town between November 20 and 25; otherwise, you will be able to reach me at the numbers I gave you at our meeting. I look forward to being in touch.

Sincerely,

[Type and sign your name]

Enclosure

SAMPLE FOLLOW-UP LETTER

Your address

City, State , and Zip Code
Telephone Number
Date

Employer Name
Title
Department
Organization
Address
City, State, and Zip Code

Dear Mr./Ms. Employer,

I want to thank you for the time you were able to spend with me discussing possible employment opportunities. As you may recall from our discussion, my background and education in the area of _____ and _____ qualified me for the position of _____ with your organization. I forgot to inform you of my expertise in _____ which I gained at _____ and _____. I am not sure that this would affect my candidacy; however I felt my knowledge in this area could be of interest.

Enclosed you will find the completed application that you requested I fill out and return. Thank you again for the opportunity to visit you. Should you need any further information, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely

[Type and sign your name]

Enclosure

SAMPLE LETTER REJECTING AN OFFER

Your address
City, State, and Zip Code
Telephone Number

Date

Employer Name
Title
Department
Organization
Address
City, State, and Zip Code

Dear Mr./Ms. Employer,

Thank you for all of the time that you have spent considering me for the position of _____ in your organization. I wish to express my appreciation for all of the efforts shown me by Mr. _____ and Ms. _____, who gave so much of their time.

I have just made a very difficult decision – with which organization to begin my career. I have been quite fortunate in having a choice of several outstanding opportunities.

After much deliberation, I must respectfully decline the invitation to join your organization. I feel that another offer better matches my career qualifications and interests at this stage in my career. However, I want to express my appreciation for the opportunity to consider your outstanding professional operation.

Sincerely

[Type and sign your name]

SAMPLE LETTER OF ACCEPTANCE

Your address
City, State, and Zip Code
Telephone Number
Date

Employer Name
Title
Department
Organization
Address
City, State, and Zip Code

Dear Mr./Ms. Employer,

Thank you for all of the time you have spent considering me for the position of _____ in your _____ Department. I want to take this opportunity to express my appreciation for the efforts of Mr. _____ and Ms. _____, who have given so much of their time.

I accept your offer as _____ in your _____ Department at the salary of \$ _____. As we discussed, I would like to report to work on June 1.

Please advise me if there is any other data you need, or if any other details need to be handled. You can contact me by telephone any day after 5:00 p.m. I will look forward to talking with you soon.

Sincerely

[Type and sign your name]