



Successful In Person Interview Tips

Before Your Job Interview:

- **Learn all you can** about the company or organization. When Jill Gilliland sends you the research, read as much as you can. It will help you formulate intelligent and appropriate questions to ask in your interview. You have to be able to answer the critical question of why you would like to work for that employer in that unit or facility with a passion for the work.

Be prepared to answer and ask questions.

- Prepare your clothes for your interview, making sure they are business-like, clean, pressed and conservative; make sure your hair and nails trimmed and clean. Your attire should be noticed as being appropriate and well-fitting, but it should not take center stage. When in doubt, always dress more professionally rather than more casually.
- **Bring** extra copies of your resume and a pad of paper and pen. Write down names and thoughts when appropriate.

During Your Job Interview:

- **Arrive 10 to 15 minutes early.** Don't take any chances that you might be even one minute late. If necessary, arrive 30 minutes early and wait.
- Treat all people you encounter with professionalism and kindness. That receptionist or secretary or maintenance man may offer his or her opinion of you to the boss. Use names and remember names.
- Don't let the employer's casual approach cause you to drop your manners or professionalism. You should **maintain a professional image.** Don't address the interviewer by his or her first name unless you are invited to.
- Don't chew gum. **Don't take cell phone calls** during an interview. If you carry a cell phone, turn it off during the interview to be sure it doesn't ring.
- **Don't ever interrupt the interviewer,** even if you are anxious and enthusiastic about answering the question.
- **Be aware of your non-verbal behaviors** - sit straight, smile as often as you can, maintain eye contact but don't stare the interviewer down, lean forward but not invading the interviewer's space. Sit still in your seat; avoid fidgeting and slouching.
- **Don't be shy or self-effacing.** You want to be enthusiastic, confident and energetic, but not aggressive, pushy or egotistic. That fine line is important. If you find yourself trying to hard to sell yourself, you are probably crossing the line. Instead, pull back; be confident and reassuring and calm.
- **Don't make negative comments** about previous employers or professors (or others).
- **Listen very carefully** to each question you are asked and give thoughtful, to-the-point and honest answers. Ask for clarification if you don't understand a question. It is OK to take a few moments of silence to gather your thoughts before answering. Try not to "beat around the bush" or take a long time to give the answer the interviewer is seeking.
- **Don't talk too much.** Answer questions appropriately. Think about what is necessary to answer the question while providing insight into yourself without too much information.
- If you are asked what your salary requirements are, you can respond by telling them that you would like them to discuss salaries with Melnic Consulting Group. The Hospital will contact Jill Gilliland, regarding the outcome of the interview including salary. Melnic Consulting Group will contact you immediately with that information.



- When the interviewer concludes the interview, offer a firm handshake and make eye contact. Depart gracefully.

After the Interview:

- After the interview, make notes right away so you don't forget critical details.
- Call Jill Gilliland immediately while the facts of the interview are fresh on your mind. Jill will want to know what you thought went well and what you may have concerns about.

During an employment interview, the interviewer meets with potential employees to evaluate their skills, capabilities, and levels of experience. A job is created to solve a problem. As you listen to the interviewer, understand what problem they are trying to solve and how you provide the solution based on your skills, experience and understanding of the situation.

To answer questions with poise, try to remember these tips:

- Listen carefully. If you feel the question is unclear, ask politely for clarification.
- Pause before answering to consider all facts that may substantiate your response. If you feel unprepared for the question, take a minute, in silence (not with fill in words such as um...) or ask for clarification then answer the question.
- Always offer positive information; avoid negativity at all times.
- Get directly to the point. Ask if listener would like you to go into great detail before you do.
- Discuss only the facts needed to respond to the question.
- Focus and re-focus attention on your successes. Remember, the goal is not to have the right answers so much as it is to convince the interviewer that you are the right person.
- Be truthful, but try not to offer unsolicited information.
- Try not to open yourself to areas of questioning that could pose difficulties for you.

Take time to think through your answers to some common interview questions. Formulating your answers and solidifying your thoughts, will give you more poise and security during the actual interview.

What would be your answers to these questions?

- What are your strengths and weaknesses?
- If you could have your choice of any job, what would it be and why?
- Why do you want to go into this unit/clinic?
- What are your short- and long-range goals and how do you expect to achieve them?
- What does success mean to you? How do you measure it?
- What motivates you?
- How do you interact with families and patients?
- What have you done to improve yourself during the past year?
- If you could relive the last 15 years, what changes would you make?
- Tell me about your greatest achievement and greatest disappointment?
- What are some of your weaknesses?
- Tell me about the best and worst bosses you've ever had.
- How do you handle your reaction when you don't get what you want? Give me a couple of examples.
- How do you handle stress?
- How do you pull a team together when it seems to be going nowhere?



- Give an example of how your work with the physicians.
- What qualities do you prize the most in those that report directly to you?
- What type of people do you have the most trouble getting along with in the workplace, and, how do you handle it?
- What constructive criticism have you received from employers?
- Everybody has pet peeves. What are yours?
- What else do you think I should know about you?

The interviewer will also want to learn about your experience and your reasons for seeking a new position and may ask the following questions: Remember to be positive and do not give too much information.

- When did you leave your last job and why?
- How long have you been out of work?
- At your last job, how much of the work did you perform independently?
- What did you like most and least about your last job?
- What are some of the problems you have encountered in your past jobs?
- How did you solve the problems?
- Do you prefer working independently or as part of a team?
- At your last job, how much was performed by a team?
- What have you been doing since you left your last job?

To learn about your plans for the future and your motivation for applying for the job, the interviewer may ask the following questions:

- Why do you want to work here? (people you have researched, quality of care, excellence, type of research, support of nursing...)
- What do you expect to experience in this job that you did not experience in your past jobs?
- How do you feel about evening work? Weekend work? Carrying a pager? Being on call?
- Assuming we make you an offer, what do you see as your future here?
- Why should we hire you?
- Are you considering other positions at this time?
- How does this job compare with them? (positive)
- If you feel you have any weaknesses with regard to this job, what would they be?
- What is your leadership style? Please give examples of this style in a real situation.
- How do you feel about relocating?
- What could you contribute to our facility?

Sometimes the interviewer will ask vague questions that, if unexpected, may be difficult to answer. Be prepared to answer the following questions:

- Tell me about yourself.
- What weaknesses in your work habits do you think you need most to work on? (what impact you have had on them and how you continue to improve)
- Why should I hire you?
- Why do you believe that you are the best candidate for this job?
- Why do you believe that you could handle this position?
- How soon would you be able to start this position if we offer it to you?



Many employers are now doing "behavioral interviews". Rather than focusing on your resume and reviewing your accomplishments as you have written them on paper, the "behavioral" interviewer will ask you open-ended questions that will cause you to describe real circumstances and your responses to them. General answers about behavior are not what the employer is looking for. You must describe in detail a particular event, project, or experience and you dealt with the situation, and what the outcome was. The premise behind behavioral interviewing is that the most accurate predictor of future performance is past performance in similar situations.

Although it will be more difficult to prepare concrete answers in advance to these interviews (as opposed to traditional ones), you can and should take some time to review your understanding of yourself, your past successes and concrete examples of your accomplishments. Work on honesty, sincerity and candidness. When you start to tell a behavioral story, the interviewer may try to sort out the details by understanding your behaviors.

The interviewer will probe for more depth, detail or understanding with questions like: "What were you thinking at that point?" or "Tell me more about what you discussed with that person." If you've told a story that's anything but totally honest, your response will not hold up through these probes.

If you have a friend that can pose as an interviewer for you, it can be helpful for you to practice answering open-ended questions, such as the following. Have your friend probe further: remember to be honest, positive and think about how much information is need to address the question. If there is a negative, talk about what you learned from the situation and how you do things differently now.

- Tell me about a time that you demonstrated initiative?
- Describe a situation when have you motivated yourself to complete an assignment or task that you did not want to do?
- Think about a difficult boss, professor or other person. What made him or her difficult? How did you successfully interact with this person?
- Think about a complex case or patient that you have been assigned. What approach did you take to solve it?
- Can you tell me about an occasion where you needed to work with a group to get a job done? What were the challenges and difficulties and how did you face these?
- Tell me about a time when you worked with a person who did things very differently from you. How did you get the job done? Would you work with that person again if given the choice?
- Describe your three greatest accomplishments to date.
- Tell me about a situation when you had to learn something new in a short time. How did you proceed?
- Can you tell me about a complex problem that you solved? Describe the process you utilized.
- Give me an example of a time when you had to make a split second decision.
- Give me an example of a bad decision that you made and what you learned from that mistake?
- Tell me about a time when something you tried to accomplish and failed. What did you learn from that failure?
- Tell me about a time when you missed an obvious solution to a problem. What did you learn from that mistake?
- Tell me about a challenge that you successfully met.
- Describe a situation when you had to go above and beyond the call of duty in order to get a job done.
- Please tell me about one or two unpopular decisions you have made. What were the positive and negative outcomes of those decisions?



- What leadership positions have you held? Describe your leadership style. What aspects of your leadership style have you changed or deleted once you learned that these aspects were not successful? (if applicable)
- Give me a specific example of a time when you used good judgment and logic in solving a problem.
- Summarize a situation where you successfully persuaded others to do something or to see your point of view. Tell me about a time when you had to use your presentation skills to influence someone's opinion.
- Give an example of when your persistence had the biggest payoff.
- How have you most constructively dealt with disappointment and turned it into a learning experience? Please give me a concrete example in your life.
- Tell me of a time when you had to conform to a policy with which you did not agree.
- Describe a situation in which you effectively developed a solution to a problem by combining different perspectives or approaches.

When you are answering "behavioral questions", steer clear of the pat answers that are not very realistic. For example, don't try to portray yourself as a person that never makes mistakes. Or as a person whose only failings are that you work too much, are too dedicated, too loyal, etc. Be honest about your mistakes since the experienced interviewer will be looking for "progress" and "growth", not perfection. But, do give an example of how you learned from your mistake and how that experience has benefited you in the long run.

Be succinct and concise. In all behavioral answers, the interviewer wants to hear:

- A brief description of the problem, challenge or situation.
- What your action was & how you decided that action.
- A brief description of the result of your action and your assessment of its result.

Always prepare questions to ask. Having no questions prepared sends the message that you have not been thinking about the job. Avoid asking questions that are clearly answered on the employer's web site and/or in any literature provided by the employer to you in advance. This would simply reveal that you did not prepare for the interview, and you are wasting the employer's time by asking these questions.

Remember that an interview is a two-way conversation. For you, the interview has two purposes: One, to sell yourself, and two, to evaluate the position. After asking questions, the interviewer usually invites you to ask questions.

By asking informed questions, such as the following, you not only gain knowledge about the potential employer, but you also make a good impression:

- What is the size of the unit, organizational structure of the unit, volume?
- Does the company plan to expand? What are the company's strengths and weaknesses compared to its competition?
- Could you explain your overall organizational structure?
- Can you discuss your take on the hospital's culture? What are the hospital's values?
- How would you characterize the management philosophy of this organization?
- What do you think is the greatest opportunity facing the organization in the near future? The biggest threat?
- How will my leadership responsibilities and performance be measured? And by whom? How often?

MELNIC CONSULTING GROUP
Leaders in Pediatric Healthcare Recruiting
www.melnic.com
jill@melnic.com
800 886-7906



- Would there be opportunities for advancement, and, how long before I might be considered for one? –if relevant
- What qualities do you prize the most in those that report directly to you?
- How does the organization rank within its field?
- What is the reputation of the department (or facility) to which I am applying?
- How is this department perceived within the organization
- What have been its goals in the last year, and, did it meet them?
- What would be the goals of the department in the coming year?
- Do you think those are aggressive or conservative goals? Who set them?
- What problems or difficulties are present in the department now?
- What are the most important problems to solve first?
- What will be the greatest challenge in the job?
- What are the greatest strengths of this department?
- What would you expect me to accomplish in this job?
- What is your management style?
- How often would we meet together?
- What responsibilities have the highest priority?
- Can you describe a typical day for someone in this position?
- How might these responsibilities and priorities change?
- How much time should be devoted to each area of responsibility?
- What qualifications are you looking for in the person who fills this job?
- What are some examples of the achievements of others who have been in this position?
- How many people have held this job in the last five years? Where are they now?
- What are the traits and skills of people who are the most successful within the organization?
- What do you like about working here?

Remember to focus more on the needs of the employer than on yourself and you will be able to communicate how your skills and experience will meet their needs.

MELNIC CONSULTING GROUP
Leaders in Pediatric Healthcare Recruiting
www.melnic.com
jill@melnic.com
800 886-7906

