



**Office of Professional
Development**

UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA

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Interviewing

This packet provides essential tools from beginning to end of your interview process. You can also learn how to prepare for a mock interview at the Office of Professional Development. A mock interview provides constructive feedback on your performance in preparation for an effective interview.

*Office of Professional Development
College of Business Administration
University of Central Florida*





Interview Attire

Important: For an interview, it is best to dress **business professional** regardless of the company's dress code policy. This will insure that you make the best impression and prove your dedication to the role and organization. Therefore, it is recommended to invest in a suit that you can wear throughout your career for interviews and professional events.

Business Professional:

***No dresses or skirts that come above the knee →**



***No backpacks! Bring padfolios or a briefcase**

***Bring plenty of tangibles like resumes and business cards**

← *No Polos



← *No Khakis or Shorts

***No Wedges or Stilettos →**

Ladies

- DO:** Opt for dark or neutral colored professional dress, knee-length skirt with blazer or pant suit
- DO:** Coordinate a white or light-color shirt with the outfit, tucked in
- DO:** Wear conservative pumps or medium heels that are comfortable to walk in
- DO:** Accessorize subtly – natural makeup, light perfume, minimal jewelry, small purse or padfolio

Gentlemen

- DO:** Dress in a black, grey, dark blue or muted pinstripe suit
- DO:** Match shirt to suit with a collared shirt in white, pale blue or other neutral shade
- DO:** Select polished slip-ons or lace dress shoes to match
- DO:** Finish the look with a conservative, classic tie

Grooming Tips for Everyone:

- ✓ Hair: Should be clean and neat.
- ✓ Hands: Clean fingernails. If polished, pick a neutral shade.
- ✓ Fit: Clothes should be clean, neatly pressed, and fit properly.



Perfect Your Elevator Pitch

Don't Forget Your Manners

Approach with a standard greeting such as “Hi, how are you?” or “Good morning!” to initiate a conversation before easing into your pitch. The goal is to engage in two-way dialogue.

Introduce Yourself

Once appropriate, open up your elevator pitch with your complete name. Remember to maintain eye contact – and smile!

Mention Your Educational Background

State the name of the degree you are pursuing and major along with anticipated graduation date. If you are completing a Minor or Certificate, mention these as well.

Explain Your Professional Experience

List the jobs or positions you are currently in as well as those you have held in the past. Connect your experience along with your specific skills to the employer’s needs.

Highlight Your Expertise, Skills, and Accomplishments

Give a concrete example that demonstrates your uniqueness and provide illustrations on how you work.

Mention Your Job Search Strategy

Outline your career objective. In addition, explain your interest and enthusiasm for the potential opportunity to join the team.

End Strategically

Wrap up your pitch (remember to be brief – 30 seconds) with a question or by offering a tangible item such as a resume. This allows for a smooth transition into the next part of the discussion.

Elevator Pitch Example

Good afternoon! My name is John Smith and I am currently pursuing my Bachelors of Science in Business Administration at the University of Central Florida with a major in Management. Anticipated graduation date is August of 2019 at this time. I currently work as a Human Resources Intern at Universal Studios where I consult with employers to identify employment needs and conduct new employee orientations. In this role, I have gained valuable experience in customer service, conflict resolution, and working effectively on diverse teams. I aim to grow into a Human Resources Specialist role and I look forward to the potential opportunity to bring my training and development skills to Walt Disney World’s Human Resources division. Can I give you my business card?



Common Interview Questions

Important: It is imperative that you utilize resources like Glassdoor and the company's website to review typical interview questions and styles. You may also want to ask the recruiter that schedules your interview what style interview you should expect. The below questions are based on a traditional and behavioral interview style, but some companies may have a technical interview style instead. In this case, you need to prepare accordingly.

Q: "So, tell me about yourself"

This question may be used to assess your personality, preparation, communication skills and ability to think on your feet. Prepare a list of what you do (your current or last job), your strengths (stick to job-focused skills), and a summary of your career trajectory, linking your experience to the job at hand.

Q: "Why did you leave your last job?"

Respond positively — "...for better career advancement or promotion opportunities, increased responsibility, and more variety at work..."

Q: "Why do you want to do this job / work for this company?"

Demonstrate your knowledge of the company and re-emphasize your suitability for the position.

Q: "What do you think you have to offer this company?"

This is a chance to sing your own praises — concentrating on the skills you have that are required for the position. ("I have strong sales skills, am a good team player and am very keen to be involved in the new markets you are developing in the Asian region.")

Q: "What do you think this position involves?"

This question is designed to reveal if you have thought about the position, done some research, listened to the interviewer, and can summarize all of this information clearly.

Q: "What do you know about the company?"

Demonstrate your interest in the job, and your understanding of the organization and industry. Talk about the research you did into the company's key areas of interest, its size, its main customers or current status, making reference to your source of information.

Q: "Do you have any questions you would like to ask?"

Always prepare a question to ask the interviewer. Ask about the position, request clarification of general information about the company, or summarize your understanding and request confirmation. If they have already answered your questions tell them (be specific) so they know that you have thought about the position in preparing for the interview.

For example:

"What do you see as being the main focus of this role?"

"Am I correct in saying that the position involves mediating between A and B departments and monitoring and developing new approaches to...?"

"I'd like to ask about the organizational structure... are the publications produced on a national basis or individually by each regional office? How are budgets controlled and allocated?"



Q: "What do you believe are your key strengths?"

Prepare responses that give specific examples of your strengths at previous positions that will support your job application.

Q: "What do you believe are your weaknesses?"

No-one readily admits real weaknesses in an interview situation. It is general knowledge that this is an opportunity to turn the question into a positive. Think of something that relates to your experience of work that is plausible as a weakness but is not really a negative point. ("I am very particular about detail", "I become very focused on the projects I am involved in")

Q: "Why have you had so many jobs?"

If you have had jobs in different industries or several positions in a short period, describe the positives — that you were learning new skills, following different career paths, travelling overseas, etc. Refer to the experience you gained in past jobs that relates to the position under discussion.

Q: "What do you enjoy most about your current / last job?"

The trick with this question is to list what you have enjoyed about work that strongly relate to the key competencies of the position in question, and mention that you are looking forward to expanding your experience / scope in these areas.

Q: A question requesting confidential information about a previous employer

This may be a testing of your discretion and professionalism. It is best to reply that you would prefer not to divulge any confidential information (sales figures, for instance), citing the fact that you are sure your interviewer would expect the same discretion from their employees.

Q: "Where do you see yourself in five years' time?"

This is an assessment of the extent of your ambition and career planning. You should demonstrate that your long-term goals are appropriate for the position being discussed and your commitment to them.

Q: "Can you give me an example of your creativity / managerial / organizational skills?" Think of some examples that prove that you possess the key attributes and competencies requested in the job ad and description. These are probably the areas on which your interviewer will probably focus.

Q: "Do you work well under pressure?"

Answer with a 'yes', and give a specific example of a time when you were under pressure and how you rose to the challenge.

Common Behavioral Questions (refer to page 6 to discuss how to best answer these questions):

Q: "Tell me about a time when you had to go above and beyond in order to get a job done."

Q: "Give me an example of a time when you tried to accomplish a task and failed."

Q: "Have you ever had a disagreement with a co-worker or boss? How did you handle it?"

Q: "Give an example of your actions in previous jobs that demonstrate your willingness to work hard."

Q: "Describe a time you contributed creatively to a team."

Q: "Tell me about a time when you were required to prioritize your tasks and how you did so."

Q: "Give me a specific example of a time when you used good judgment in solving a problem."

Q: "Tell me about your best/worst team experience — and your role in it."

Q: "Give an example of a difficult situation you've faced and how you handled it."



Utilize the STAR Method

Important: The STAR Method is the BEST way to answer behavioral interview questions. If you express the situation, task, action and result in your answer while being concise but informative, you will be sure to win over your interviewer. Make an appointment with a Career Development Career Coach to practice this technique.



S

Situation

Describe the situation you were in while providing context. Tell the interviewer about a specific challenge or situation. You should provide enough details for the employer to understand the “who, what, when, where and why” of the situation.



T

Task

Explain exactly what you were trying to achieve. What task were you assigned to do? Describe the project or assignment. Tell the interviewer what you were aiming to accomplish.



A

Action

Explain your specific role and what action you have taken. If problems or challenges arose, outline how you handled it. Tell the interviewer how you proactively took action.



R

Result

Describe the result of YOUR specific action. Explain how you have met your objective. Always remember to provide a positive result. Demonstrate what you have learned from this experience and how you have applied this knowledge since.



End of Interview Questions

Important: Keep in mind that the questions you ask at the end of an interview should be written down beforehand and well thought out. Do your research before deciding on a particular question, and have about 3-7 prepared. If the answer to a question that you're thinking can be readily found on the internet, you may not want to ask that question. Also avoid personal questions that would make your interviewer feel uncomfortable. Finally, always ask for business cards at the end of your interview so you can send a thank you email 24-48 hours afterward!

- What has your favorite aspect of the job been and what do you like most about working for the company?
- What do you think are the most important qualities for someone to excel in this role? **OR** How would you describe the ideal candidate?
- What is the typical career path for someone in this role?
- What are the challenges of this position?
- What aspects of this job would you like to see performed better?
- What have past employees done to succeed in this position?
- What type of employee tends to succeed here? What qualities are the most important for doing well and advancing at the firm?
- How do you evaluate success here?
- If you were to hire me, what might I expect in a typical day? **OR** What are the responsibilities and accountabilities of this position?
- Where do you see the company in three years and how would the person in this role contribute to this vision?
- What are the first priorities for this position?
- Can the positions duties be expanded?
- What are the employer's short- and long-range objectives?
- What are some outside influences that affect company growth?
- When and how will I be evaluated?
- What are the performance standards?
- With whom would I be working? Who would be my supervisor?
- What is the department's environment like?
- When will you make the hiring decision?
- What are the next steps in the interview process? Or can you tell me what steps need to be completed before your company can generate an offer?

You may also want to research your interviewer on LinkedIn beforehand and have pointed questions specific to them. Maybe you have a commonality with work experience, school, volunteer, etc. Feel free to ask about their experience or how they grew to the position that they are in now.