Career Center Hours
One-Stop Center
Building A-221

Hours
Monday 8:00am - 6:00pm
Tuesday-Thursday 8:00am – 5:00 pm
Friday 9:00am – 1:00 pm

Phone
(619) 660-4436
TYPES of INTERVIEWS

1. **STRUCTURED INTERVIEW**
   - Preselected list of questions
   - Can be impersonal
   - Sometimes questions are given before an interview

2. **UNSTRUCTURED/ NON-DIRECTED INTERVIEW**
   - Questions are open ended
   - May vary for each applicant
   - Applicant has control
   - Helps gauge fit of applicant with current staff

3. **PANEL INTERVIEW**
   - Typically will include a coworker, immediate supervisor, and human resource representative
   - Primarily used for professional positions

4. **GROUP INTERVIEW**
   - Interview is with other applicants
   - Group may be given a task to accomplish
   - Interactions/behavior is observed
   - Learn from other applicants’ responses

5. **SCREENING INTERVIEW**
   - Designed to eliminate applicants
   - Will ask about qualifications and verify experience
   - Make sure to mention your skills as they relate to required qualifications listed on Job Announcement.

REGARDLESS OF WHAT TYPE OF INTERVIEW YOU HAVE, THERE ARE SEVERAL KEY STEPS TO THE INTERVIEW PROCESS
The 3 Steps to Interviewing

**Step 1: Preparation**

A. RESEARCHING THE COMPANY  
B. PERSONAL PREPARATION

**Step 2: The Interview**

A. PRESENTATION - FIRST IMPRESSION  
B. THE INTERVIEW - EMPLOYER ASKING QUESTIONS  
C. YOUR TURN - YOU ASK QUESTIONS TO THE EMPLOYER  
D. CLOSING - LAST IMPRESSION

**Step 3: After the Interview**

A. PERSONAL RECORD  
B. THANK YOU LETTER
Step #1: PREPARATION

RESEARCHING the COMPANY

THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW:

• The name of the person who does the hiring.
• The salary range for the position.
• What are aspects that you like about the company/organization?
• What products do they make?
• What services do they provide? Who do they serve?
• What is the growth potential (advancement) within the company/organization?
• What is the future like for the company/organization?
• What makes the company different from other companies/organizations?
• Who are the competitors to the company/organization?

WHERE TO FIND THE INFORMATION:

Company’s Website: Most businesses have a website and/or a Facebook account. Spend some time on their web sites.
  • Read their mission statement (often in About section).
  • Look for current changes or successes in company
  • Make sure to incorporate what you learned about the Company during the interview.

Ask a Professional: Informational Interviews with Professionals within the Company or in similar Career areas can provide you with information to make you stand out during the interview. Ask the Career Center for a copy of our Informational Interview hand out.
  • Pay attention to Career terms that are used by professionals.
  • Ask for current trends or specialized training required within the field.
ONLINE RESOURCES for INTERVIEWING

cacareercafe.com
Interviewing tips and strategies along with listings of Professional Associations that you can join.

perfectinterview.com/cuyamaca
Free Online Interviewing program for Cuyamaca students and community with over 1500 interviewing questions. Program offers interviewing practice including video recording interview answers, interview coach, and sample responses.

Indeed.com
Website that provides up to date job openings in local areas. Great resource to learn Career and technical terms to help you stand out during the interview.

onetonline.org
Great resource for occupational information including identifying skills, interests and abilities specific to Job Title.

Collegecentral.com/cuyamaca
Cuyamaca college’s Job Board with free resources including Career videos, podcasts, and Career articles on Interviewing, Resume writing, and Career Development.

www.quintcareers.com/job_applications.html
A great article regarding the steps to filling out a competitive job application.
PERSONAL PREPARATION

- Review your resume. Review the most frequently asked questions.
- Practice answers to the most frequently asked interview questions. (Do not memorize)
- Prepare yourself for the tough questions.
- Review illegal questions.
- Review questions to ask the interviewer.
- Have the right attitude
- Bring to the interview: pens, resume, license, social security number, letters of recommendation, list of references, examples of your work.
- Dress: Be clean and neat. Dress a little bit better than you would for the job. Don't forget to look in a full length mirror (standing and sitting). Be conservative.
- Posture: Stand up straight and walk tall. Remember to make eye contact.
- On time: Know where you are going and allow for delays. Be at least 15 minutes early to your interview.

Step 2 - THE INTERVIEW

PRESENTATION: FIRST IMPRESSION

- **BE ON TIME!** Arrive 15 minutes early. It helps to drive to the interview location the day before the interview, to determine how much time it will take. Remember to allow for traffic.
- **BE INDEPENDENT.** Go alone. Bringing family members can eliminate you from the competition.
- **BE COURTEOUS.** Your impression begins the minute you enter the office. Don't be rude to the support staff--they are often asked to share their impression with the interview team.
- **BE POSITIVE.** Don't complain about the weather, traffic, or parking etc. This might create a bad impression.
DURING THE INTERVIEW: EMPLOYER ASKING QUESTIONS

• **BE PLEASANT, FRIENDLY, and BUSINESS-LIKE.**
• **EYE CONTACT.** It is important to keep eye contact when being introduced and during the interview.
• **SHAKING HANDS.** Feel free to initiate a handshake. Be firm -- if you tend to have sweaty hands, quickly wipe them before the handshake.
• **BODY LANGUAGE.** Be aware your nonverbal messages. Don't cross your arms or keep your hands in your pocket. Remember to sit up straight and find a comfortable position for your hands.
• **WATCH THE INTERVIEWER.** The interviewer gives nonverbal messages too. Watch to see if the interviewer seems to lose concentration. This may mean you are not answering the question directly enough, or that the interview may be over.
• **BE AWARE OF YOUR VOICE.** Being anxious in an interview may raise the pitch of your voice. Be conscious of how loud you are speaking. Tension can also raise the rate of your speaking. Be aware of how fast you are speaking — you may want to speak more deliberately.
• **LISTEN TO THE QUESTION.** Understand what is being asked. If you are unsure, ask for clarification.
• **THINK THROUGH THE QUESTION. TAKE TIME TO ANSWER.** It is OK to take a few seconds to think about your response. You may repeat the question before responding.
• **WHEN YOU ANSWER THE QUESTIONS, BE DIRECT AND POSITIVE.** Answer with the facts - be honest, but not blunt. Excessive or negative information will detract from your presentation.
• **FOCUS ON SUCCESS AS IT RELATES TO THE POSITION.** Focus on how your experiences/skills/achievements qualify you for the position.
FREQUENTLY ASKED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

HINT: Practice! Practice! Practice! Write your responses down, practice with a friend. The more you practice the more professional your responses will sound and the more confident you will be during the interview.

PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS

A. Tell me about yourself.
B. What are your short/long range goals? How do you plan to achieve them?
C. Why are you changing jobs?
D. What did you like/dislike about your last employer?
E. Describe/give example of working as a team player.
F. What are your strengths/weaknesses?
G. Are you more comfortable working by yourself or with others?
H. What do you see yourself doing in five years?

ABILITIES, QUALIFICATIONS, SKILLS

A. Describe/give example of how you work under stress/deadlines.
B. Describe/give example of a conflict and what you did to resolve it.
C. Describe three accomplishments from your present job.
D. How do your qualifications relate to this job?

CURRENT WORK EXPERIENCE/PREPARATION

A. What two or three things are most important to you in a job?
B. What did you like/dislike about your current/previous job?
C. How has your education prepared you for this job?
D. Describe your experience as a supervisor.
E. What community activities have you been involved in?

POSITION SPECIFIC

A. What do you know about our company?
B. This position may involve relocating, overtime, travel, rotating shifts. Do you have any objections to these demands?
C. What questions do you have for me?
ILLEGAL QUESTIONS

There are certain questions that are either inappropriate or illegal and should not be asked by the employer. You don't need to figure out the interviewer's reason behind asking -- but you will need to decide on how you will respond. You can either answer, not answer, or answer but point out that this may be an illegal question. You may want to respond "I would be happy to answer your question if you tell me how it is related to the job."

- When and where were you born?
- What is your marital status? What is your spouse's occupation?
- Do you mind answering some personal questions?
- What is your native tongue? How did you learn to read/write/speak a foreign language?
- What is your religious affiliation?
- Do you have children? Do you plan to have children? Are you now pregnant?
- What type of military discharge did you receive?
- Are you the principal wage earner in your household?
- Have you ever been treated for a mental or emotional problem?
- Do you have a disability?

YOUR TURN:
Common Questions to Ask During the Interview

Usually near the end of the interview, the interviewer will ask if you have any questions. Always ask questions. Why? It supports your interest in the position and allows the Interviewer to get to know you better.

- What characteristics are you looking for in the ideal candidate for this position?
- Is there anything unusually demanding about the job?
- What kind of training could I expect if I was offered this position?
- Who would I be working for?
- Does the company encourage/provide continuing education for employees?
- Are there opportunities for advancement in this position?
- Do you have any plans for growth or expansion?
- What do you like most about working for this company?
- When do you expect to make a hiring decision?
- What is the next step in the interview process?
CLOSING: LAST IMPRESSION

• Thank the employer and remind him/her of your interest in the job. You might say, "I am looking forward to hearing from you."
• EXIT GRACEFULLY. Keep your composure until you have left the building. Don't rush. Leave with as much confidence as you arrived.
• FOLLOW-UP WITH A THANK YOU LETTER.

STEP 3: AFTER THE INTERVIEW

PERSONAL RECORD
As soon as possible after the interview, keep notes of the following:

• Name(s) and title(s) of the interviewer(s) (and others that you may have talked to or interacted with).
• Basic responsibilities of the position.
• Why you can do the job.
• What went well in the interview.
• What went poorly, and why.
• When and how you expect to hear from the employer.

THANK YOU LETTER
Next, write a follow-up/thank you letter. The letter is a way to acknowledge the interview and thank them for the opportunity, as well as to remind them of your interest in the position. The letter is also an ideal way of including any relevant information you may have forgotten to mention in the interview.
• Address the letter to the interviewer. If there was an interviewing team, either address all or send a letter to each member.
• Mention names of other people you may have met or interacted with.
• Type your letter. If you choose to handwrite the letter - use legible handwriting.
• Mail/Email the letters within 24 hours of the interview.
FOLLOW-UP/THANK YOU LETTER FORMAT

Date

Your Name
Street Address
City, State, Zip

Interviewer's name
Title
Company Name
Street Address
City, State, Zip

Dear Mr./Ms. ____________:

First Paragraph
Express appreciation for being selected to interview. Indicate the job for which you were interviewed, where it was held, and the date. You may refer to a particular part of the visit to refresh the interviewer's mind.

Middle Paragraph
Tell the interviewer again your interest in the position. Briefly restate your reasons for wanting the position or for wanting to join the company. If there is anything you forgot to mention in the interview which would further enhance your qualifications, mention it here.

Closing Paragraph
Offer to provide additional information if necessary. Indicate that you are interested in the position and are available for additional information or interviewing at their convenience.

Sincerely,

(Your handwritten signature in black ink)

Your name typed
SAMPLE FOLLOW-UP/THANK YOU LETTER

March 17, 2015

Sally Smith
400 Juniper Road
El Cajon, CA 92019

Ms. Linda Johnson
Director of Employment
Allied Corporation
100 East Mountain Road
Santee, Ca 92071

Dear Ms. Baxter:

Thank you for the opportunity to interview for the position of Assistant to the Purchasing Manager. This is an exciting position and I look forward to the prospects of joining Allied Corporation and working with such a dynamic team.

As I mentioned during the interview, I am familiar with many of the duties and responsibilities of the position. I spent two summers working in the purchasing department of a manufacturing firm, and quickly learned the value of a timely purchase and efficient inventory control of raw materials.

In addition to my experience in this area, the knowledge I gained through the courses in my associate degree program will serve me well in meeting the requirements of the position. I am confident I can contribute significantly to your company.

Thank you again for the opportunity. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Sally Smith