

Name _____ (20 points)

Job Interview Activity Packet

Are you...

...*that* person who does not shake the interviewer's hand or make eye contact?

...*that* person who gets tongue-tied while answering a question?

...*that* person who cannot actually perform the skills listed on your résumé?

Don't be *that* person!

An information technology recruiter recalls how a job candidate relied on the Internet to answer a telephone interview question related to his supposed field of expertise. Not only did the interviewer hear the candidate's keys tapping in the background, but the candidate quoted word-for-word from several websites. Don't be *that* sneaky person who cannot explain the knowledge and skills you claim to possess.

Competition is fierce in today's labor market, causing the hiring process to be a stressful situation for all participants. Workers want to find the perfect company, and companies want to find the perfect workers

Every written and spoken word you communicate during the interview process, whether by telephone, video, or in person, should be accurate, honest, and polite. Interviewers really do want you to succeed. They would prefer to instantly identify you as the right employee, rather than interview another 50 people. Therefore, do not give them any possible reason not to offer you the job.

Understand the Screening Process

Prior to the actual face-to-face interview, the company will likely request and review your résumé, employment application, and/or applicable work samples. An interviewer or recruiter may also conduct a telephone or video interview.

Besides general telephone etiquette, monitor the tone, speed, and volume of your voice. Do not let your nerves make you sound like a high-pitched cartoon character. Be sure to take the call in a quiet, private location using a telephone with good reception. You do not want to have to whisper, shout or find an outlet to recharge the telephone battery. Do not interrupt the caller, talk incessantly, or speak over him or her. Avoid using curse words, slang, stereotypical slurs, or questionable jokes.

Remember that telephone conversations are also a challenge for the interviewer. He or she cannot see your facial expressions or body language. Therefore, try to communicate as courteously, effectively, and naturally as possible.

Companies are also increasingly using video technology for screening applicants. Dress appropriately and choose a quiet location for this video call. The interviewer wants to see and hear you, not your barking dog or boisterous sister. Smile, nod, and use eye contact. They are watching you the entire time, so avoid multitasking or looking away from the camera. As with all interviews, listen to the question and then answer it thoroughly and concisely. Avoid nervous tics such as pen tapping, nail biting, or using filler words such as *uh*, *like*, or *um*.

Ace the Face-to-Face Interview

If the telephone or video call goes well, the company will likely request a face-to-face interview. Arrive on time and be fully prepared for this critical meeting. Try to relax, smile, and make eye contact with all personnel you encounter at the interview site. The interviewer may ask for the input of everyone you met that day, from the receptionist to the cashier. Introduce yourself, offer a firm handshake, smile, and sit in an upright position. Never chew gum, eat, drink, or use a mobile device. Bring a pen and paper to jot down notes and the interviewer's name.

Listen carefully to the question and then take a few seconds to formulate a thoughtful, specific answer. Try not to ramble, get tongue-tied, or blurt out the first thing that comes to mind. Take a deep breath to calm your nerves. The interviewer may ask you to provide an example of when you resolved a conflict, solved a problem, or demonstrated your leadership skills. To fully answer such a question,

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- describe the situation, • explain your actions, and
- state the results.

Answer all parts of the questions using complete sentences. For example, if the interviewer asks for two examples, provide two examples. If he or she asks for how, when, and where something happened, describe all those details.

Provide examples that are relevant to the position. The interviewer wants to learn if you will be a good worker, not a good friend or soccer player. Therefore, when asked to describe yourself, stick to career goals, accomplishments, and qualifications. Do not describe personal details, such as family issues, favorite bands, or the name of your girlfriend. Highly personal “who you are” details are not relevant to your employability.

Other common interview mistakes include completing the interviewer’s sentences and dominating the conversation. According to one employment recruiter, a sure way to bomb the job interview is to talk nonstop. Some applicants never give the interviewer much of a chance to speak or ask questions.

Regardless of whether the reason is nerves or arrogance, you will not get the job offer.

Most job interviews conclude with a brief question and answer session. Recall some of your prepared questions, but avoid asking ones that the interviewer answered during the course of the interview. This is still an important part of the hiring process, so treat it as such.

A supervisor recently informed an employee that the company had not originally planned to hire her.

Job Interview Checklist

The applicant did not impress the interviewers during the actual interview. However, her intelligent questions and industry insights during the question and answer session changed their minds. The lesson here is to prepare for all parts of an interview. You never know what can make or break someone’s decision to hire you.

The company may also request a demonstration of your skills. Depending on your profession, you may be asked to troubleshoot a computer problem, decorate a cake, change a tire, or assist a patient. Calmly perform these assigned tasks using accepted industry techniques and terminology.

At the end of the interview, shake hands and thank the interviewer for his or her time. Remember that company personnel evaluate you the entire time you are on their premises. During one group interview wrap-up session, a job candidate removed his jacket and tie, unbuttoned the top buttons of his dress shirt, and pulled the shirrtails from his pants. The human resources representative then watched in disbelief as he completely removed his shirt while exiting the building. Don’t be *that* person who literally undresses on the way out the door. You will forever be the subject of someone’s favorite bizarre-but-true interview story, but you will not be an employee.

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Do!!

→ conduct telephone and video interviews in a quiet, private location
→ be on time for all interviews and/or calls
→ put away distractions, including mobile devices
→ greet people with a smile and firm handshake
→ sit or stand in an engaged, upright position
→ smile, nod, show enthusiasm, and use eye contact
→ listen and understand the question before speaking
→ use complete sentences, paying attention to the tone, speed, and volume of your voice
→ be polite and use proper English
→ respond with professional, work-related examples
→ allow the interviewer to complete his or her ideas
→ be calm when demonstrating your skills
→ remember you are being evaluated the entire time
→ ask questions at the end of the interview, shake hands, and thank the interviewer

Don't!!

Don't
make it difficult to be seen or heard
ignore potential weather or traffic delays
multitask, fidget, text, eat, drink, chew gum, or doodle
appear rude or uninterested
slouch, frown, look away, or cross your arms
engage in distracting behaviors or use filler words such as <i>um, like, or uh</i>
rush your response
address only part of the question, provide one-word answers, mumble, or talk too fast
use slang, sarcasm, or swear words
talk about personal/family issues or problems
interrupt or talk nonstop
lie about your skills or qualifications
be rude or dismissive
ask questions that the interviewer answered during the interview

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Multiple Choice Questions

1. Jana is interviewing for a position as a computer technician. During the interview, she could be evaluated for all the following EXCEPT-

- a. The demonstration of her computer skills
 - b. Her responses to interview questions
 - c. Her knowledge and love of classic cars
 - d. The questions she asks the interviewer
2. Why is it important to listen to a question carefully?
- a. To be able to answer all parts of it
 - b. To be able to answer it in one or two words
 - c. To decide whether or not to answer it
 - d. To be able to guess the follow-up questions
3. When should you shake the interviewer's hand?
- a. Never
 - b. At the beginning of the interview only
 - c. At the end of the interview only
 - d. At the beginning and end of the interview

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4. Ty wants to be an animal care attendant at an urban veterinary clinic that serves a variety of customers. Which should he NOT share during the interview?

- a. He volunteers weekly at an animal shelter.
- b. His favorite cat name is Misty.
- c. He has experience grooming and bathing dogs.
- d. He speaks two languages fluently.

5. Which is the best response to the interviewer's question, "What is your biggest weakness?"

- a. I do not have any weaknesses.
- b. I do not work well with other people.
- c. I am a perfectionist and can be hard on myself.
- d. I am absolutely dependent on my smartphone.

6. Carlos interviews for a lifeguard position. Which is the best answer to, "Can you tell me about yourself?"

I am quarterback of the football team

- a. I have one sister and two dogs.
- b. I am a huge football fan and a great friend.
- c. I enjoy helping people, have CPR certification, and worked last summer at the city pool.

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True or False

1. Conduct all telephone or video interviews in private locations free of distractions. _____
2. Interviewers hope you do poorly. _____
3. Do not to use eye contact during an interview because it is confrontational. _____
4. All responses to interview questions should be appropriate and relevant to the job. _____
5. Use your smartphone to take notes during the interview. _____
6. You can eat during the interview if you offer to share with the interviewer. _____
7. If the interview is not going well, there is no need to ask questions at the end. _____
8. Keep talking until told to stop. _____

Short Answers

1. What voice qualities should you monitor during job interviews or conversations?

2. What three things should you do to fully respond to the interviewer's request to, "Tell me about a time you struggled with a task."

