



Global Chartered Accountants

GCAOFFICIAL.ORG



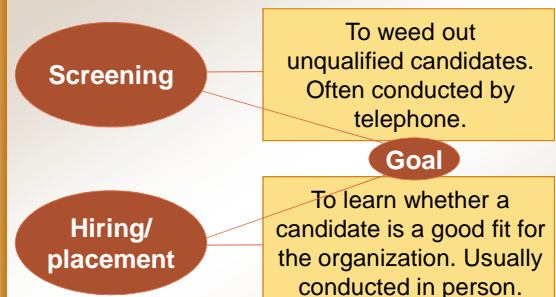
CHAPTER 14

Interviewing and Following Up

Multimedia Instructor Version
© 2010 Thomson South-Western



Types of Employment Interviews



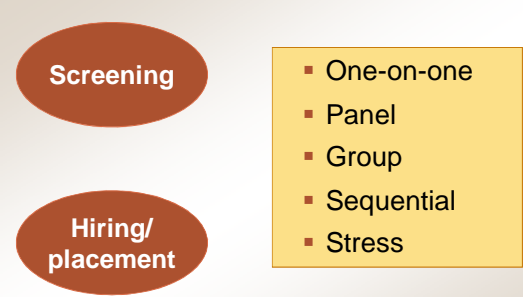
Screening To weed out unqualified candidates. Often conducted by telephone.

Hiring/ placement To learn whether a candidate is a good fit for the organization. Usually conducted in person.

Goal

Mary Ellen Guffey, *Essentials of Business Communication, 8e* Chapter 14, Slide 3

Types of Employment Interviews



Screening

- One-on-one
- Panel
- Group
- Sequential
- Stress

Hiring/ placement

Mary Ellen Guffey, *Essentials of Business Communication, 8e* Chapter 14, Slide 4

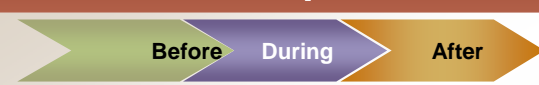
Interview Success Requires an Effective Game Plan



Before the interview → **During the interview** → **After the interview**

Mary Ellen Guffey, *Essentials of Business Communication, 8e* Chapter 14, Slide 5

Using Professional Phone Techniques



Before → **During** → **After**

- Invest in a good answering machine or voice mail system.
- Alert your family; don't let children answer.
- Beware of answering cell calls.
- Use voice mail to screen calls.

Mary Ellen Guffey, *Essentials of Business Communication, 8e* Chapter 14, Slide 6

Making the First Conversation Impressive

- Near the telephone keep your résumé and a list of positions for which you have applied.
- Treat any call from an employer as an interview.
- Take good notes; obtain accurate directions.
- Ask the employer to send a copy of the job description and other company information.
- Confirm the date and time of promised interview.



Researching the Target Company

Before During After

- Research in the library, campus career center and the Web for information.
- Know the leaders, company products, finances, goals, competition, accomplishments, and setbacks.
- If possible, interview employees.
- Consult blogs.

Prepare and Practice

Before During After

- Study the job description. How do your skills and accomplishments fit the position?
- Prepare success stories.
- Clean up any digital dirt.
- Practice answers to typical interview questions. Get your responses down pat.

Prepare and Practice

- Record yourself.
- Expect to explain problem areas on your résumé.
- Decide how you will dress professionally.
- Gather what you will bring with you.
- Take a trial trip to the interview site.



Traveling to and Arriving at Your Interview

Before During After

- Give yourself plenty of time to groom and dress.
- Arrive on time or a little early.
- When you enter, be courteous and congenial to everyone.
- Greet the interviewer confidently; don't be afraid to initiate a handshake.



Fighting Fear

Before During After

- Practice interviewing as much as you can, particularly with real companies.
- Prepare thoroughly.
- Breathe deeply.
- Remember that interviewing is a two-way street. You are also evaluating the interviewer and his or her organization. This should give you confidence.

During the Interview

Before During After

Sending Positive Nonverbal Messages and Acting Professionally

- Control your body movements.
- Exhibit good posture.
- Use appropriate eye contact.
- Use gestures effectively.
- Smile enough to convey a positive attitude.

During the Interview

Sending Positive Nonverbal Messages and Acting Professionally

- Listen attentively.
- Turn off your cell phone.
- Don't chew gum.
- Sound enthusiastic, interested, and sincere.
- Avoid "empty" words—*um, uh, like, basically.*

During the Interview

Answering Questions Effectively

- Use the interviewer's name occasionally.
- Be sure you understand the question asked. If necessary, clarify vague questions, such as *By ____ do you mean ____?*
- Aim your answers at key requirements for the job and at characteristics that interviewers seek: expertise, competence, communication skills, and enthusiasm for the job.

During the Interview

Answering Questions Effectively

- Use good English and enunciate clearly.
- Avoid answering with a simple "yes" or "no."
- Do not lie.
- Never make negative statements about your present or former employers.



During the Interview

Answering Questions Effectively

- Don't inquire about salary, vacations, and bonuses until the interviewer raises the issue or until you are offered the position.
- Don't be a "know-it-all." Don't be overbearing, overly aggressive, or conceited.
- Show what you can do for the company; avoid an attitude of "What can you do for me?"

Five Important Areas Employers Will Probe

Communication skills: How well do you present yourself and your ideas?


Attitude: Do you have a positive attitude about yourself and your career?

Aptitude: Do your educational training and general life experiences qualify you for this position?

Potential: How do your attitude and aptitude combine to contribute to this company?

Motivation: What are your short- and long-term career goals? Why do you want this job?


Kinds of Interview Questions



Think about how you might respond most effectively to these examples of the ten most common types of interview questions.

Kinds of Interview Questions

Get Acquainted



- Tell me about yourself.
- What are your greatest strengths?

Kinds of Interview Questions


Gauge Your Interest



- Why do you want to work for _____?
- Why are you interested in this position?

Kinds of Interview Questions


Your Experience and Accomplishments



- Why should we hire you when we have applicants with more experience or better credentials?
- How do your qualifications and experience prepare you for this position?

Kinds of Interview Questions

The Future



- Where do you expect to be five years from now?
- If you got this position, what would you do to fit in?

Kinds of Interview Questions

Challenging



- What is your greatest weakness?
- How would your former supervisor describe you as an employee?

Kinds of Interview Questions

Money



See *Communication Workshop*, "Let's Talk Money," at the end of the chapter.

- How much money are you looking for?
- How much do you think you're worth?

Kinds of Interview Questions

Situational



- If you were aware that a coworker was falsifying data, what would you do?
- If you had to handle an irate customer, what would you do?

Kinds of Interview Questions

Behavioral



- Tell me about a time when you solved a difficult problem.
- Describe a time when you worked successfully as part of a team.

Kinds of Interview Questions

Illegal and Inappropriate



- What is your marital status?
- Do you have any disabilities?
- How old are you?
- Where are you from? What is the origin of your last name? What is your native language?

Kinds of Interview Questions

Illegal and Inappropriate



- Have you ever been arrested?
- Do you have any children?
- Do you have any religious beliefs that prevent you from working weekends or holidays?
- How much do you weigh?

Use the STAR Method to Answer Behavioral Questions



Behavioral interview questions may begin with *Tell me about a time when you...*

To answer effectively, use the STAR method.

Use the STAR Method to Answer Behavioral Questions

S

What was the **situation**?

T

What was the **task**?

A

What **action was taken**?

R

What was the **result**?

Asking Your Own Questions

Interviewee Questions

- What will my duties be?
- What is it like working here, in terms of the people, management practices, work loads, expected performance, and rewards?
- What training programs does this organization offer?

Asking Your Own Questions

Interviewee Questions

- Who would be my immediate supervisor?
- What is the organizational structure, and where does this position fit in?
- What is the first problem that needs the attention of the person you hire?

Asking Your Own Questions

Interviewee Questions

- How will my job performance be evaluated?
- What do you like best about working for this organization?
- When will I hear from you regarding further action on my application?

Ending Positively

- When the interviewer signals the end of the interview, stand up and shake hands.
- Find out what action will follow.
- Ask, "When can I expect to hear from you?"
- After his or her reply, say, "If I don't hear from you by then, may I call you?"
- Thank the interviewer.
- Say goodbye to the receptionist.

Before

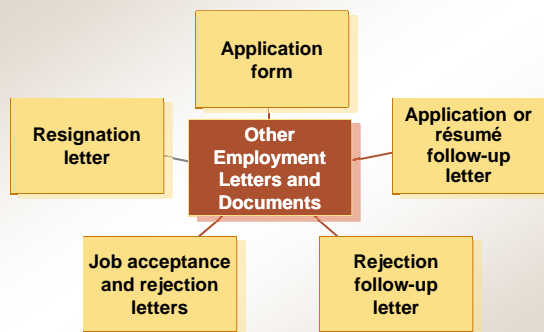
During

After

- Make notes on the interview as soon as you leave.
- Alert your references that they might be called.
- Write a thank-you letter to the interviewer. Remind the interviewer of your visit. Show that you really want the job and that you are qualified for it.
- If you don't hear from the interviewer within the specified time, call.

Interview Follow-Up Letter

See on page 10



Application Form

- Be prepared to fill out a job application form.
- Carry a card summarizing your vital data with such information as
 - Graduation dates
 - Beginning and ending employment dates
 - Salary history
 - Full names and titles of previous supervisors
 - Full addresses and telephone numbers of current and present employers
 - Complete data about your references

Application Form

- Look over all questions before starting.
- Print your answers neatly, using blue or black ink.
- Answer all questions honestly. Write *Not applicable* or *N/A* if appropriate.
- Give a specific job title if requested.
- Expect a salary question. Suggest a range or write *Negotiable* or *Open*.
- Be ready to explain reasons for leaving previous positions.

Application or Résumé Follow-Up Letter

- Send a short follow-up letter if your application or résumé generates no response.
- Open by reminding the reader of your interest.
- In the body, review your strengths or add new qualifications.
- Close by looking forward positively.
- Avoid accusations that make the reader defensive.

Rejection Follow-Up Letter

- Don't give up if you didn't get the job and you think it's right for you.
- Open your message by subordinating your disappointment to your appreciation at being notified promptly and courteously.
- In the body, emphasize your continuing interest.

Rejection Follow-Up Letter

- Express confidence in meeting the job requirements.
- Refer to specifics of your interview.
- Close by taking the initiative; tell when you will call for an update.
- Be persistent but not a pest!

Job Acceptance and Rejection Letters

- After being offered a job (usually over the phone), follow up with a letter confirming the details and formalizing your acceptance.
- Open by expressing pleasure; confirm your acceptance of the position with enthusiasm.



Job Acceptance and Rejection Letters

- Review salary and benefits in the body.
- Include the specific starting date.
- Close with thanks.



Resignation Letter

- If you must leave a position you have held for a period of time, depart gracefully and tactfully with a resignation letter.
- Remember that many resignation letters are placed in personnel files. Be careful and formal.
- Confirm the exact date of your resignation.
- Remind your employer of your contributions.
- Offer assistance to prepare for your resignation.
- Offer thanks and end with a forward-looking statement.

FIGURE 14.1 Twelve Interview Actions to Avoid

1. **Don't be late or too early.** Arrive five to ten minutes before your scheduled interview.
2. **Don't be rude.** Treat everyone you come into contact with warmly and respectfully.
3. **Don't ask for the job.** Asking for the job is naive, undignified, and unprofessional. Wait to see how the interview develops.
4. **Don't criticize anyone or anything.** Don't criticize your previous employer, supervisors, colleagues, or job. The tendency is for interviewers to wonder if you would speak about their companies similarly.
5. **Don't be a threat to the interviewer.** Avoid suggesting directly or indirectly that your goal is to become head honcho, a path that might include the interviewer's job.
6. **Don't act unprofessionally.** Don't discuss controversial subjects, and don't use profanity. Don't talk too much.
7. **Don't emphasize salary or benefits.** Don't bring up salary, vacation, or benefits early in an interview. Leave this up to the interviewer.
8. **Don't focus on your imperfections.** Never dwell on your liabilities or talk negatively about yourself.
9. **Don't interrupt.** Interrupting is not only impolite but also prevents you from hearing a complete question or remark.
10. **Don't bring someone along.** Don't bring a friend or relative with you to the interview. If someone must drive you, ask that person to drop you off and come back later.
11. **Don't appear impatient.** Your entire focus should be on the interview. Don't glance at your watch, which can imply that you are late for another appointment.
12. **Don't act desperate.** A sure way to turn off an interviewer is to act too desperate. Don't focus on why you *need* the job; focus on how you will add value to the organization.

Summing Up and Looking Forward

Whether you face a screening interview or a hiring/placement interview, you must be well prepared. You can increase your chances of success and reduce your anxiety considerably by knowing how interviews are typically conducted and by researching the target company thoroughly. Practice answering typical questions, including situational, behavioral, and challenging ones. Consider audio or video recording a mock interview so that you can check your body language and improve your answering techniques.

At the end of the interview, thank the interviewer, review your main strengths for the position, and ask what the next step is. Follow up with a thank-you letter and a follow-up

call or message, if appropriate. Prepare other employment-related documents as needed, including application forms, application and résumé follow-up letters, rejection follow-up letters, job acceptance and rejection letters, and resignation letters.

You have now completed 14 chapters of rigorous instruction aimed at developing your skills so that you can be a successful business communicator in today's rapidly changing world of information. Remember that this is but a starting point. Your skills as a business communicator will continue to grow on the job as you apply the principles you have learned and expand your expertise.

Notice how the letter in Figure 14.2 conveys enthusiasm and confidence.

FIGURE 14.2 Interview Follow-Up Letter

Adam G. Heraud

158 Gause Blvd., Apt. E, Slidell, LA 70458
(985)726-5143, aheraud@gmail.com

May 28, 200x

Mr. Charles W. Hainsworth
Apex Tech Imaging
3855 Ridgelake Avenue
New Orleans, LA 70130

Dear Mr. Hainsworth:

Talking with you Thursday, May 27, about the graphic designer position was both informative and interesting.

Thanks for describing the position in such detail and for introducing me to Ms. Tanaka, the senior designer. Her current project designing an annual report in four colors sounds fascinating as well as quite challenging.

Now that I've learned in greater detail the specific tasks of your graphic designers, I'm more than ever convinced that my computer and creative skills can make a genuine contribution to your graphic productions. My training in design and layout using PhotoShop and InDesign ensures that I could be immediately productive on your staff.

You will find me an enthusiastic and hardworking member of any team effort. As you requested, I'm enclosing additional samples of my work. I'm eager to join the graphics staff at your New Orleans headquarters, and I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,
Adam G. Heraud
Adam G. Heraud

Enclosures

Mentions the interview date and specific job title

Highlights specific skills for the job

Shows appreciation, good manners, and perseverance—traits that recruiters value

Personalizes the message by referring to topics discussed in the interview

Reminds reader of interpersonal skills as well as enthusiasm and eagerness for the job