Want to Get the Job? Look Prepared! Job Interview Tips

No two situations are ever exactly the same, but as a general guide, these are the types of questions that could come up in a typical interview.

Why don’t you tell me about yourself?

This question has a crucial objective: to see how you handle yourself in unstructured situations, how articulate you are, confident you are, and generally what type of impression you would make on the job. Also to see where you want to go in your career and what has brought you to this point. Now, you can respond to this question the wrong way by asking, “What do you want to know?” You need to develop a good answer to this question, practice it, and be able to deliver it with poise and confidence. The right response is twofold: focus on what interests the interviewer, and highlight your most important accomplishments.

Do not dwell on your personal history--that is not why you are there. Start with your most recent employment and explain why you are well qualified for the position. The key to all successful interviewing is to match your qualifications to what the interviewer is looking for. Highlight Important Accomplishments Have a story ready that illustrates your best professional qualities. For example, if you tell an interviewer that people describe you as creative, provide a brief story that shows how you have been creative in achieving your goals.

What is your greatest weakness?

An impressive and confident response shows that the candidate has prepared for the question, has done serious self-reflection, and can admit responsibility and accept constructive criticism. Sincerely give an honest answer (but not a long one), be confident in the fact that this weakness does not make you any less of a great candidate, and show that you are working on this weakness and tell the recruiter how.

Tell me about a situation where you did not get along with a superior.

The wrong answer to this hot-button question is, “I’ve been very fortunate and have never worked for someone I didn’t get along with.” Everyone has had situations where he or she disagreed with a boss, and saying that you haven’t forces the recruiter to question your integrity. Also, it can send out a signal that the candidate is not seasoned enough or hasn’t been in situations that require him or her to develop a tough skin or deal with confrontation. It’s natural for people to have differing opinions. When this has occurred in the past, you could explain that you presented your reasons and openly listened to other opinions as well.

Describe a situation where you were part of a failed project.

If you can’t discuss a failure or mistake, the recruiter might conclude that you don’t possess the depth of experience necessary to do the job. The recruiter is not looking for perfection. He or she is trying better to understand your level of responsibility, your decision-making process, and your ability to recover from a mistake, as well as what you learned from the experience and if you can take responsibility for your mistakes.

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It should conclude on a positive note, with a concrete statement about what you learned and how it benefited the company.

What are your strengths?

Describe two or three skills you have that are relevant to the job. Avoid clichés or generalities; offer specific evidence. Describe new ways these skills could be put to use in the position you are being considered for.

Why did you leave your last position?

At high levels, issues that relate to personality and temperament become more important than they might otherwise. The recruiter wants to know if you will fit in with the client company. The recruiter may also be fishing for signs of conflict that indicate a potential personality problem. Be honest and straightforward, but do not dwell on any conflict that may have occurred. Highlight positive developments that resulted from your departure, whether it was that you accepted a more challenging position or learned an important lesson that helped you to be happier in your next job.

Why do you want to work in this industry?

Think of a story to tell about how you first became interested in this type of work. Point out any similarities between the job you’re interviewing for and your current job. Provide proof that you aren’t simply shopping in this interview. Make your passion for your work a theme that you allude to continually throughout the interview.

Career Smarts: Common Mistakes

What's the most common mistake that job hunters make when writing their resumes?

The most common mistake, by far, is filling up the resume with a laundry list of functions and responsibilities that you’ve held in your past jobs as opposed to the specific accomplishments that made a difference in the companies you worked for. You can never assume, simply because you had a particular responsibility or performed a particular task, that the person reading your resume will automatically think that you can make a contribution to his or her company.

A second common mistake is not being specific enough when it comes to the skills you possess. Mentioning your "computer skills" is no longer enough, for example. Companies - and the resume-scanning software now being used - are interested in the specific programs with which you’re familiar.

What are the pros and cons of taking on temporary jobs while looking for full-time work? It is not a bad idea since more and more companies are hiring temporary professionals for middle- and senior-level assignments and it provides experience. Temporary assignments not only give you a way to ease the financial pressure of being out of a job, but they also give you a chance to network, develop new skills and convert the temporary assignment into a full-time position. The only downside is that you have to be prepared to handle most of your job search activities after working hours.

For assistance in writing your resume, CV, cover letter or preparing for the interview, you can come to the Student Support Services office and make an appointment with any of the counselors.
College Spotlight: College of Social Work

In the 1930's the country was emerging from the greatest economic depression it had ever known. At its most serious point, fully one-third of the nation's workforce was unemployed. With the election of Franklin Delano Roosevelt as President of the United States in 1932, the federal government took a new and larger role in social legislation. In 1938 the UK Board of Trustees established a Department of Social Work within the College of Arts and Sciences. It was the wife of the university president, Frances Jewell McVey, who first had a dream of offering social work training at UK. Courses in the social work department were offered on the undergraduate and graduate levels, with emphasis on the master's level program. Four months after its creation, the UK social work program was accredited by the American Association of Schools of Social Work.

Our program provides our students with a generalist social work education so that they are prepared to practice in various settings. Our students also have the flexibility to tailor their education to meet their interests through a liberal arts foundation, upper division electives, and volunteer and field placements with a social worker in the community.

Students who achieve high academic standards as an undergraduate BASW student may qualify for the 38 hour Advanced Standing Master’s Program.

Study Tips: Writing using Transitions

The most convincing ideas in the world, expressed in the most beautiful sentences, will move no one unless those ideas are properly connected. Unless readers can move easily from one thought to another, they will surely find something else to read or turn on the television. Therefore, providing transitions between ideas is largely a matter of attitude. You must never assume that your readers know what you know. In fact, it's a good idea to assume that your reader may not know anything about your topic. You might be able to leap from one side of the stream to the other; believe that your readers need some stepping stones and be sure to place them in readily accessible and visible spots. In order for this to happen, you can use one of the four basic mechanical considerations in providing transitions between ideas: using transitional expressions, repeating key words and phrases, using pronoun reference, and using parallel form. Transitional tags run the gamut from the most simple — the little conjunctions: and, but, nor, for, yet, or, (and sometimes) so — to more complex signals that ideas are somehow connected — the conjunctive adverbs and transitional expressions such as however, moreover, nevertheless, on the other hand. For a complete list of transitional words and cues you can ask the learning specialist in the SSS office.

Scholarships: Money Opportunities

The following are a list of opportunities for money for school, for more information on any of these asks a SSS Counselor.

**BUCKS for BRAINS**: An exciting program providing undergraduates at UK with hands-on experience in academic research, working alongside top faculty in areas of history, plant biochemistry, and computer science as well as an array of other topics. It would be for 8 weeks beginning May 7. The deadline to apply is **April 15**. If you want more information go to [WWW. rgs.uky.edu/students/guidelines.html](http://WWW.rgs.uky.edu/students/guidelines.html).

**William C Parker Diversity Scholarship: Continuing Students** Deadline April 15: Students interested in this scholarship must have a minimum GPA of 2.5, write an essay on how he/she can contribute to the diversity on UK’s campus, and complete the application. Awards are made on the applicant’s ranking within the competitive pool. The value of the award is $5000.00 dollars per year. An application is available in the SSS office.

Other scholarships are available, all you need to do is come by and look through the scholarship binder at the font table.
Stress: Are You Feeling It Lately?

You're feeling anxious, simple things irritate you, you've got yet another headache coming on and you're tired but there's no time to stop and rest. You're suffering from mood swings, feel tense, are worrying endlessly and can't concentrate on simple tasks. If this sounds like a familiar scenario, you could well be suffering from stress. Stress can strike at any time during our lives and can be a debilitating condition. Many factors can cause it, but common triggers tend to be pressures of work, relationships, money, family problems or merely the fact that life suddenly seems to be a constant tough battle. Once stress starts it can impact on all areas of our health — physical, mental and emotional.

Continued stress that isn't dealt with can lead to increased feelings of insecurity and can cause other conditions such as depression, high blood pressure, peptic ulcers or a lowered immune system.

Are You Stressed?
One of the important aids to combating and dealing with stress is to first recognize that you are indeed suffering from it. Sadly, this isn't always as simple as it may seem. Despite the fact that other people notice something's wrong, sufferers are often the very last to realize and admit that they actually are stressed. Some physical symptoms of stress are: shortness of breath, frequent colds, aching back, migraines, sudden allergies, neck aches, nausea, weight loss or gain, tiredness, sweating, and indigestion, to name a few. Along with physical symptoms psychological symptoms exist too. These can range from anxiety, guilt, depression, exhaustion, paranoia, to anger, fear, jealousy, and withdrawal. Stress is high in college students, and should not be seen as what is required when in college. Come see a SSS Counselor on the ways to cope with stress.

What YOU Don’t Want to Miss!

- **Last appointments** with SSS Counselor, April 22-26 By appointment
- Thursday, April 25  **Recognition Ceremony** 5-7 at Dickey Hall Conference Room
- WCP Freshmen: Complete 3 Freshmen Focus Workshops
- Everyone! Make your second or third appointment with your SSS counselor Call 257-9797

RSVP for **all workshops** by calling the SSS Office 257-9797 or email **valerie.rister@uky.edu**