

How to Prepare for an Interview



01 Perform Organization/Company Research

- Understand the organizational mission, vision, and goals. Learn how they put these items into action through their business practices and community involvement.
- Explore their products, services, and, if known, their customers.
- Examine their social media accounts, along with other sources for a broader and balanced picture of the company.
- If the company is product or service-based, try them out as a consumer.

02 Learn about Open Positions

- Perform a deep dive into the position announcement.
- Understand what skills and experiences the job description is emphasizing, and what problems this position will solve. Match these items to your experiences and how you have demonstrated these skill sets.

03 Know your Audience

- If you are not told who you will be meeting with during your interview, ask. For each interviewer, learn what their role at the company is and prepare a few questions that are specific to them. LinkedIn may be a great resource.
- Confirm the interview format (phone, in-person, web, panel, etc.).

04 Prepare for General Interview Questions

- Know your selling points and how they relate to this position.
- Quantify your experience
 - If you have supervisory responsibilities how many did you supervise?
 - If you produced cost savings or efficiencies, how much time or money was saved?
 - If you chaired a committee, what was its size?
 - If you presented to an audience, how large?
- Practice your answers so you feel comfortable responding, but do not memorize them.
- Plan on how you will handle a question that may catch you off guard. Develop a phrase that you may say to pause and gather your thoughts. Consider repeating the question, pausing for a drink or saying something like. "That is a great question..."

05 Behavioral-based Interview Questions

- Create a list of accomplishments using the STAR(T) (Situation, Task, Action, Result + Takeaways) methods of reflection to help understand your current skills/capabilities and highlight your successes.
- Turn these accomplishments into stories you may share in your interview. Doing this will help you frame your accomplishments around solving problems, accomplishing a goal, prioritizing under pressure, turning a failure into a win, completing a multifaceted project, or overcoming barriers. See below using the STAR(T) method.
(<https://www.themuse.com/advice/star-interview-method>)
 - Situation: Briefly lay out the scenario using just enough detail that the interviewer will understand the stakes and everything else in your answer.
 - Task: Talk about what your role in the situation was.
 - Action: Discuss what you did and why.
 - Result + Takeaways: Tell your interviewer about the outcome and what you learned.

06 Prepare Questions for the Interviewer

- Plan to ask questions specifically about the job and company.
- Prepare more than you think you will need as the interviewer may already address some of your questions during the interview.
- Consider:
 - What does a typical day or week look like in this role?
 - What attributes does someone need to have to be successful in this position?
 - What are the biggest challenges that someone in this position would face?
 - What does your onboarding process look like?
 - What professional development opportunities are available to your employees?
 - Can you tell me about the team I'll be working with?
 - Who will I work with most closely?
 - Who will I report to directly?
 - Is there anything else I can provide you with that would be helpful?

07 The Day (or Two) Before

- Print out copies of your resume, include a copy for yourself.
- Test any technology (microphones, headsets, network connections, hardware, software) that you may be using and in the location you will be using it, if possible.
- Pack your purse, backpack, or briefcase that you will be bringing with you. Include a notepad and any items to help with an "emergency", such as a stain stick, umbrella, and breath mints. Clean out the bag of other unnecessary items.
- Figure out the best travel route for the time of day you will be arriving. Know where you will park and if you need to pay for parking, etc.
- Get a good night's rest leading up to the interview.

QUESTIONS?

REACH OUT TO CAREER@HILBERT.EDU