



Interviewing

Acing the Interview

Before the Interview

- Review your resume
- Research the position, organization, and industry
- Match your skills and qualifications to the position
- Practice responses to potential interview questions
- **Prepare 3-5 stories using the STAR concept**
- Plan what to wear
- Research the location of your interview
- **Conduct an online practice interview and obtain feedback using StandOut**

During the Interview

- Greet everyone, smile, show enthusiasm, and make eye contact
- **Provide examples that showcase your skills and abilities following the STAR concept**
- Emphasize your strengths and stay positive
- Listen carefully
- Pay attention to your nonverbal communication
- Ask questions at the end of the interview
- Thank the interviewer(s)

Day of the Interview

- Dress to impress
- Arrive 10-15 minutes early
- Be nice and courteous to everyone with whom you come in contact
- **Bring your professional portfolio with extra copies of your resume, references, notepad, and pen**

After the Interview

- **Send a thank you note, letter, or email to the interviewer(s) within 1-2 days**
- Follow up with the organization at least 5 days after your interview

Suit

- Two piece, long sleeve, professional suit
- Pant, dress, or skirt suits (Dress and skirt at knee length-avoid high slits)
- Solid colors or subtle pinstripes (avoid bright colors)
- Pant leg should touch the front of the shoe and fall above the heel in the back

Shirt

- Straight or button-down shirts with a collar
- Blouses
- Avoid large graphics, low-cut, or see-through fabrics

Tie

- Coordinate color and print with your outfit

Shoes/Socks

- Polished closed toe shoes
- Dark calf length socks
- Flat to medium size high heels

Miscellaneous

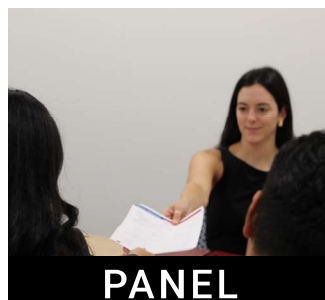
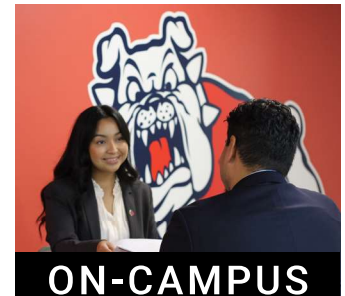
- Make-up and jewelry in moderation
- Avoid strong perfumes or colognes
- Hair is neatly groomed and pulled away from face
- Nails are clean and not too long
- Clean-shaven face preferred (trimmed beard, if applicable)



Visit the Clothing Closet in the **University Student Union, Room 306** to obtain up to three pieces of free professional clothing per semester!



Types of Interviews



Behavioral Interviewing

A behavioral interview is designed to get you to reveal more about yourself, how you think, solve problems, and interact with others. They usually begin with, “Describe a situation...Give me an example...Tell us about... etc.”

The STAR concept is a structured manner of responding to a behavioral interview question by discussing the specific Situation, Task, Action, and Result of the situation you are describing, in a story-telling format.

Situation

Give an example of a situation you were involved in that resulted in a positive outcome.

Task

Describe the tasks or problem involved in that situation.

Action

Explain the specific actions you took or that were involved in the task

Result

Describe the results that directly followed because of your actions.

Sample Behavioral Question and Answer

“Describe the most challenging team experience you have encountered?”

SITUATION: I was involved in a group project last semester for my Administration and Organizational Behavior Management class where our team had to create a business plan. Group members varied significantly in their skills and motivation to complete the project, and each member was delegated tasks and deadlines for completion. One group member had fallen far behind and our group’s success and grade were in jeopardy.

TASK: Being the group leader, I was the one responsible for delegating the project tasks and seeing our project to completion.

ACTION: I reached out to the group member who was no longer keeping pace. In talking with him, it became clear that he had an entirely different understanding of our objective and how it would be achieved. I shared this with our other group members so they would see his unique viewpoint. This helped our group’s approach in creating the business plan.

RESULT: As a result, our group became more cohesive, which helped us produce a successful business plan and made the group experience more enjoyable.

Behavioral Interviewing Worksheet

Communication Effectiveness

Describe an instance when you had to use communication skills to get an important point across.

TIP: Mention how you follow up with questions to ensure your message is understood

Situation

Task

Action

Result

Time Management

Tell me about a time when you had to put in long hours or work weekends to meet a deadline.

TIP: Working long hours could mean you are truly dedicated to helping a team/company meet a deadline.

Situation

Task

Action

Result

Tips For Acing An Online Interview



Find a location that will be quiet and have a good internet connection



Ask family/roommates not to disturb you and remove pets from the room



Know how to use your technology and practice beforehand



Dress just as if you were interviewing in person



Silence your phone



Have everything you'll need on hand for the interview



Questions Most Commonly Asked By Employers

General

1. Tell me about yourself?
2. Walk me through your resume.
3. What can you tell us about our organization?
4. Please share three strengths and weaknesses.
5. Why would we hire you?
6. What is your ideal job?
7. What motivates you?
8. Describe a conflict you experienced and its resolution.
9. How would others describe you?
10. What do you do in your spare time?

Education

1. What are your major academic achievements?
2. What did you enjoy most/least about your major and why?
3. How has your college experience prepared you for this career?
4. What extracurricular activities have you participated in? What did you learn from these activities?
5. How did you stay organized in school? How did you prioritize?
6. What courses have you taken that are directly transferable to the job?
7. Do you think your grades are a good indication of the type of employee you'll make?

Experience

1. What skills and/or experience do you have that qualifies you for this position?
2. What have you learned from previous experiences?
3. How do you cope with working under pressure and meeting tight deadlines?
4. What is the most difficult decision you have had to make on the job?
5. How well do you work with people? Do you prefer working alone or in groups?
6. How would you describe your leadership skills?
7. How well do you adapt to new situations?

Career Goals

1. What are your short-term and long-term career objectives? How do you plan to achieve them?
2. What are the most important rewards you expect to gain from your career?
3. How do you define success?
4. Are you willing to relocate?
5. Are you willing to travel for the job?

Unusual

1. If I gave you \$75,000 to start a business, what would you start?
2. If you could compare yourself with any animal, which would it be and why?
3. If you could be a superhero, what would be your superpowers?
4. What song best describes your work ethic?

Questions You Can Ask Employers

1. What traits will help me succeed long-term in the company?
2. How would you describe the company's culture and leadership philosophy?
3. What specific qualities and skills are you looking for in a candidate?
4. What does a typical day or week look like for the person in this position?
5. What is the company's management style?
6. What are the prospects for growth and advancement?
7. What orientation/training is provided to new employees?
8. If I am extended a job offer, how soon would you like me to start?
9. What is the next course of action? When should I expect to hear from you?
10. Are there any other questions I can answer for you?

Questions You Should Avoid

1. Never ask for information that is easily accessible on the internet or company's website.
2. Never ask about pay, time off, benefits, etc.; wait until the employer brings it up.
3. What does your company do?
4. Do you do background checks?
5. How quickly can I be promoted?



Top 10 Interview Questions and Answers

	Question	Recommended Feedback	Example
1	Tell me about yourself.	Consider your response to this request as a commercial that sells your autobiography. Always answer this question with positive information. View this question as "Tell me about yourself <i>related to this job</i> ," this will keep you focused on skills and experiences relevant to the position in question. Avoid a lengthy history or wandering off in different directions. Don't divulge overly personal information unless it is job related.	"I've always been a news junkie and I spent my last two years in school preparing myself to work in communications when I graduated. I looked for internships and extracurricular opportunities that would expose me to media relations, and I'm excited to continue on that path. I've been told that I'm particularly good at coming up with creative story angles, so I'm very excited about this opportunity."
2	What are your greatest strengths?	This is your time to shine. You're being asked to explain why you are a great employee, so don't hold back and stay positive. Concentrate on discussing your main strengths. List three or four proficiencies e.g. your ability to learn quickly, determination to succeed, positive attitude, your ability to relate to people and achieve a common goal. Once you list your strengths, choose one and give an example. You may be asked to give more examples of the above so be prepared.	"I think one of my greatest strengths is as a problem solver. I have the ability to see a situation from a different perspective and I can get my work done even in the face of difficult obstacles. I also feel that my communication skills are top notch. I feel comfortable presenting to small and large groups. Lastly, my greatest strength is my strong work ethic. When I commit to a deadline, I do whatever it takes to deliver. For example, while I was working in a group of 4 for my Marketing 115, Global Logistics and Supply Chain Strategies class, I was responsible for completing..."
3	What is your greatest weakness?	Keep your answer factual and brief. We all have weaknesses so your goal here isn't to lie; it's simply to present yourself as best you can. Your weakness should not be something that would eliminate you from the running. Find a weakness that you have a solution to, or successful in overcoming.	"I would say that public speaking is an area that I could work on. I tend to get nervous when asked to present to a large group. In small team meetings, I'm the first one to stand up and present. But put me in front of a big group and I can get flustered. I took a speech class this semester that helped me gain confidence."
4	Describe a difficult situation/project and how you overcame it.	This is a behavioral interview question designed to discover how you handle certain situations. The logic behind this type of question is that how you behaved in the past is a predictor of what you will do in the future. Give a concrete example of a difficult situation that actually happened. Then discuss what you did to solve the problem. Keep your answers positive and be specific. Itemize what you did and how you did it.	"I'm the Membership Chair of XYZ student organization. Since membership decreased over the last 3 years, I thought it would be a good idea to create a new membership recruitment event. So I organized a bowling and pizza event, created flyers and posted it on Facebook. We had a great turnout, and 10 new members joined."
5	Where do you see yourself in five years?	The interviewer is looking for you to have a clear mindset about what you wish to accomplish. Outline your job and career goals and how you envision them to fit with those of the company. Describe how you would contribute to the areas of the company that you are most passionate about and how that would ultimately obtain success for you and the company.	"My goal right now is to find a position at a company where I can grow and take on new challenges over time. Ultimately, I'd like to assume more management responsibilities and get involved in product strategy. But most importantly, I want to work for an organization where I can build a career."

Question	Recommended Feedback	Example
<p>6 What background and experience do you have that qualifies you for this position?</p>	<p>Draw parallels from your current or previous experience to the requirements of this position. A similarity that seems obvious to you may not be so obvious to the interviewer. Don't discount any experience you may have. Even if you are new to the professional job market, have only held a part-time job, or have never held a job, you have done things in your life that can count as experience.</p>	<p>"My understanding from the job description is that excellent communication and computer skills are required, and I am very strong in those areas. In fact, I am fluent in Spanish, and have a degree in computer science where my GPA was 3.4. In addition, I have had numerous opportunities in my internships and class projects to present ideas in small and large groups."</p>
<p>7 Please provide some examples of teamwork.</p>	<p>When asked about teamwork during a job interview, it's important to show enthusiasm for working on a team vs. independently if the position requires teamwork. Give specific examples of teamwork you have participated in successfully.</p>	<p>"In high school, I enjoyed playing soccer and performing with the marching band. Each required a different kind of team play, but the overall goal of learning to be a member of a group was invaluable. I continued to grow as a team member while on my sorority's debate team and through my advanced marketing class where we had numerous team assignments."</p>
<p>8 Why do you want to work here?</p>	<p>The employer wishes to observe if your answer indicates that you have thought about what you want and that you have researched the company. Demonstrate that this is the company you want to work for. A little flattery will go a long way, so cite some good qualities of the company. Let the interviewer know you are being selective about where you want to work and that you're not just sending your resume for any job opening.</p>	<p>"I'm connected on LinkedIn to many people who work at your company. When I reviewed their profiles, I saw that we all shared some things in common. It struck me that this is the kind of place where I can fit in and excel, so I was thrilled to see you have this opening."</p>
<p>9 Why should we hire you?</p>	<p>Think of yourself as the product. Why should the customer buy? What can you do for them that someone else can't? Using details from past job accomplishments or from your education to support "the fit" with specific information targeted toward the company's needs. Mention your abilities, experience, and energy.</p>	<p>"I am excited for the opportunity to use my skills to help bring your organization to even greater heights. My passion, drive, and hardworking personality combined with my ability to work well as a team player are sure to mesh well with the culture and demands of your organization. My previous experience as an intern at XYZ company allowed me to refine my abilities and I am confident I will become an integral part of your team."</p>
<p>10 Do you have any questions?</p>	<p>The interviewer is looking for intelligent questions from you to give them insight into your analytical skills and overall enthusiasm for the opportunity. In many situations, the questions you ask in an interview can be more revealing than the answers you give and can give you the advantage you need to get the job. Make sure you have researched and prepared several questions before your interview. Be ready to write them down if any come to mind while you are in the interview.</p>	<p>"How would you describe a typical week/day in this position?"</p> <p>"How would you describe the company's culture and leadership philosophy?"</p> <p>"What is the next course of action? When should I expect to hear from you?"</p> <p>"Are there any other questions I can answer for you?"</p>

How to set up a practice interview and access hundreds of interview questions using **STANDOUT**®

1. Go to csufresno.standout.com
2. Login with your Fresno State username and password
3. Click on Practice on the top menu
4. Select one of the interviews listed or Create Your Own Practice interview by selecting your own interview criteria
5. Review your answers and comprehensive scores to strengthen your interviewing skills