Lesson Objectives:
- Become familiar with common job interview questions
- Identify illegal interview questions
- Organize key information about oneself for an interview
- Recognize important qualities of a good interview
- Interview a colleague about work qualifications, create summary and report to class

Language Skill Proficiency:
- Speaking
- Listening
- Reading
- Writing

Materials and Equipment:
- Common Interview Questions
- Interview Cheat Sheet
- 25 Qualities Job Interviewers Look For
- Most Common Reasons People are not Hired (Teacher Resource)
- Partner Interview Handout

Activity Plan

Warm Up: Have Ss get into groups. Explain to Ss they will be in charge of conducting interviews for job candidates who are applying to work for their company. In 10 minutes, have Ss list as many interview questions as they can that they might consider asking the candidates. Have Ss report back their questions as a class. Which group came up with the most questions?

Introduction: Ask Ss who have interviewed in the U.S. to share their experiences. How did they prepare? Was there anything that surprised them during the interview process? Tell Ss that today’s class will focus on interviewing.

Presentation: Provide Ss with Common Interview Questions. Go over as a class. Don’t stress memorization of the question but an understanding of the type of information that is being sought. Share illegal interview questions and brainstorm ways to handle such questions if they were to come up.

Practice: Point out to Ss that interview questions can be formatted in different ways but usually ask for similar key information. Provide Ss with an Interview Cheat Sheet. Explain to Ss that the document helps to remember key information to bring up during an interview. Tell Ss the sheet should be reviewed prior to an interview and reviewed quickly at the close of an interview, if convenient, to make sure you didn’t forget to mention something important. Go over categories listed on the Interview Cheat Sheet discussing what interview questions might be asked to elicit the information that appears on the sheet. Have Ss complete the Interview Cheat Sheets individually. Circulate to assist.

Practice: Ask Ss to consider important qualities of a good interview. Provide groups of Ss with 25 Qualities Job Interviewers Look For or a similar article. Have groups rate the 5 most important qualities of an interview. Have groups report back to class providing explanations for their decisions. Share with Ss information found on Most Common Reasons People are not Hired.

Practice: Provide Ss with Partner Interview Handout. Have Ss each prepare 5 interview questions to ask another S. As Ss finish writing questions, have Ss get into pairs. Have Ss interview a partner using the questions they prepared. Have Ss take notes. When interviews are complete, have Ss write a paragraph describing their partner using their partners’ answers and share with class.

Evaluation: Ask Ss to list things to be considered when preparing for an interview.

Extension Activities:
- Have class create a rubric to evaluate interviews. Have Ss do mock interviews in pairs in front of the class while being graded by peers. See the following site for great mock interview activities: http://www.ourfactsyourfuture.org/admin/uploadedpublications/2746_interview_act.pdf
Common Interview Questions

1. Tell me about yourself.
   a. What type of work have you done?
   b. What is your educational background?
   c. What are your skills?
   d. What type of worker are you?

2. Why do you want to work for this company?

3. What is your biggest strength?

4. What is your biggest weakness?

5. Why should I hire you?

6. Why did you leave your last job?

7. What are your career goals?

8. Why do you want to work for us?

9. Do you have any questions for me? (Ask questions!)

The following questions cannot be asked during an interview:

- *Nothing* related to gender! Example: Do you think a woman can do this job?
- *Nothing* about marriage, children and family status! Example: Do you have kids?
- Citizenship, gender and language! Example: Where were you born? NOTE: Employers can only ask: Are you legally allowed to work in the U.S.?
- *Nothing* about religious practices! Example: Do you belong to a local church? NOTE: Employers can only ask you about religion as it relates to your schedule of availability. Example: Are you available to work on Sunday mornings?
- *Nothing* about age! Example: How old are you? How long have you been working? NOTE: Employers can only verify that you meet job requirements. Example: Do you meet the requirements to perform this job?
Interview Cheat Sheet

Major Accomplishments:
1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.

Type of Worker I am:
1.
2.
3.
4.

Things You Need to Know About Me:
1.
2.
3.
4.

Reason I Left Last Job:

Answers to Difficult Questions:
1.
2.
3.
4.

My Strengths/Weaknesses:
1.
2.
3.
4.

Things I Can Do For You:
1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.

Questions to Ask Interviewer:
1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
25 Qualities Job Interviewers Look For

When you're job hunting, you need the right skills, education, and experience. But that's not all you need. Employers are also looking for a host of other qualities.

For some examples, take a look at the following list. Don’t be freaked out by the length. Read through it. Think about how you rate on each item and how you could improve. It could be the best thing you ever do for your job hunt.

1. Energy. Humans are drawn to energetic people because energy is contagious and an upper. Job interviewers are human.

2. Good manners. Dressing appropriately, sitting erect, maintaining eye contact, waiting to sit until your interviewer is seated—these things all show respect for the person and the situation.

3. Maturity. Mature people know how to focus on the needs of others. Immature people are just wrapped up in themselves. Employers really prefer the first one.

4. Judgment. When interviewers start questions with “tell me about a time when you,” that’s your opening to bring up examples of when you showed excellent judgment.

5. Problem-solving skills. The “tell me about a time” question is also an opportunity to talk about how you effectively approach problems.

[See How to Tell When a Job Interview is Going Well.]

6. Loyalty. Employers seek candidates who can demonstrate loyalty to something—a cause, colleagues, a company, your profession.

7. Cheerful nature. A positive attitude, a smile, and an easygoing attitude tell an employer you will be a pleasure to have around. That’s important.

8. Good health. Employers need to believe that you can physically do the job. If you have visible health issues, you might consider preemptively addressing them.

9. Financial responsibility. Lots of jobs involve a credit check. So if you have a problem in this area, start working now to fix it!

10. Demonstration that you finish what you start. This is one reason many employers require a college degree. If you don’t have one, look for other examples of your stick-to-it-iveness.

11. Follow-through. Not quite the same as #10. Follow-through is a habit of mind highly valued at most companies. A good example is writing a thank-you note after the interview.

[See Why You Should Never Skip the Interview Thank-You Note.]

12. Demonstration of an ability to go above and beyond. Employers dream about these kinds of employees. Think of a time you’ve shown this quality and find a way to talk about it.
13. Ability to handle criticism. When interviewers ask about “your greatest weakness,” they want to see that you’re capable of recognizing you do have weaknesses, and that you’re willing to put in the work to correct them.

14. Ability to cooperate with others. Be nice to receptionists/assistants/colleagues. Show that you would be an asset to the team.

15. Intelligence. For example, in interviews, employers notice how well you appear to understand questions and whether you answer them clearly, in complete sentences, using reasonably good grammar.

[See more job advice at U.S. News Careers.]

16. Demonstration that you know something about the employer’s business. A no-brainer. At least it should be.

17. Have you reached a level commensurate with your age and qualifications? Don’t let the interviewer wonder. If this is an issue for you, tackle it head-on.

18. A career trajectory that makes sense. Learn to talk about your career in a way that shows you have a plan. Ideally, you’ll be able to show continuous improvement.

19. Long-term goals and objectives. What you want to do here is demonstrate that you are a thoughtful person with goals, and the smarts to pursue those goals. It ties in with #18.

20. Solid, thought-through reasons for leaving past jobs. Even if you’ve had 10 jobs in the past six years, it doesn’t have to hurt you if you can show good smart reasons for why.

21. Punctuality. The reason you need to be on time for interviews is that this is the employer’s first clue that you can meet a deadline.

22. Resilience. Can you still perform when the going gets tough? Think of examples from your personal and work life, and try to work them into the interview.

23. Attention to detail. Your resume is the classic platform for showing an employer that you can produce a meticulously accurate product.

24. Flexibility/adaptability. Interviewers sometimes ask an unexpected or even “crazy” question just to see how you react. This is a time to be at your most unflappable.

25. Some evidence of achievement and commitment in your personal life. Employers ask about your hobbies and passions as a way of getting to know you, and because they like to see some success here, too.


https://money.usnews.com/money/blogs/outside-voices-careers/2010/10/12/what-job-interviewers-are-really-looking-for
Most Common Reasons Why People are Not Hired

- Bad personal appearance
- Unable to express oneself clearly
- Poor interest and enthusiasm
- Overly nervous, under confident
- Too aggressive
- Too much emphasis on money
- Not willing to start at the bottom
- Discourteous
- Immature
- Speaks badly of former co-worker, supervisors or jobs
- No eye contact
- Messy application
- Late arrival for interview
- Could not give direct answers to questions
- Did not show appreciation for interviewers time
- Asked no questions about the company

Source: www.RCTresources.com
Partner Interview Handout

Step 1: Write 5 interview questions.

Step 2: Interview a partner using the prepared questions. Write notes about your partners’ answers.

1. ______________________________________________________________________________
   Notes: __________________________________________________________________________

2. ______________________________________________________________________________
   Notes: __________________________________________________________________________

3. ______________________________________________________________________________
   Notes: __________________________________________________________________________

4. ______________________________________________________________________________
   Notes: __________________________________________________________________________

5. ______________________________________________________________________________
   Notes: __________________________________________________________________________

Step 3: Write a paragraph using your partners’ answers.

_________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________