

Interviewing Skills

**A guideline written and compiled by
Cabrillo College Student Employment Center**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- INTRODUCTION** 1
- RESEARCHING THE JOB** 1
 - Unwritten Job Descriptions** 1
 - Written Job Descriptions** 1
- RESEARCHING THE COMPANY** 1
- QUESTIONS TO RESEARCH THE COMPANY** 2
- INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEWS** 2
- PREPARATION FOR THE INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEW** 3
- HOW TO SET UP AN INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEW** 3
- CONDUCTING THE INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEW** 3
- AFTER THE INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEW** 3
- QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS IN THE INTERVIEW** 4
- COMMON INTERVIEW QUESTIONS** 4
 - Handling silence in the interview** 5
- QUESTIONS TO ASK IN THE INTERVIEW** 6
- BEHAVIORAL INTERVIEWING** 6
 - What is Behavioral Interviewing** 6
 - Critical Points About Behavioral Interviewing** 6
 - Examples of an SAR Answer (Situation, Action, Response)** 7
 - A Complete SAR Story** 7
 - Sample Behavioral Interview Questions** 7
- TYPES OF INTERVIEW** 8
 - Individual Interviews** 8
 - Panel Interviews** 8
 - Serial Interviews** 8
 - Video Interviews and Teleconferencing** 8
- REFERENCES** 9
- SELLING YOURSELF** 9
- DRESSING FOR SUCCESS** 9
- BODY LANGUAGE** 9
 - Your Body Language** 9
 - The Interviewers' Body Language** 10
- STRESS REDUCTION** 10
 - Tips On Alleviating Stress Before The Interview** 10
- HANDLING ILLEGAL QUESTIONS** 11
 - Laws that deal with workplace discrimination are** 11
 - Some Ways to Handle Illegal Questions** 11
- REMEMBER!** 12
 - Be Prepared** 12
 - Practice** 12
 - Be Confident** 12
 - Clothing** 12
 - Body Language** 12
 - Closing** 12
 - Send A Thank You Note—Very Important!** 12

INTRODUCTION

Interviewing for a new job or a promotion takes preparation, practice and enthusiasm. Since the interview is like a performance, the behind the scenes work will determine the type of reviews you will receive.

This guide on the art of interviewing will give the basics of how to prepare and present yourself in a positive manner.

RESEARCHING THE JOB

Unwritten Job Descriptions

For most jobs there is both a written and an unwritten job description. The unwritten job description may be obtained from talking to employees of the firm you are applying to, through questions to the human resources department, by reading between the lines of the written job description, informational interviews, or knowledge of similar positions elsewhere. The unwritten job description deals with: the chain of command, the work site's physical layout, the number and type of contacts made, company management style, what characteristics you need to have to be successful in this job, and what may be included in the section of the job announcement that reads "will perform other duties as assigned."

Written Job Descriptions

The written job description may be anywhere from 3 single-spaced typed pages to 3 lines in the local newspaper in length. If a written job description is not available for the position you are applying to, you may research the general position through similar written job descriptions available at: city, county or school districts human resources departments, or by looking at general job information in a local career center or public library in the Occupational Outlook Handbook, or similar reference which describes the major characteristics of a type of employment. Job descriptions are also available over the Internet.

When researching the job to prepare for the interview, the job description, both written and unwritten will be a valuable tool in helping you develop your answers to questions so that your answers reflect the demands of the position and the needs of the company.

RESEARCHING THE COMPANY

One of the most important things you can do to make a positive impression in the interview is to research the company. The smaller the firm, the more likely you will need to poll current and past employees for information, or check with friends who work at competing firms. Large corporations have been reviewed by various sources and those reviews are often available in the public library at the reference desk. Some reference librarians and career centers also keep clipping files on local companies. You may also find information on local companies through your chamber of commerce, and larger companies may have stockholder and annual report information available to the general public.

Some additional resources to do company research are:

College Placement Directory Moody's Manuals

College Placement Annual Mac Rae's Blue Book

Thomas's Register Of Amer. Mfg. Fitch Corporate Manuals

Standard & Poors Corp, Records Dun & Bradstreet Ref.

Researching the company directly (visiting the physical location) can also provide you with information regarding the corporate culture. Is it conservative or relaxed, do people wear formal business attire to the office or more casual clothing? Is the atmosphere one you feel comfortable in? The more you know about the company in advance, the better you can formulate your answers to interview questions which may deal with the types of products and services provided by the firm, opportunities for transfer and promotion, and give you information as to how to dress for the interview so that you look like you belong in the company.

According to one report, just knowing information about the company can increase your chance of employment by 37%. For more information: http://www.quintcareers.com/researching_companies.htm

QUESTIONS TO RESEARCH THE COMPANY

- How old is the company?
- Where are the offices, stores, manufacturing, etc., located?
- What does it produce, or what does it have to offer?
- What has been its growth?
- What does the future seem to hold for its products or services?
- Does it have a long-term market?
- What other industries or competitors impact it?
- How many competitors are there?
- Who are they, how do they compare in terms of size and growth?
- Reputation?
- What makes this firm different from their competitors?
- How large is the organization?
- What population do they serve? Who is their client base?
- What is their reputation?
- Who are its chief executives?
- Who is in charge of the department in which you would work?
- How long have they held that position?
- Have they ever held your position?
- What happened to the last two people who held the position you are applying for?
- Why is this job open?
- What is their policy for advancement?
- What type of benefits are available?
(not asked in the job interview—find out when researching the company or when they have offered you the job)
- What is the salary range for this position?
(not asked in the job interview—find out when researching the company or when they have offered you the job)
- Is training provided?
- How are performance evaluations handled?
- On what basis are raises awarded?

If company is located in a different area than where you currently live, check the cost of living index to determine how the salary compares given housing and other cost of living factors.

INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEWS

One of the most effective methods of obtaining more detailed information about a particular career or specific job is to conduct an informational interview with someone who holds the position that interests you. The benefits are numerous:

- * Allows you to determine whether or not the career, industry or company matches your skills, interests and expectations.
- * Confirms information that you have read and provides information not available in written form.
- * Expands your professional network
- * Assists you in organizing your future job search by revealing the best ways to get into the profession.
- * Provides you with tips and information about the job and career field that could be of great value in a job interview.
- * Gives you an opportunity to see the organization from the inside.
- * Access to unadvertised job openings

PREPARATION FOR THE INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEW

Prepare for informational interviews well in advance. You must begin with a self-assessment. The better you know yourself the more likely you will pursue a career that is both enjoyable and rewarding. Next, conduct a thorough literature / internet search on careers that interest you and on any organization you intend to contact. Resources may include local Chamber of Commerce employer guides, phone book yellow pages, professional associations and magazines, career counselors and faculty, internet listservs, public library clipping files, etc.

HOW TO SET UP AN INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEW

Telephone or write the person you wish to interview well before the date the interview will take place. Introduce yourself and explain that you are a student or job seeker. Mention how you found the person's name and what your expectations are from this interview.

State the type of job you are interested in researching, the reason why, and the amount of time it would take to conduct the interview (usually 20 - 30 minutes). If the person is unable to meet with you, ask for a referral.

Thank the person for speaking with you and confirm the date, time and location of the interview, parking arrangements, building location, and any additional information you may require.

If that person cannot see you, as a courtesy, express your regret. State your appreciation for any referral names given to you.

CONDUCTING THE INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEW

- * What is your level of freedom to solve problems and take action on the job?
- * Tell me about your working conditions, e.g., physical, environmental, sensory, stress.
- * What special knowledge, skills, training, or experience did you have or need for this job?
- * Is there a standard educational path for entry into this field? What alternate paths are there?
- * What do you like least/most about your job?
- * Is there a "career path" in your field?
- * What is the salary for entry-level and more advanced positions in the field?
- * How did you find your job?
- * What is there about your job that most people don't know about?
- * If you were to have to find a different type of work, what else has this job prepared you to do?
- * Can you suggest anyone else I can talk with about this field?

Prepare additional questions based upon the specifics of the type of work you are seeking.

You requested the interview. Be prepared to ask questions. Be concise so as not to waste the person's time. Allow the person an opportunity to provide additional information. Ask for a tour of the work area if possible.

The purpose of the interview is to collect information that will allow you to make informed career decisions. Do not take the chance of embarrassing yourself or upsetting a potential employer by using the informational interview to ask for a job or set up an employment interview.

You may leave them with a copy of your resume, in case they may hear of an opportunity that matches your skills and interests.

AFTER THE INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEW

Add more information to the notes you took during the interview.

Always send a thank-you letter promptly (within 1-2 days after the interview).

For more information: http://www.quintcareers.com/informational_interviewing.html

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS IN THE INTERVIEW

Prepare a list of questions you feel you may be asked. These questions can be modified from the list of typical questions which have been provided below, or you can compose questions which deal with items on your resume (breaks between jobs, work in unrelated fields, moving to a new area, special skills or expertise) or questions related to specifics on the job description. You may also be asked “behavioral” questions, in which you are asked to describe how you reacted in a particular situation. These questions are different than hypothetical situations as they ask you to relay a story of how you actually responded to a particular situation, instead of how you might behave in a hypothetical situation. There are some excellent books available on interviewing which provide sample questions, what is the reason behind the question, and how to respond.

Some books that I recommend regularly are :

Sweaty Palms The Neglected Art of Being Interviewed

by H. Anthony Medley

101 Great answers to the Toughest Interview Questions

by Ron Fry

Best Answers to the 201 Most Frequently Asked Interview Questions

by Matthew J. Deluca

COMMON INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

What are your long (or short) term goals?

What specific goals, other than those related to your occupation, have you set for yourself over the next 10 years?

How do you plan to achieve your career goals?

What are the most important rewards you expect from your career?

Why did you choose this career?

What motivates you to put forth your greatest effort?

How would you describe yourself?

How has your college experience prepared you for this career?

What measures do you use to evaluate or determine success?

In what ways do you think you can make a contribution to this company?

What qualities should someone applying for this position possess?

Describe the relationship that should exist between a supervisor and subordinates.

What one or two accomplishments have given you the greatest satisfaction?

Describe the accomplishment, how you got involved, what you achieved and how you did it. (Behavioral question)

What college subjects did you like most (least) and why?

Describe your most rewarding college experience.

How did you select your college or university?

Do you have plans for continued study? An advanced degree?

Do you think grades are a good indication as to what you have learned?

In what type of work environment are you the most comfortable?

Why should I hire you?

What do you consider your greatest strengths (weaknesses)?

If you were hiring someone for this position, what qualities would you look for?

What are your hobbies?

What do you do in your spare time?
What volunteer work do you do or have you done in the past?
Are you willing to travel for this position?
What are your salary requirements?
Why are you applying for this job?
How many promotions or raises were you given on your last job?
What did you like most (least) about your previous job?
How do you best motivate others?
What would your last boss say about you?
What do you know about the position I am interviewing you for?
Tell me about yourself.

Once you have prepared your list of potential interview questions, practice how you will respond to those questions. If at all possible, roll play the interview with a friend. If you cannot roll play, but have access to a video camera, video tape yourself (dress appropriately for this if you do). If you have access to a tape recorder, tape record yourself. It is very important that you verbalize your responses to the questions out loud.

Review your responses. Are they too wordy or too blunt? Do you use a lot of filler words (and, um, well, you know, etc.)?

Are you willing to ask for clarification if you are not sure of the intent of the question?

Are you speaking too fast or too slowly?

Are you answering the question thoroughly, but without “running on”?

Handling silence in the interview

Many candidates talk themselves out of a job, because they felt that they had to fill the quiet spaces in the interview with words and thoughts that they had not thought out in advance. If you answer a question in the interview, and there is silence after your response, ask if the interviewer would like for you to expand on any part your prior response. A moment of silence may also give you the opportunity to expand on some of your skills that are related to the position, but had not yet been addressed in the interviewer’s questions. You can ask if the employer would like you to expand on your last answer, or be prepared to insert additional information about your skills as they relate to the position Plan in advance how you want to handle silent moments in the interview.

QUESTIONS TO ASK IN THE INTERVIEW

What are the most important responsibilities of the position?

What results are expected of this position?

What are the limits of the position's responsibility and authority?

What problems (or opportunities) are associated with this position?

In your opinion, what aspects of my background make me a strong (or weak) candidate for this position?

What assistance is available to this position?

Who will be my superior, and what are their strengths? Where can my skills augment their abilities?

Are there projects in motion that whoever fills this position will inherit? What is their status?

What criteria is used to evaluate performance? Are there annual reviews?

What are the goals for this company and this department?

Why did the individual in this position before leave the job?

Why did you come to work here, and why do you stay?

What type of training is provided?

What is the biggest challenge in this position?

What characteristics make a person successful in this job?

Try to avoid discussing salary or benefits in the interview. Be general if you cannot avoid the subject. You are in a much better position to negotiate both if you are the top candidate for the job. By bringing up the subject in the interview, it seems that the "perks" of the job are more important than the job itself, and can turn off an interviewer

BEHAVIORAL INTERVIEWING

Courtesy of Oswego State University of New York

What is Behavioral Interviewing

Behavioral Interviewing is a new style of interviewing that more and more organizations are using in their hiring process. The basic premise behind behavioral interviewing is this: the most accurate predictor of future performance is past performance in a similar situation. It focuses on experiences, behaviors, knowledge, skills and abilities that are job related. Traditional interviewing questions ask you general questions such as "Tell me about yourself." The process of behavioral interviewing is much more probing and works very differently.

Critical Points About Behavioral Interviewing

- * Employers predetermine which skills are necessary for the job for which they are looking and then ask very pointed questions to determine if the candidate possesses those skills. To assess which skills the employer seeks, review employer literature, speak with alumni, family and friends who work for the employers, and listen carefully during the organization's information session.
- * Always listen carefully to the question, ask for clarification if necessary, and make sure you answer the question completely.
- * Your interview preparation should include identifying examples of situations where you have demonstrated the behaviors a given company seeks.
- * During the interview, your responses need to be specific and detailed. Tell them about a particular situation that relates to the question, not a general one. Briefly tell them about the situation, what you did specifically, and the positive result or outcome. Your answer must contain these three steps (situation, activity, result or "SAR") for optimum success.
- * Before the interview process, identify two or three of your top selling points and determine how you will convey these points (with demonstrated SAR stories) during the interview.

- * It is helpful to frame your answer as a story that you can tell. Typically, the interviewer will pick apart the story to try to get at the specific behavior(s) they seek.
They refer to this as “digging a well.” The interviewer will sometimes ask you open ended questions to allow you to choose which examples you wish to use. When a part of your story relates to a skill or experience the interviewer wishes to explore further, he/she will then ask you very specific follow-up questions regarding your behavior.
These can include “What were you thinking at that point?” or “Tell me more about your meeting with that person.” or “Lead me through your decision process.”
- * Whenever you can, quantify your results. Numbers illustrate your level of authority and responsibility. For example: “I was a shift supervisor.” could be “As Shift Supervisor, I trained and evaluated 4 employees.”
- * Be prepared to provide examples of when results didn’t turn out as you planned. What did you do then?
- * Your resume will serve as a good guide when answering these questions. Refresh your memory regarding your achievements in the past couple of years. Demonstration of the desired behaviors may be proven in many ways. Use examples from past internships, classes, activities, team involvement, community service and work experience. In addition, you may use examples of which you may be especially proud such as running a marathon, exhibiting paintings in an art show, climbing all the Adirondack High Peaks, designing a web site, biking across the country, etc.

Examples of an SAR Answer (Situation, Action, Response)

Situation	During my Public Relations internship, I noticed that attendance at community events had dropped by 30% over the past 3 years.
Action	I designed a new promotional packet to go out to the local community businesses. I also included a rating sheet to collect feedback on our events and organized internal round table discussions to raise awareness of the issue with our employees
Result	We utilized some of the wonderful ideas we received from the community, made our internal systems more efficient and visible and raised attendance by 18% the first year.

A Complete SAR Story

Right before Thanksgiving break, most of my house mates had gone home for the weekend break. I received a call that one of my house mates had been involved in a car accident. I volunteered to go to the hospital to be with him and then called his parents. I also made arrangements for them to stay at a nearby hotel when they arrived. They were pleased I had taken time from my own weekend to help them. My house mates congratulated me for keeping a cool head, going above and beyond, and handling the situation. I’ve since decided to volunteer on the campus ambulance service.

Sample Behavioral Interview Questions

These are often difficult questions to answer on the fly. Jot down examples of stories in your past that you would use to answer these questions. Careful preparation is the key to an effective behavioral interview. Setting up an appointment for a mock interview with the Career Counselor is an excellent way to practice.

- * Describe a situation in which you were able to use persuasion to successfully convince someone to see things your way.
- * Describe an instance when you had to think on your feet to extricate yourself from a difficult situation.
- * Give me a specific example of a time when you used good judgement and logic in solving a problem.
- * By providing examples, convince me that you can adapt to a wide variety of people, situations and environments.
- * Describe a time on any job that you held in which you were faced with problems or stresses that tested your coping skills.
- * Give me an example of a time in which you had to be relatively quick in coming to a decision.

- * Tell me about a time in which you had to use your written communications skills in order to get an important point across.
- * Give me a specific occasion in which you conformed to a policy with which you did not agree.
- * Give me an example of an important goal which you had set in the past and tell me about your success in reaching it.
- * Tell me about a time when you had to go above and beyond the call of duty in order to get a job done.
- * Give me an example of a time when you were able to successfully communicate with another person even when that individual may not have personally liked you (or vice versa).

TYPES OF INTERVIEW

Depending on the type of organization or company you are applying to you may be interviewed by a individual or a panel, or you may be interviewed by different people in a series of interviews. Attempt to find out in advance what process will be used so that you will know what to expect, and you will know how much time you should set aside for the interview process.

Individual Interviews

This is the interview that is generally expected. You interview one on one, with either the hiring manager or their designated representative. Occasionally you may need to come back for an additional interview if you are selected from a larger group to come back for further consideration. Hiring decisions may be made on the spot or may be made any time in the future, depending on the number of follow-up interviews and how references check out.

Panel Interviews

Most government agencies, cities, colleges and school districts interview candidates by utilizing a panel. This panel may consist of anywhere from 3 to as many as 8-10 individuals who will be asking you questions. Generally in a panel interview situation, all applicants are asked the same questions so that their answers can be compared to other candidates. Some variation in questions may occur, based on your response to questions in the interview itself. Generally, interviews done by a panel require that a hiring decision, or at least a ranking of candidates pending reference verification, be made the day of the interview. It is difficult to coordinate the schedules of those involved to have them meet again to make a hiring decision at a later date. Additional interviews may again be scheduled for final candidates. When additional interviews are scheduled, they are usually performed by one or two individuals, rather than a full panel. Counties, cities and school districts also establish pools of qualified applicants so that they do not need to repeat the process with every opening for a similar position. You may receive a job offer up to 18 months from the date the hiring pool is established.

Serial Interviews

Consecutive interviews are held on different days. In a serial interview, you may be scheduled for 2-7 interviews the same day, within the same company for one position. Serial interviews can last from one hour to 8 hours in length. If you will be participating in a serial interview, be sure to establish how much time you will need to set aside for the process prior to scheduling the interview. Hiring decisions from serial interviews are rarely made on the spot, but you may hear a decision in as within 24 hours.

Video Interviews and Teleconferencing

With the advent of new technologies, you may be asked to submit a video tape or interview in real time from a remote location via teleconferencing or computer hook up. You may also be asked to give a power point presentation or in some other fashion demonstrate your familiarity with today's technology as part of the interview. In order to be comfortable with the different media, practice with that media so you feel confident with your presentation. With a video interview, it may be to your advantage to have it professionally produced and edited.

REFERENCES

Assume that your references will be checked. It is vital that the individuals that you are using as a reference know in advance that you are using them as a reference. If possible, get written letters of recommendation. Letters of recommendation are good forever. It is not always possible to contact prior supervisors or work associates. If you have changed your name, let the reference know the name you worked under when you knew the reference, and the name you are using now. If it has been a while, you may want to refresh them on what you did, and what you accomplished when you worked for them. Make it easy for the reference to say nice things about you.

SELLING YOURSELF

An interview is centered on the subject that you should know better than anyone else, yourself. You need to have taken the time to think about your particular strengths and skills, particularly as they relate to the position for which you are applying, and to be prepared to verbalize them.

Not all interviewers are skilled in the art of interviewing and drawing information from you. You must be prepared for the inexperienced or overworked interviewer. Be ready to take advantage of any opportunities to tell the interviewer how your skills and abilities can benefit the company. Stick to your assets that are work related. Give it all you have, be confident, enthusiastic, but not overly aggressive.

DRESSING FOR SUCCESS

Rule of thumb—dress for the interview slightly more formally than you would dress for the position you are applying for, keeping in mind the company dress standards. Even in informal environments, you are generally expected to dress up for the interview. Select and try on your interview clothes the night prior to your interview. Do they feel comfortable? Are all the buttons on and no loose threads hanging from hems, are you spotless and well pressed? Do you feel good about yourself in these clothes?

Going for a promotion? Dress for the job you want, not the job you have. Observe what individuals are wearing at the level of employment you are aiming for and emulate that style of dress after eliminating the most flamboyant and conservative styles. Your exterior image is often the only one some people may be able to judge you by. The first impression you make in the interview is what you look like. While we have limited control over our facial features, hair, height and weight, we do have control over our clothing and style of dress. When going for a promotion within your current company, dress for the job you want for an extended time prior to applying for that position. You can not change your style of dress a week prior to an interview, and expect that you will be viewed as a serious contender for a promotion.

BODY LANGUAGE

Your Body Language

How we sit, stand and move says a lot about who we are and how we feel about ourselves. Your body language can reinforce or detract from what you say in the interview. It is important to convey a strong, confident and open body language.

Tips on positive body language

- * Role play your questions in front of a mirror or video camera, or ask a friend to critique your posture and gestures. Be sure they tell you what you are doing right, as well as what you could improve upon.
- * Shake hands with the primary interviewer when entering and leaving the interview.
- * Smile. Be sure to convey interest and enthusiasm with your facial expressions.
- * Use good eye contact.
- * Use gestures if appropriate.
- * Try not to freeze into one position. Breathe.

The Interviewers' Body Language

Pay attention to the interviewers' body language. Are they paying attention to you? Are they turned toward you, leaning forward, nodding and smiling? If so, great! You are on the right track with your response to their question.

Are they turned away from you, not making eye contact? Shuffling papers? Do they have a posture which is slumped away from you? Are their arms crossed in front of them? If so, it is time to re-group. Your response to their question may be off track. Ask them to re-phrase the question, are they interested in a particular aspect of your response? Was all going well before?

Think in advance how you want to respond if their body language shows that you are on the wrong track, or have lost their interest.

STRESS REDUCTION

Job interviews seem to have been designed to induce a good case of stress. No matter how practiced you may be in the art of interviewing, stress is still a factor in most interviews.

Stress may be exhibited by

- * Your hands perspire or shake.
- * You haven't moved in 5 minutes and your feet fall asleep.
- * Your voice rises or cracks.
- * You can't remember the speech you had memorized the night before.
- * All of the above.
- * None of the above, but something else.

Tips On Alleviating Stress Before The Interview

- * Tell yourself what a good person you are, what a good candidate you are for the job, think about your strong points, build your self-confidence.
- * Move around. Exercise lightly to moderately. Get your blood flowing and breath deeply prior to the interview.
- * Meditate.
- * Get to the interview on time or early.
- * Do what works for you to calm yourself: Positive visualizations, quiet time, whatever makes you feel calmer.

HANDLING ILLEGAL QUESTIONS

There is no one correct way to deal with illegal questions in the interview. They may be asked because the interviewer doesn't know they are illegal, or doesn't care that they are illegal. In either case, how you choose to answer them may determine whether or not you are offered the job. Some questions are blatantly against the law, while others fall into a gray area, or are subtle. Local laws may be more stringent than state or federal laws, offering protection to additional protected classes (i.e. sexual orientation).

Illegal questions may deal with issues of race, gender, religion, national origin, native language, age, prior worker's compensation claims, prior arrests, or disability status. Gray areas (most likely illegal or at least subject to legal complaint) may include questions regarding marital status, number of children, plans for children, childcare arrangements, organizations you belong to, etc.

Some questions are legal in specific circumstances. They are called bona fide occupational qualifications. Models may need to be a certain age, gender or size. A religious organization hiring for a position which has religious responsibilities (e.g. teaching a religion class), can require candidates to be of a certain religious faith. Where personal physical care is a job requirement, the employer may hire an individual who is the same gender as the individual that personal care is to be provided for.

Laws that deal with workplace discrimination are

Civil Rights Act of 1964

American's with Disabilities Act

Vietnam Era Veteran's Readjustment Act

Age Discrimination in Employment Act

Some Ways to Handle Illegal Questions

You can refuse to answer, and indicate that the question is illegal.

When someone asks you a question you don't want to answer, you can always smile and ask, "Why do you want to know?"

You can answer the intent of the question

Question "How many children do you have?"

Answer "My childcare arrangements are very stable and present no conflict with my ability to be a dependable employee"

You can answer the legal version of the question (if there is one)

Question "Have you ever been arrested?"

Answer "I have never been convicted of any crime."

You can answer briefly, not providing any additional information, or if the answer may help you to get the job you can provide as much information as you feel is appropriate. You control your response, and the amount of information that you are willing to provide. Stay professional, no matter how you choose to respond.

Some questions which are illegal to ask prior to hiring you, are legal to ask after you have been hired for insurance and emergency notification purposes. If you feel you have been asked illegal questions, and have been denied employment because you refused to answer those questions, or because of your answer to those questions, you can file a complaint with your local federal Equal Employment Opportunity office.

REMEMBER!

Be Prepared

Know your strengths and skills. Be ready to talk about them if not directly asked.

Know the job you are applying for. Research the company.

Practice

Think about the questions you may be asked and practice your answers or presentation in front of a mirror, role play with friends, tape record or video tape yourself.

Be Confident

Enthusiasm counts. Know you are a good candidate for the job.

Clothing

Be sure what you wear is in good condition and appropriate for the position for which you are interviewing.

Body Language

Watch for nervous mannerisms, but don't keep from making gestures if they are appropriate and comfortable. Use good eye contact. Smile. Watch their body language for clues.

Closing

Thank them for their time. Re-affirm your interest in the position. Emphasize your qualifications if no other opportunity has presented itself.

Send A Thank You Note—Very Important!

Note may be on personal stationary and may be hand delivered.