

Solid Interview Skills

Your Journey to a Job Offer



EDUCATOR'S RESOURCE GUIDE

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Program Summary

The interview process for a job can be intimidating as potential employees wonder what questions will be asked and what the appropriate responses are to land the job. Candidates can learn key strategies to help guide them through the job interview. Students will learn about self inventories, types of interviews, and what to do following the interview.

Unit Teaching Points:

1. The interview allows one to showcase his/her talents, abilities and skills in a physical setting. The interviewer meets the candidate face-to-face and can learn about the person through words and actions.
2. In advance of the interview process, one should have knowledge of interview skills, preparation tips, self inventory and self marketing.
3. “Homework” is key to being ready for an interview. The three homework areas are plan, prepare and practice.
4. Assessing one’s qualifications to do the job requires self reflection and analysis.
5. Mock interviews are give the candidate a chance to prepare for questions as well as evaluate potential responses and body language.
6. The interview process is not finished after the face-to-face meeting. The candidate should write a thank-you letter and monitor the status of the job. If an offer is received, specific steps should be taken before accepting the position.

Related Learning Seed Programs

Mapping a Career Path: Know Your Aptitude, Interests, Values & Personality
Your Job Search: Navigating the Roads to Employment
Engaging Resumes & Covers Letters: How to Hook the Job You Want

National Standards

Grades 11 and up

American School Counselor Association (ASCA)

- C: A2.2 Apply job readiness skills to seek employment opportunities
- C:A1.3 Develop an awareness of personal abilities, skills, interests and motivations
- C:A2.2 Apply job readiness skills to seek employment opportunities
- C:B1.5 Use research and information resources to obtain career information
- C:B1.6 Learn to use the Internet to access career-planning information

American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences (AAFACS)

- 1.2.2 Demonstrate job seeking and job keeping skills.
- 1.2.3 Apply communication skills in school, community, and workplace settings

National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) and International Reading Association (IRA)

- 12: Students use spoken, written, and visual language to accomplish their own purposes (e.g., for learning, enjoyment, persuasion, and the exchange of information).

Additional Resources

Interview to Win Your First Job

by Ronald L. Krannich, Ph.D.

Job Interviews for Dummies

by Joyce Laine Kennedy

The Quintessential Guide to Job Interview Preparation

by Katharine Hansen, Ph.D

Thirteen Ed Online-Adult Ed

www.thirteen.org/edonline

Mock Interview Lesson Plans

www.eduers.com/resume/Mock_Interview.htm

Lesson Plan 6: Interviewing Skills

http://www.ccd.me.edu/careerprep/CareerPrepCurriculum_LP-6.pdf

Interviewing Tips

<http://www.careercc.com/interv3.shtml>

Lesson Plan 1a

Purpose: Guide and Create Expectations
Name: A Company and Me
Type: Self analysis
Est. length: 40 minutes

Lesson Summary

Students will analyze company mission statements and background information, then identify key information that they can utilize in an interview. Students will match their abilities to that information.

Lesson Materials

- Pen/Pencil
- Notebook paper
- Computer with online access



Lesson Objectives

- The students will be able to find relevant information about a company they can use in an interview.
- The students will be able to match their personal criteria to that of the company

I. Lesson Set-up (5 minutes)

Ask the students to answer this question: When searching for a job, what are some things you look for in company you would like to work for.

II. Learning Activity (30 minutes)

1. Instruct students to create a T-chart on a piece of notebook paper. Label the left column “Company” and the right column “Me.”
2. Direct students to find a website for a company they are interested in working for and scan it for information such as was discussed in the lesson set-up.
3. Instruct students to write information they find that would be useful knowledge for a job applicant (e.g., mission statement, company size, product lines.) in the “Company” column of their T-chart.
4. For the “Me” column, direct students to list personal values, qualities, interests, experience or skills that that relate to each of the elements they listed in the Company column.
5. Lead a class discussion on the student’s findings, encouraging brainstorming among the class to fill in the gaps where students couldn’t find any immediate relation between a company’s information and themselves.

III. Closure: Discussion (5 minutes)

Each day, ask these five questions to guide a closing discussion.

1. How well do you think your criteria matches that of the company?
2. What did you learn about the company and its objectives?
3. What information did you find that could benefit you in an interview?
4. How might you be able to use that information in an interview?
5. After reading about the company, are there changes you would make to your criteria? Why or why not?

Lesson Plan 1b (Alternative)

Purpose: Guide & Create Expectations
Name: Unit Pre-test
Type: Question-and-answer
Est. Length: 15 minutes

As an alternative to Lesson 1a: “Self and Company Analysis” you can guide and create student expectations with the Pre-test found on Worksheet A of the Appendix.

Answer Key

Hiring managers look for three things on a resume.

Skills, accuracy, and experience

There are 5 key components to having successful interviewing skills

Talking points, looking the part, professionalism, self marketing, and final impression

What are 5 things employers are looking for in an employee

Responsible, dependable, flexible, hard working and willing

An excellent way to prepare for an interview is to practice with a partner and conduct a:

Mock interview

Whenever answering a question, make sure your answers are:

Clear, concise and conversational

Once the interview is over, make sure you:

Give a professional “good bye”, send a “thank you” note and monitor the job status

Lesson Plan 2 (page 1 of 2)

Purpose: Define & Interpret Information
Name: "Interview Keys"
Type: Independent Practice
Est. Length: 50 minutes

Lesson Summary

Students will watch a video and complete a corresponding worksheet to gain a better understanding of the key components of the job interview process.

Lesson Materials

- Copies of "Video Notes" (Worksheet B in the Appendix) for each student
- Pen/pencil
- Video: *Solid Interview Skills: Your Journey to a Job Offer*



Lesson Objectives

- Students will learn key components of the interview process
- Students will understand preparation and interview skills
- Students will learn about different interview styles
- Students will learn what questions to ask/avoid in an interview
- Students will learn the importance of appearance, greetings and body language
- Students will learn what to do when an interview is over
- Students will learn what to do when offered a job

Lesson Plan 2 (page 2 of 2) (Estimated Time: 60 minutes)

I. Lesson Set-up (5 minutes)

BEFORE the video:

Lead a class discussion about what kinds of questions they would expect to hear during a job interview.

II. Learning Activity (50 minutes)

DURING the video:

1. Students watch video “Solid Interview Skills: Your Journey to a Job Offer”
2. Students will complete Worksheet B “Video Notes”

AFTER the video:

Students will share their answers to the questions from the video

III. Closure: Discussion (5 minutes)

- What aspects of the interview process surprised you?
- How can you present yourself in the best way possible for an interview?
- What is so important about the hand shake and body language?
- Why do you think the “thank you” letter and the follow-up procedures are so important?
- What did you learn about yourself during self inventory?

Lesson Plan 3 (page 1 of 2)

Purpose: Define & Interpret Information
Name: “Comparison”
Type: Analysis
Est. Length: 40 minutes

Lesson Summary

Students will locate a job opening and match their skill sets to the job requirements, as well as begin to prepare for the Mock Interview assessment.

Lesson Materials

- Computer with online access
- Pen/pencil
- Notebook Paper
- Copies of “Comparison” (Worksheet C in the Appendix) for each student



Lesson Objectives

- Students will identify personal skills and match them to job requirements
- Students will learn the importance of knowing a company’s background
- Students will be able to compare similar job openings and requirements
- Students will be able to navigate job sites for openings in their fields of choice

Lesson Plan 3 (page 2 of 2)

(Estimated Time: 50 minutes)

I. Lesson Set-up (5 minutes)

Lead a class discussion about what students could look for in a job advertisement in order to know if it is one they would want to apply for.

II. Learning Activity (50 minutes)

1. Direct students to work with partners to research and select job openings in the fields of their choice.
2. Instruct students to research the employer from their selected job opening.
3. Each student will make 2 copies the company's mission statement, background information and job requirements. Copies will be exchanged by the students to prepare for the mock interviews later on.
4. Handout "Comparison" (Worksheet C in the Appendix). Review the instructions with students so they can complete the worksheet for their selected job opening.

III. Closure: Discussion (5 minutes)

1. Upon review, how well do you feel your qualifications match those of the job you selected?
2. Did you find job requirements that did not fit your qualifications?
3. Was it difficult to find job openings in your field? Why or why not?
4. Why do you think research on the company is so important?
5. After looking over job openings, did you have second thoughts about the field you chose? Why or why not?

Lesson Plan 4 (page 1 of 2)

Purpose: Generate & Differentiate Ideas
Name: “Q & A”
Type: Small group discussion
Est. Length: 40 minutes

Lesson Summary

Students will develop responses to common interview questions.

Lesson Materials

- Copies of “Q & A” (Worksheet D in the Appendix) for each student
- Pen/pencil
- Notebook paper
- Completed Worksheet C “Comparison”

Lesson Objectives

- Students will create clear and concise responses to interview questions
- Students will learn how to answer negative questions in a positive way
- Students will compare good and bad answers to questions
- Students will know proper responses during an interview

Lesson Plan 4 (page 2 of 2) (Estimated Time: 40 minutes)

I. Lesson Set-up (5 minutes)

Instruct students to write about different ways they might answer a question about an area that is not one of their strengths. Facilitate a class discussion about some student answers.

II. Learning Activity (30 minutes)

1. Distribute the Q & A (Worksheet D) from the Appendix.
2. Instruct students to use their completed Worksheet C (“Comparison”) to identify strengths related to the questions.
3. Direct student to meet with their partners from Lesson 3 to review and improve answers.
4. Lead a class discussion to share answers and brainstorm how to respond to negative questions in a positive way.
5. Ask class if there are questions that were not on the list that could be added.
6. For homework, assign students to create a one page list of talking points for an interview.

III. Closure: Discussion (5 minutes)

- How can an exercise like this help you in preparing for an interview?
- Do you feel confident in positively answering all questions? Why or why not?
- Why do you think interviewers ask negative questions?
- What do you think was the most useful question to an interviewer? Why?
- What did you have difficulty with in trying to answer some of the questions?

Lesson Plan 5a - Unit Assessment

Purpose: Develop & Evaluate Performance
Name: Mock Interview
Type: Project-Based
Est. Length: 60 minutes

Summary: Students will participate in mock interviews to test what they have learned about the interview process.

Assessment Materials

- Pen/pencil
- Copies of Worksheet D (blank) and Worksheet E for each student
- Students should have their talking points, assigned as homework from the previous lesson
- Students should have their own job-related website printouts from previous exercises, as well as the ones provided to them by their partner

Assessment Objectives

- Students will demonstrate skills learned regarding interview preparation and presentation
- Students will display knowledge of personal skill set and how it matches job requirements
- Students will skillfully answer questions on job performance, company knowledge and negative situations
- Students will understand the subjective nature of the interview process
- Students will demonstrate proper body language skills
- Students will receive constructive feedback on their performance

I. Lesson Set-up (5 minutes)

Ask the students how they feel as they prepare for the interview. Are there areas they are a little unsure of? What steps can be taken to solve these problems?

II. Assessment Activity (55 minutes)

1. Instruct each partner group to decide who goes first as the interviewee and who goes first as the interviewer.
2. Instruct the interviewer to spend 5 minutes reviewing the job-related materials given to them by their partner earlier in the week. Instruct the interviewee to spend those 5 minutes reviewing their talking points assigned as homework after the last exercise.
3. Direct each partner group to team up with another partner group, who will serve as an audience for the mock-interview.
4. The interviewer will ask their partner the questions on Worksheet D. They should pretend they are the hiring manager for the company their partner has decided to interview with. They should also feel free to ask follow-up questions.
5. The interviewee will ask the interviewer two questions at the end of the interview, just as they would in a real interview. (The interviewer can make-up a reasonable answer if they don't know the answer.)
6. The interviewer and the two "audience" partners should evaluate their partner's answers on Worksheet E
7. At the end of the interview, the small group will discuss the positives of the interviewees answers, body language, and end-of-interview questions. The interviewers will turn in the evaluation sheet to the instructor.
8. Instruct partners to switch roles and repeat all of the above steps.

Lesson Plan 5b - Unit Assessment (Alternative)

Purpose: Develop & Evaluate Performance
Name: Unit Post-test
Type: True/False/Multiple choice
Est. Length: 15 minutes

As an alternative to Lesson 5a: “Mock Interview,” you can define and evaluate student performance with the Post-test found on Worksheet E in the Appendix.

Unit Post-test Answer Key

9. (D) All of the above
10. (C) Have a single copy of your resume
11. False
12. (B) Crossed legs
13. (B) Very detailed
14. (A) Salary and benefits

Appendix

Student Worksheets Glossary

Solid Interview Skills: Your Journey to a Job Offer

Name _____

Directions: Fill-in-the-blanks with the correct words from the Word Bank at the bottom of the page.

Hiring managers look for three things on a resume. They are: 1. _____, 2. _____, 3. _____

There are 5 key components to having successful interview skills. The 5 are: 1. _____, 2. _____, 3. _____, 4. _____ and 5. _____

When doing self inventory, you need to match your skills to what employers are looking for. Employers want someone who is: 1. _____, 2. _____, 3. _____, 4. _____ and 5. _____

An excellent way to practice one's interview skills is to work with a partner and do a _____.

Whenever answering a question, make sure your answers are: 1. _____, 2. _____ and 3. _____.

Once the interview is over, make sure you: 1. _____, 2. _____, and 3. _____.

WORD BANK

dependable	conversational	self marketing	final impression
willing	mock interview	clear	experience
concise	skills	responsible	talking points
say good bye	accuracy	flexible	professionalism
monitor job status	looking the part	hard working	send a "thank you note"

Solid Interview Skills: Your Journey to a Job Offer

Name _____

Directions: While watching the video, answer the following questions in the spaces provided.

1: What is a self-inventory?

2: What are talking points?

3. During an interview, when might you get to use the information you found when you researched the company?

4. What kinds of body language might an employer be looking for?

5. Why is a thank you letter important?

Worksheet C
(Lesson 3)
Comparison

Solid Interview Skills: Your Journey to a Job Offer

Name _____

Directions: Find a job posting for a position in a field of interest. In the “Requirements” column, write down all the items from the posting that the employer is looking for in an ideal employee. In the “Skills” column, write down your attributes that would match the employers’ requirements.

<u>Requirements</u>	<u>Skills</u>

Name _____

Directions: Use the following chart to rate the job applicant. Rate the candidate on a scale of 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest).
Make notes where applicable.

WHO IS THE JOB APPLICANT? _____

NONVERBAL BEHAVIOR

1. Had firm handshake	1	2	3	4	5
2. Sat still/didn't fold arms or cross legs	1	2	3	4	5
3. Had good eye contact	1	2	3	4	5

VERBAL BEHAVIOR

1. Spoke clearly and conversationally	1	2	3	4	5
2. Made good references to work skills	1	2	3	4	5
3. Had tone of enthusiasm and interest in job	1	2	3	4	5
4. Was polite and courteous	1	2	3	4	5
5. Was concise with answers	1	2	3	4	5
6. Connected career goals to job	1	2	3	4	5
7. Related skills to job requirements	1	2	3	4	5
8. Showed knowledge of the company	1	2	3	4	5
9. Asked good questions of the interviewer	1	2	3	4	5

Total: **/60**

Name _____

DIRECTIONS: Circle the correct answer to each of the statements below:

1. To understand a job better, which of these questions should you ask?
 - A. What are the company strengths compared to its competitor.
 - B. What is the department plan for the next 5 years?
 - C. Could you explain your organizational structure?
 - D. All of the above.
2. When preparing for an interview, which of the following should you not do:
 - A. Call ahead to confirm
 - B. Write down interviewer's name and phone number
 - C. Have a single copy of your resume
 - D. Have work history and references
3. To let the employer get to know you better, you should send them to your social networking site.
TRUE FALSE
4. Which of these is not an example of good body language:
 - A. Sit up straight
 - B. Crossed legs
 - C. Arms on lap
 - D. Sit still
5. Answers to questions should contain all of the following except:
 - A. Clear
 - B. Very detailed
 - C. Concise
 - D. Conversational
6. What topic should you not ask about during an interview?
 - A. Salary and benefits
 - B. What do you enjoy about your job
 - C. How does the position fit the company's long term plans
 - D. Could you explain your organizational structure

- Self inventory** identifying qualities and skills one has that make them marketable to employers.
- Talking points:** positive traits, characteristics and skills one should highlight in an interview.
- Role playing:** assuming a position (interviewer, employer) to practice for an interview.
- Body language:** non-verbal cues one gives using such things as facial expressions and hand gestures.
- Self marketing:** presenting your strengths and valuable traits in a positive and persuasive fashion.