

## Preparing for an Interview

*Getting your foot in the door is often the hardest part with any job or internship application. Once you're in, the interview is your time to shine and prove to them your passion for their work and ability to deliver. Here are a few tips to help you prepare.*

- Do your research beforehand! Review their website, annual report, and do a Google search to get a better sense of their mission, objectives, achievements, etc. Do some research to get acquainted with any major issues in the field and who their main competitors are.
- The interview is when many first impressions are formed, so make sure it's a good one. Dress professionally, even if you know it's a relaxed organization. For suggestions on what is appropriate attire, visit [www.symsdress.com/basics.htm](http://www.symsdress.com/basics.htm).
- Bring a note pad, extra copies of your resume, a list of references, and a copy of the job description.
- Spend some time thinking about how you will respond to an interviewer's questions. Having an idea of what you're going to say will help you keep from hemming and hawing. A list of common questions can be found below.
- When answering questions, don't restrict yourself to general statements such as, "I'm a hard worker". Use specific examples from your experience to back up all your attributes. Don't make the interviewer prompt you for full answers!
- When talking about your short and long term goals, keep in mind an interviewer wants to see that your plans align with their needs and how they compliment the organization. Be careful about explicitly stating something like, "I'd like to work for a year or two, then return to grad school"; though this may be the case, question whether an employer would want to invest in an employee who plans to leave in a year.
- Asking questions about the organization, the field, and your interviewer shows your engagement and interest. See the list of sample questions below for ideas.
- Complaining about past employers or putting down previous experience may lead to an interviewer forming an opinion of you as a negative person. Stay positive!
- Send a quick thank you after the interview. It doesn't have to be a formal thank you note sent via post; a simple email is sufficient, and appreciated, in most cases.
- Consider a mock interview beforehand. This is a great chance to practice your answers and thinking on your feet. Recruit a friend to interview you or contact the BA Internship Coordinator ([baints@du.edu](mailto:baints@du.edu) or 303-871-4495) to set up a mock interview.
- ***Your passion for the work will make you stand out!***

## Interview Sample Questions

*Practicing different responses to typical interview questions will help you to be ready for them. It is also helpful to have thought of a few questions to ask beforehand, showing your interest in learning more about the job and organization. Most importantly, relax, listen and be real, and before you know it, you'll be in your next job!*

### Questions You Might Be Asked in an Interview

1. Tell me about yourself? (this is a short "infomercial," 2 minutes or less)
2. What do you know about our company/organization?
3. Why should we hire you?
4. What can you do for us that someone else can't?
5. What do you look for in a job?
6. What skills and qualifications are essential for success in the position of \_\_\_\_\_?
7. How long would it take for you to make a meaningful contribution?
8. How does this assignment fit into your overall career plan?
9. Describe your management/leadership style.
10. What do you believe is the most difficult part of being a supervisor of people?
11. How would your colleagues/boss describe you?
12. How would you describe yourself?
13. What do you think of your present or past boss?
14. What were the five most significant accomplishments in your last position?
15. What were the five most significant accomplishments in your career/life so far?
16. Can you work well under deadlines or pressure?
17. How much do you expect if we offer you this position?
18. Why do you want to work for us?
19. What other positions are you considering?
20. What are your career goals?
21. What are your strong points?
22. What are your weak points?
23. How did you do in school?
24. What position do you expect to have in 2 to 5 years?
25. If you took the job what would you accomplish in the first year?
26. Why do you want to leave your current or last position?
27. What kind of hours are you used to working or would like to work?
28. Do you have your reference list with you? (But don't unless it is asked for).
29. What questions didn't I ask that you expected?
30. Do you have any questions for me? (Answer: yes!)

### Questions You Might Want to Ask

1. Why is this position open?
2. How often has it been filled in the past five years? What were the main reasons?
3. What would you like done differently by the next person who fills this position?
4. What are some of the objectives you would like to see accomplished in this job?
5. What is most pressing? What would you like to see happen during the next three months?
6. What are some of the long term objectives you would like to see completed?
7. What are some of the more difficult problems one would have to face in this position?
8. How do you think these could best be handled?
9. What type of support does this position receive in terms of people, finances, etc?
10. What freedom would I have in determining my own work objectives, deadlines, and methods of measurement?
11. What advancement opportunities are available for the person who is successful in this position, and within what time frame?
12. In what ways has this organization been most successful in terms of products/services/projects over the years?
13. What significant changes do you foresee in the near future?
14. How is one evaluated in this position?
15. What accounts for success within the company/organization?
16. How did the interview become involved with the organization/field?
17. What does the interview think is the best/most fulfilling aspect of working for the organization?