



SUCCESS IN INTERVIEWING AND NETWORKING

KEY TO A SUCCESSFUL INTERVIEW

The key to a successful interview is adequate preparation. Most employers ask the same basic questions, so prepare answers before an interview. Below is a list of questions frequently asked by employers, with some ideas on how you might answer.

Avoid memorizing answers, but become confident about what you will say so that you can leave a positive first impression. Find someone to coach you through the questions—a friend, someone at the employment resource center, or your ward or stake employment specialist.

COMMON QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Tell me something about yourself.

Develop a brief summary (two minutes or less) that includes positive work and volunteer habits. Use your “Me in 30 Seconds” statement along with “Power Statements” to answer (these are described at www.ldsjobs.org and in the Career Workshop).

What are some of your strengths? or Why should we hire you?

Know your strengths, and use your Power Statements to prove them. Tell how you can add value to the company and how you can help make or save money.

Why do you want to work for us? or What do you know about our company?

Do research before the interview in order to give an appropriate answer. Discuss how your skills would fill the needs of that company. Use a Power Statement.

What are some of your weaknesses?

Explain how you have turned perceived weaknesses into strengths. For example: *“Some people say that I am too nice. But I have found that by being nice I am able to serve 14 percent more customers per shift, and I have 40 percent fewer complaints than my average co-worker.”*

What do you think of your present [or past] employer?

Never criticize your last company or boss. Always use positive terms. Try using a Power Statement for your previous employer.

What do you hope to be doing in five years?

Indicate how you hope to make a positive contribution to the employer’s company. For example: *“I’d like to be working for you in a position of responsibility.”* Use a Power Statement to describe how you plan to benefit the company.

“If ye are prepared ye shall not fear.”

DOCTRINE AND COVENANTS 38:30



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What do you expect as a salary or compensation?

Avoid mentioning a specific salary. You may respond with:

- *What do you normally pay someone with my experience?*
- *What does your budget allow for this type of position?*
- *I know that I have to make you more money than it costs you to employ me. Let me first explain how I can do that.*
[Use a Power Statement.]

Or you can ask to not discuss money until you find that you and the employer are a good match. Suggest that if you both find that you want to work together, then you can agree on a salary arrangement later.

Do you have any questions for me?

Ask questions such as:

- *Where do you see this company in five years?*
- *What have been your experiences with this company?*
- *Why is this position open?*
- *Do you have any concerns about my abilities to do this job? Would you share them with me?*
- *What is your time frame for making a decision?*

BEHAVIORAL QUESTIONS

Employers often ask questions to see how you react or behave in certain situations. Try to understand why the employer might be asking the question. As you give your answer, provide specific examples that show the employer your thought process.

The following is a list of typical behavioral questions and what an employer might be evaluating:

- Describe the most recent situation you faced under pressure. How did you react?

Evaluation: Does the candidate explode? Walk away? Give up? React in a mature way?

- Describe your last major mistake. Why did it happen? What did you do about it?

Evaluation: Does the candidate understand the seriousness of the situation? Is the reason he or she gives for the mistake logical?

- Tell me about a time when your ideas were rejected by your boss. How did you work through the situation?

Evaluation: Does the candidate bow down to management? Does he or she go back and do homework for another try? Is he or she persistent when right?



LDS EMPLOYMENT RESOURCE SERVICES

The Career Workshop, available through the LDS employment resource center or your stake employment specialist, will help you to prepare to succeed in an interview.

"I wouldn't have known what to say in the interview or how to say it, if I hadn't been in the Career Workshop, where I identified skills that I had and learned the 'Me in 30 Seconds' statement."

Johannesburg, South Africa

"I gained so much from the Professional Placement Program. I had a great deal more confidence in presenting myself and discussing my strengths and weaknesses and my accomplishments. I know this was crucial at the job interviews I went to."

Washington, D.C.