

MASTER THE INTERVIEW PROCESS

Cut Through Uncertainty To Determine The Best Candidates For Your
Business, Culture, And Teams

Workbook Edition



moxie
INSTITUTE

MASTER THE INTERVIEW PROCESS

- Foundations of Great Interviews
- The Power of Questions
- Preparing for Interviewee Questions
- Host Engaging Interviews
- Closing Strong and Providing Next Steps

FOUNDATIONS OF GREAT INTERVIEWS

Chemistry	Philosophical Alignment	Direction/Goals

YOUR MAIN ROLE

- Set the tone and create an inviting and engaging space
- You get what you give
- But don't give away too much
- Come prepared with questions
- Know your differentiator ("sell them")

THE STORY OF US: COMPANY ELEVATOR PITCH

An elevator pitch is a short spoken statement about your company. This is your differentiator as a company and hooks the candidate with what makes your company unique. It tells candidates who the company is, what you do well as a company, and what you can offer to the candidate. The idea is that it should be brief enough to be delivered during an elevator ride

Example: "We are the leading paper manufacturing company in the US. We make everything from the giant banner ads you see on buildings, to the tiny business cards you carry in your pocket. Everything we do is locally sourced, expertly crafted, and of the highest quality. Working here means you're an artisan who admires their craft and loves working with amazing people who share a passion for design - all in a fun and engaging environment that values new ideas. Sound good?"

Who You Are: Introduce yourself and your company.

What You Do: Describe what products and/or services your company offer.

How You're Different: Describe what makes your company different from its competitors.

Why You're The Best: Explain your value proposition.

What's In It For Them: Describe what your candidate can gain by working with your company.

Call To Action: Describe your desired outcome.

KEEP AN OPEN MIND AND HEART

Unconscious biases (i.e. Similarity Bias, Halo or Horn Bias)

- What unconscious biases might you have, and what can you do to ensure you avoid potential biases and find the best candidate for the role?

NOTES:

THE POWER OF QUESTIONS

THE THREE MAJORS

1 Culture Fit Examples:

- “We’re curious; what do you know about our company and the industry we operate in?”
- “Any reason in particular that you applied to our company vs. somewhere else?”
- “What about this role and its responsibilities caught your attention?”

Additional Culture Fit Questions:

2 Skill Fit Examples:

- It says here in your resume/cover letter that you... tell us more about that.
- So when you were X, or solving problem X, how did you approach it?
- Tell us some of the biggest lessons you’ve learned when trying to X.
- If you started next week, what would be one of the first things you would do to start solving X?

Additional Skill Fit Questions:

3 Character Fit Examples:

- *(Situational)*
“People don’t always agree on how to solve problems. Tell us a time when you had to...”
- *(Service)*
“Each of us participates in creating the environment and culture around us. Tell us something you do or have done to spread joy or improve someone’s day around you?”
- *(Success)*
“We all have “sharp edges” we’re working on, especially during times of stress, deadlines, and conflict. From a personal development lens, tell us about a corner you’ve turned that you’re personally proud of, as well as a lesson learned.”

Additional Character Fit Questions:

THE THREE MINORS

1 Mindset Examples:

- A truth you've learned...
- A good day for you would be...
- We all make mistakes. What's your go-to strategy for adapting?

Additional Mindset Questions:

2 Motivation Examples:

- What drives you and keeps you going?
- Do you have any goals you're working on this year? What about the next 5?

Additional Motivation Questions:

3 MISC or Mystery Box Examples:

The Set-Up: We believe people are more than just the work they do...

- Do you have any passions, interests, or hobbies outside of work that bring you joy?
- Anything else you want us to know about yourself?
 - **Note:** Even if they say “I’m an open book. What do you want to know?” You redirect it back to their choice: “Nothing in particular, just wondering if there is anything you want us to know about you.” If there is nothing, just move on.

Additional Misc or Mystery Box Questions:

ADDITIONAL COMMON INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

■ TEAMWORK

Almost any job requires the candidate to work with others, so it's important to learn about their experiences working as part of a team. Look for stories that illustrate their ability to work with others under challenging circumstances, such as resolving team conflicts, dealing with project constraints, or motivating others.

- Tell me about a time when you had to work closely with a personality that was very different from yours.
- Give me an example of a time you faced a conflict with a coworker. How did you handle it?
- Describe a time when you had to step up and demonstrate leadership skills.
- Tell me about a time you made a mistake and wish you had handled a situation with a coworker differently.
- Tell me about a time you needed to get information from someone who wasn't very responsive. What did you do?

■ CUSTOMER SERVICE

If the position is service-oriented, you can ask the below questions. Listen for stories about a time they successfully represented their company and delivered exceptional customer service.

- Describe a time when it was especially important to make a good impression on a client.
- Give me an example of a time when you didn't meet a client's expectations. How did you attempt to rectify the situation?
- Tell me about a time when you made sure a customer was pleased with your service.
- Describe a time when you had to interact with a difficult customer. How did you handle it?
- When you're working with a large number of customers, it's tricky to deliver excellent service to them all. How do you go about prioritizing your customers' needs?

■ ADAPTABILITY

Times of turmoil are excellent material for interviews. Listen for responses highlighting how they successfully navigated challenges and their ability to adapt when faced with difficult situations.

- Tell me about a time you were under a lot of pressure at work. How did you handle it?
- Describe a time when your team or company was undergoing some changes. How did that impact you and how did you adapt?
- Tell me about a time when you successfully adapted to a new work environment.
- Give me an example of a time when you had to think on your feet.
- Tell me about a time you failed. How did you deal with the situation?

■ TIME MANAGEMENT

When asking about time management, listen for specific examples of how the candidate executed projects successfully within the time required. These questions help ensure you can count on the candidate to deliver.

- Give me an example of a time you managed numerous responsibilities. How did you handle that?
- Describe a long-term project that you kept on track. How did you see it through to completion?
- Tell me about a time your responsibilities got overwhelming. What did you do?
- Tell me about a time you set a goal for yourself and what you did to achieve your objective.
- Tell me about a time an unexpected problem derailed your planning. How did you recover?

■ COMMUNICATION

Communication is essential in the workplace and a crucial skill that employers look for. Listen for specific examples that showcase the candidate's ability to communicate successfully.

- Tell me about a time when you had to rely on written communication to get your ideas across.
- Give me an example of when you were able to persuade a coworker into seeing a new perspective.
- Describe a time when you were a team leader. What did you do to ensure clear communication?
- Give me an example of a time when you had to have a difficult conversation with a frustrated client or coworker. How did you handle the situation?
- Tell me about a recent presentation you gave and why you think it was successful.

■ MOTIVATION AND VALUES

It's important to ascertain what motivates a candidate. Listen for responses that address values and motivations.

- Tell me about your proudest professional accomplishment.
- Describe a time when you saw a problem and took the initiative to correct it.
- Tell me about an experience you had under close supervision or loose supervision. How did you handle the situation?
- Give me an example of a time you were able to be creative with your work. What was exciting or difficult about it?
- Tell me about a time you were dissatisfied in your role. What could you have done to make it better?

QUESTIONS AND TOPICS TO AVOID

- **Disabilities:** According to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), employers are limited in making disability-related inquiries during the pre-offer, post-offer, and employment stages. These are questions that elicit information about a disability. These include questions like, “Have you ever had a disability?” or questions about the prescription medicine they are taking.
- **Genetic Information:** Under Title II of the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008 (GINA), hiring companies and other employment-related organizations such as employment agencies, labor organizations, and joint labor-management training and apprenticeship programs are heavily restricted from requesting for, requiring, or purchasing genetic information.
- **Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation:** Gender identity and sexual orientation have been explicitly mentioned as bases for discriminatory practices. If knowing the candidate’s gender identity and sexual orientation has absolutely nothing to do with the Job, then it’s best not to ask about them.
- **Religion:** In general, questions about an applicant’s religious affiliation or beliefs (or availability for work on Sundays) are viewed as non-job-related under federal law. However, if religion is a bona fide occupational qualification, employment based on religion is permitted. For example, the employment of religious teachers in religious educational institutions.
- **Race and Ethnicity:** As with gender identity and sexual orientation, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 also prohibits discrimination based on race. Questions regarding race and ethnicity should not be asked unless it is a Bona Fide Occupational Qualification.
- **Military Discharge:** While not exactly illegal, employers are strongly advised against asking related questions as EEOC has said that basing hiring decisions solely on military discharge status violates Title VII as it has been found to work against the African-American community in particular.
- **Educational Requirements:** It’s normal for jobs to require a minimum level of education. After all, the educational certificate does imply that the applicant has the basic level of knowledge necessary to perform some basic job functions. But if the requirements are higher than what is needed to successfully perform the job, it may violate Title VII as it can potentially and disproportionately exclude certain racial groups.
- **Marital and Family Status:** Such questions have the potential to violate Title VII (including “is that your married name?”) as they may be seen as evidence of intent to discriminate against people such as women with children, pregnant women, or single parents. Also. “Any kids? / What’s your childcare situation?”
- **Age:** Asking the interviewee about when they graduated high school, or their date of birth could be seen as a form of age discrimination. If necessary, candidates could be asked to furnish their proof of age or mention that hiring is subject to age verification.

- **Language:** Some jobs may require candidates with the ability to speak or write certain languages. It's crucial for such questions to be worded distinctively. Ask the candidate what languages they speak and write fluently, if required by the job, instead of asking for their native language, as it could be considered as national origin discrimination.
- **Salary History:** Although it isn't uncommon for companies to ask for the last drawn salary of an individual, it could be seen as gender discrimination and may even violate state laws. Rather than basing their pay off their previous salary, ask for their salary expectations for the position. After all, candidates should obtain remuneration based on the value of their experience to your company, rather than calculated based on their previous paycheck.
- **Financial History:** Questions relating to debt and financial health could be justified for positions involving significant amounts of cash or financial accounts. However, it's also a form of discrimination towards those with lower incomes and is a gray area that should be avoided if possible.
- **Health and Physical Abilities:** Enquiring about a candidate's smoking and drinking habits to more personal information like height and weight or past illnesses could also be seen as a form of discrimination. Instead, ask about their ability to perform specific tasks required by the job description. Even though employers do not have any ill intent when seemingly asking certain types of questions, it can be perceived as discrimination. Here are some tips and guiding principles which should be considered while crafting interview questions, to prevent these sticky situations.

For more information, review the US Equal Employment Opportunity Commission website at: <https://www.eeoc.gov/>

Additional Questions To Avoid:

PREPARING FOR INTERVIEWEE QUESTIONS

- Savvy interviewers are interviewing YOU as much as you are interviewing them
- Separate the “authentic question askers” from the “trying to look smart” applicants

COMMON QUESTIONS FROM CANDIDATES

- What is the history of this position? (i.e., Was it just created, or am I the 3rd person you’ve tried and fired for it?)
- What would you want to see me accomplish in the first six months?
- How would you measure my success, and what could I do to exceed your expectations?
- Which part of the position has the steepest learning curve? What can I do in order to get up to speed quickly?
- What are the expectations about managing workflow?
- How is the feedback process structured?
- What professional development opportunities will I have to learn and grow?
- What is the most challenging part of your job? What is your favorite part of your job?
- How did you get to your role?
- Do you have the tools and resources to do your job well?
- Do you feel that your opinions count?
- Is there anything I have said that makes you doubt I would be a great fit for this position?
- Can you tell me a bit about how the company focuses on work/life balance?
- What are the perks and/or benefits that the company provides?

Jot Down Your Answers And Additional Questions From Candidates:

HOST ENGAGING INTERVIEWS

TIPS AND BEST PRACTICES

- What you see is what you get.
- Show a united front
- Bring the culture to the interview

Additional Tips and Best Practices to Host Engaging Interviews:

VIRTUAL INTERVIEWS

- Test your audio and video before the interview
- Use a platform that you are comfortable with
- Set a virtual background (if needed) or clean up your existing background
- Dress to impress
- Ensure you have good lighting
- Ensure all cameras are on
- Ensure you are speaking loudly enough to be heard by your mic

Additional Tips For Effective Virtual Interviews

CLOSING STRONG AND PROVIDING NEXT STEPS

- Thank the candidate for their time, and offer sincere appreciation for meeting with you.
- Let them know the general timeframe for when a hiring decision will be made.

What Are Some Challenges When Closing Strong? What Can You Do Instead?

Criteria	1 = Unacceptable	2 = Minimally Acceptable	3 = Proficient	4 = Advanced	Score
Response to Questions	Inappropriate answers given to questions. Lacked variety in answers or did not directly respond to questions asked. No questions present.	Few substantive/pertinent answers given. Very little variety in type and form of answers. Answers and questions lacked thoughtfulness.	Some substantive/pertinent answers. Some variety in type and form of answers. Thoughtful questions were present.	Mostly substantive/pertinent answers. A lot of variety in type and form of answers. Very thoughtful answers and questions.	
Language	Grammar, pronunciation, and/or word choice are severely deficient. Interviewee does not use professional language.	Isolated errors in grammar, pronunciation, and/or word choices reduce clarity and credibility.	Presentation is free of serious errors in grammar, pronunciation, and/or word usage. Interviewee sounds mostly professional.	Presentation is free of errors in grammar and pronunciation; word choice aids clarity and vividness. Professional language.	
Appropriateness	Content and/or style are frequently inappropriate to the audience and/or context. Dress is not professional.	Content and/or style are occasionally inappropriate. Dress is somewhat professional.	Content and/or style are consistently appropriate. Dress is professional.	Content and style are consistently appropriate. Targeted to the interviewer and the specific context. Dress is professional.	
Delivery	Delivery is distracting or awkward and not commanding for an interview. Long silences or too much talking.	Delivery neither enhances nor hinders performance. Appropriate gestures are communicated. Some distracting mannerisms and very nervousness.	Delivery is clear and commands the interview. Voice and body are evenly matched and appropriately managed for the situation. Some nervousness visible.	Vocal and non-verbal delivery are well developed and enhance the interview experience.	

Score Total (out of 16): _____

Criteria	1 = Unacceptable	2 = Minimally Acceptable	3 = Proficient	4 = Advanced	Score
Content of Questions	Inappropriate questions asked to elicit a response. Lacked variety in type and form of questions.	Few substantive/pertinent questions asked. Very little variety in type and form of questions.	Some substantive/pertinent questions. Some variety in type and form of questions.	Mostly substantive/pertinent questions. A lot of variety in type and form of questions.	
Organization of Interview	Little or no structure present. Presentation is confusing; no logical sequence of ideas; frequently off topic. Interview falls well outside set time parameters.	Identifiable structure is present but inconsistent; may contain statements out of place and deviates from topic. Interview falls outside set time parameters.	Identifiable structure is present and consistently executed with a few statements out of place. Interview meets set time parameters.	Identifiable structure is presented in a purposeful, effective sequence and remains focused. Interview makes full use of time and stays within parameters.	
Language	Grammar, pronunciation, and/or word choices are severely deficient. Interviewer does not use professional language.	Isolated errors in grammar, pronunciation, and/or word choices reduce clarity and credibility.	Interview is free of serious errors in grammar, pronunciation, and word choices. Sounds mostly professional.	Presentation is free of errors in grammar and pronunciation; word choice aids clarity and vividness. Professional language.	
Appropriateness	Content and/or style are frequently inappropriate to the audience and/or context. Dress is not professional.	Content and/or style are occasionally inappropriate to the audience and/or context. Dress is somewhat professional.	Content and/or style are consistently appropriate to the audience, and/or context. Dress is professional.	Content and style are consistently appropriate. Targeted to the interviewee and the specific context. Dress is professional.	
Delivery	Delivery is distracting or awkward and not commanding for an interview. Long silences or too much talking.	Delivery neither enhances nor hinders performance. Appropriate gestures are communicated. Some distracting mannerisms.	Delivery is clear and commands the interview. Voice and body are evenly matched and appropriately managed for the situation.	Vocal and non-verbal delivery are well developed and enhance the interview experience.	

Score Total (out of 20): _____

WE WOULD LOVE YOUR FEEDBACK!

Scan the QR code below to take our super short, super fun
(okay, maybe not super fun) survey. We promise it's under a minute!



To continue to elevate your professional skills and accelerate your career goals or to just learn more about our industry-leading training and services, you can visit our website, send us an email or give us a call!

We look forward to supporting you on your journey!



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