

Technical English, Lecture 15: Interviews

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Interviews are a comprehensive example of what we studied.

- You read a job description.
- You write a cover letter and a resume.
- You maintain a (two way) conversation with the interviewer.

What are the types of interviews?

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Levels

In many cases you will pass by various filters.

1. The administrative assistants in the company read the application and classify it. They may exchange some emails with you and make a decision.
2. There could be a phone interview.
3. The technical interview tests your abilities.
4. There is sometimes a second interview with the managers where you *negotiate*.

Remember that it is an interview not an interrogation!

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Objectives

Regardless of the type of the interview you want to

1. meet the job requirements,
2. communicate clearly,
3. build rapport, and
4. gather feedback information.

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Meet the job requirements

You should

- prepare yourself emotionally,
- write an inventory of your skills, and
- think about answers to expected questions:
 - Can you tell me about yourself?
 - What are your weaknesses?
 - Don't you think that you are overqualified for this job?

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Communicate clearly

It is a two way communications. Interviewers mention several attitude problems. The interviewee

1. does not ask questions.
2. condemns past employers.
3. is unable to take criticism.
4. has a poor personal appearance.
5. cannot take decision and seems lazy.
6. pretends to know everything.
7. comes late to appointments.
8. is not looking at the interviewer. (avoids eye contact)
9. is unable to express clearly.
10. overemphasizes the issue of money.

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Some answers

Yourself: This should be a short summary (less than two minutes) and probably end it with a question to the interviewer so that you get information about the company as well.

Weakness: “Although I bring many strengths, my performance on ... is not comparable but I am trying to improve by” You may ask about the company’s policy to promote self-learning by the employees.

Overqualified: “This actually means that I bring new talents to the team and that I am right for you now without any further training. My interest in the position should allow me to use these talents to benefit the company more.” You may ask about the possibility of putting these talents to the service of other employees.

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Over the line

Phone interviews are a bit harder since you cannot use body gestures in either way while communicating. The only thing that you have is your voice. However, prepare yourself and get your papers near you:

- your resume,
- the job posting,
- your research about the company, and
- some opening and closing questions that you want to ask.

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Build a rapport

- Correlate your experience with the benefits of hiring you.
- Take the initiative and make yourself fit. The top finalists are closely matched. It is the rapport that gives you the advantage.

8/10

Thanks are due

Job-seekers must send a thank-you letter right after a job interview. The thank you letter may be one

- that is general.
- that stresses fit.
- that builds on strength.
- that entices the employer.
- that aims at damage control.
- that mentions interview afterthoughts.
- that targets the campus recruiter.

http://www.quintcareers.com/sample_thank-you_letters.html

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Gather information

Instead of playing darts blindfolded try to get answers.

- What are the measures of success in the company?
- What are the top three priorities the company wants to accomplish?
- “Given my qualifications, what are your concerns?”

Remember that you are in a *negotiation*. You are “selling” your time and getting money. As much as possible try to delay the discussion of the salary till you have the upper hand!

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