

***Professional Presentation Expectations:***

- On time (10-15 minutes early)
- Dressed professionally (suit)
- Brings 2 polished copies of resume
- Greeting (firm handshake & verbal greeting)
- Positive attitude/enthusiasm

***Overall Communication:***

- Attentive (eye contact, body language, listening skills)
- Vocabulary and grammar
- Speaks clearly (clarity, pace, volume, pitch)

***Effective Interviewing Skills:***

**Q1. Tell me about yourself.**

- Give background (where are you from?) and timeline (chronological order)
- Highlight significant experiences before and during time at OSU; why are you here today?
- Choose key skills and characteristics, illustrate by utilizing unique personal experiences; Make a connection to the job description

**Q2. What made you choose your major and why are you interested in this field?**

- Explain WHY you like your major; WHAT do you like specifically about your major and courses?
- Describe your decision making process and rationale behind choosing your major

**Q3. What about our company leads you to believe you would be a good fit?**

- Show specific knowledge of the company
- Discuss THREE characteristics about company and how each fits with your skills/abilities; Provide evidence of company research with specific, not obvious, details
- For corporate culture demonstrate how the company values align with your values
- Show in depth research and connection to yourself and your major

**Q4. Based on the duties and responsibilities of this position, why did you choose to interview for this specific role?**

- Show knowledge of position; demonstrate a reading of the *duties & responsibilities* section of the job description
- Talk about the parts of the job description (not just qualifications) that interest you, and why

**Q5. Behavioral Based Questions**

It is recommended to use detailed examples from work experience or extra-curricular activities, rather than business core classes. Differentiate yourself with your unique stories. Use the **STAR** method to answer each question.

- **Situation:** Provide detailed information so the interviewer has a clear understanding of the context of the situation
- **Task:** Be specific about your role in the project or situation; this is often the problem to be solved
- **Action:** This is the bulk of your answer! Highlight your individual contributions and outline the steps you took
- **Result:** Stay positive and show success; Emphasize the impact made and lessons learned (your “takeaway”)

**Q6. Why should I hire you?**

- Select three characteristics (strengths/best qualities) that would be most relevant to the job
- Provide specific examples of how you demonstrate EACH characteristic

**Q7. What questions do you have for me?**

- Have three to five questions prepared specific to the company and diverse in type to show your interest
- Have questions you REALLY want to know the answers to – see *Turning the Tables* handout for examples
- After you have finished asking your 3-5 questions, your final question should be to ask about the next steps in the hiring process/timeline

***Closing the Interview***

- Initiate the close by thanking the interviewer
- Ask for a business card in case you have follow-up questions
- Show enthusiasm and express sincere interest in the position; reiterate fit based on the knowledge you have gained in the interview

## **What Questions Will the Recruiter Ask You?**

### **What Examples Should You Use?**

It is possible to anticipate the questions the recruiter will ask so that you go into the interview prepared with good examples of your skills and competencies. Here are 5 steps to help you anticipate and prepare:

1. The first step is to put yourself in the shoes of your future employer. What skills are they looking for? Why should they hire you? The clue to those questions lies in the JOB DESCRIPTION.
2. Take the job description and identify the SKILLS and QUALIFICATIONS they are looking for. Make a list of those skills, competencies, and qualifications. It will most likely be skills like problem solving, taking initiative, customer orientation, communication skills, but each job is different with different skills.
3. Find a good comprehensive list of interview questions by competency or skill. An excellent resource is to Google “behavioral based interview questions by competency” or “complete list of interview questions.” The best lists have the questions categorized by skill similar to the sample below.
4. Locate the questions that match the list of skills you identified from the job description.
5. Finally, for each question, think of one or two situations or examples you would use to convince the interviewer that you have that skill. Take time to remember the detail in those examples.

Now practice answering the questions. Aim for two to three minutes per question. You are the storyteller—be vivid and specific and cover S (Situation), T (Task), A (Action), R (Result). *Let your example convince them you have the skills they are looking for. Make them remember you!*

Here is just a sample of skills and the related questions that a recruiter might use to evaluate if you really have those skills. Remember this is just a sample and you want to find questions that relate to competencies and skills in the job for which you are interviewing.

#### **Taking Initiative**

- Give me an example of a time when you initiated and completed a project.
- Tell me about a time when you motivated yourself to complete an assignment or task that you did not want to do.
- Tell me about the one time when you were motivated to put forth your greatest effort individually or within a group.
- Give an example of when your persistence had the biggest payoff.
- Tell me about the riskiest decision you have ever made.
- What new ideas or suggestions, if any, have you generated any while at school or work?

#### **Conflict Resolution/Strategizing/Analysis**

- Please describe a situation when you faced conflict with another individual and how you resolved it.
- Give me an example of a time when you helped solve a problem in a group. What precipitated this problem?
- Tell me about a time when you failed and what you learned from it.
- Describe the most difficult problem you ever faced at work or in school.
- When have you had a particularly difficult decision to make?
- Tell me about a situation in which you had to learn something new in a short time. How did you proceed?
- How have you most constructively dealt with disappointment and turned it into a learning experience?
- Describe a situation in which you effectively developed a solution to a problem by combining different perspectives or approaches.
- Can you tell me about a complex problem you solved? Describe the process that you utilized.
- Walk me through a situation where you had to do research and analyze the results for one of your classes.

**What Questions Will the Recruiter Ask You?**  
**What Examples Should You Use?**

**Time Management/Multitasking**

- Describe a circumstance in which you had several things to do in a limited amount of time. What led up to the situation? What was the outcome?
- Describe a time when you had to deal with the public. How did those involved respond?
- Describe a situation where class assignments and work or personal activities conflicted. How did you prioritize? How did you manage your time? What was the outcome?

**Communication/Persuasion/Criticism**

- Tell me about a situation when something you said or wrote was misunderstood.
- Describe a situation in which you misunderstood something a professor or supervisor wrote or said. Why did the misunderstanding occur?
- Tell me about a time when you had to persuade another person or group of people with an idea you had.
- When have you set a long range goal and achieved that goal?
- Tell me about a time when your work or ideas were criticized.

**Teamwork/Collaboration/Leadership**

- Tell me about a time when you took a leadership role.
- What leadership positions have you held? Describe your leadership style.
- Describe the most collaborative project you have worked on. What was your role?
- Describe a time when you were extremely flexible in adapting to the needs of others.
- Tell me how you assisted another person in reaching his/her goal.
- Think about a difficult boss, professor, or other person. What made him or her difficult? How did you successfully interact with this person?

**Other**

- What are your long term goals?
- What accomplishment has given you the most satisfaction and why?
- What three words would you use to describe yourself? Why?
- Describe your three greatest accomplishments to date.

## **Asking Questions**

### **How to Ask Good Questions**

Are recruiters just being polite when they ask if you have any questions for them? NO. Employers are interested in candidates who ask well-prepared and intelligent questions that reflect the candidate's knowledge of the company. If you ask a good question during an interview, this signals that you will ask good questions on the job too.

1. ***Know yourself, the company, and the industry.*** By doing an assessment of yourself – what you want in a job in terms of title, responsibilities, career development, company culture, and so on – you will understand what your deal breaker issues are when choosing a job. Areas in which you might want to dig deeper, as the interviews progress, include: company culture; positive current events taking place within the company; and how others in your position have developed in their careers – broadly or more vertically, etc. As you ask questions, try to get at what you cannot find in the company's published recruiting materials or elsewhere in your company and industry research.
2. ***Know your audience.*** When you interview for a job or internship, the person interviewing you may hold one of several different positions within the company. A large company may have HR recruiters conduct first round interviews with students, whereas a smaller company may have department employees or managers conduct interviews. It is important to know who is interviewing you so that you can tailor your questions accordingly. For example, you would not want to ask a specific accounting-related question (that only an accountant would know) to your interviewer if they are an HR recruiter.
3. ***Consider what stage you are at in the process.*** Earlier in the process, you will want to ask more general questions about the company's strategy and priorities and how you can fit into them, company culture, career development opportunities, and so on. Later, you will want to drill down to more specific details in these areas.
4. ***Develop a core list of questions.*** You will want to create at least three general questions you can use with all the companies with which you are interviewing. Beyond those, you should tailor questions to each company based on what you know about the company or have experienced with the company to date. Of course, based on the natural conversational flow of your interviews and what, specifically, you have been discussing with the recruiter, there will be some unscripted questions that will come to mind. Where possible, ask questions that shine a light on your knowledge, insights, and thoughtfulness about the industry, the company, its people, its culture, and/or specific ways you will be able to add value in the job.
5. ***Stay positive and know what not to ask.*** You want to be sure your interview maintains a positive tone. Avoid asking questions that highlight failures of the company or any negative aspects or news. You never want to put the interviewer on the defensive about their company. Additionally, avoid putting the interviewer on the spot by asking for immediate feedback, such as "do you see any concerns in regards to my qualifications for this position?" This makes some recruiters feel uncomfortable.

## Other Important Tips

- Do not ask about compensation in your interview. Only ask about pay once you have received an offer.
- Feel free to bring a list of questions with you to the interview and to reference those when it is time for you to ask questions. They should be typed or neatly written in your pad folio, and this is the only time you should open your pad folio during the interview. This shows that you have planned ahead and you are prepared to ask questions. Though you can reference your prepared questions, you should not take notes while your interviewer is speaking.
- Be sure to ask questions that you actually *want* to know the answer to and actively listen to the answers! Employers can tell if you are just asking them questions for the sake of asking questions.
- Always inquire about the next steps in the process (i.e. is there a second round interview? When can you expect to hear back from the employer? Can you get a business card?).

## Examples of Questions (Different Stages in Process)

### ***During Information Sessions/First Round Interviews***

- I heard about \_\_\_\_\_, can you tell me more about that? (This would pertain to an industry or company event – something that has been in the news or that you discovered in your networking and research). I get the sense that your culture is very *x, y, and z* (for example, team oriented, quick, and open/flexible). Is this an accurate assessment? What more can you tell me about the culture and its values, and how your culture impacts how people work together?
- I noticed that your company has a “\_\_\_\_\_” program for its customers. Could you tell me more about the benefits of this program?
- What do you think are some common qualities of interns/employees who really stand out? (If you ask this, be sure to respond with how you fit the qualities they identified)
- When you look back on your experience with your company, what would you be proudest about? (this may be best suited for the hiring manager or someone who once held the position you are applying for)
- How do you measure an individual’s success in your organization?
- What are the next steps in general? (If the interviewer has not already outlined these) Timing? May I please have a business card?

### ***During on Onsite Interview***

- (For Your Hiring Manager or Someone Senior) What is your management style? How do you make decisions? Like to communicate? Lead people?
- What do you see as the group’s top priorities?
- What’s important to know if I come aboard — what will contribute to my success and help me be effective and acclimate well?
- What’s your view on developing people? Any examples you are particularly proud of?
- What do you see as the top three goals/objectives for my job? What metrics do you use to evaluate performance?
- What are your ideas for how this role could evolve?
- Can you describe the performance review process?

### ***After You Have Received an Offer***

- What's the timeframe for getting back to you?
- What is your ideal timeline for start date — earliest/latest?
- When will you be sending the formal offer letter?
- If I have follow-up question or requests, are you the best person to contact?
- Where can I get information on the benefits that would be included in the offer?
- Review our [Evaluating and Negotiating Job Offers Handout](#) for more tips and advice.

### ***After You Have Accepted the Job or Are Close***

- I would still like more information on *x, y, and z* – are there alumni from my university or other people within the company with whom you could put me in touch?
- Are there any upcoming company events that I could participate in to get a deeper understanding of the company? (For example, a company happy hour or social gathering with CEO)
- Among those who have joined you and done well, what was their entry strategy? What did they particularly pay attention to that helped them transition into the organization well and be effective quickly? Are there things I could be doing before I start to be better prepared?