



*Ensuring that by 2025,
60% of Jackson County residents will have
a post-secondary degree or valuable credential*

PREPARING FOR THE SUCCESSFUL JOB INTERVIEW

“Never tell me the sky’s the limit when there are footprints on the moon.” –Author Unknown

The job interview is a mutual exchange of information.

As the applicant, your main objectives are:

- To communicate information about your skills and qualifications clearly and accurately.
- To connect this information to the requirements of the job for which you are interviewing.
- To seek additional information about the position and employer to determine if the position is an appropriate fit.

The interviewer’s main objectives are:

- To assess how closely your qualifications match the requirements of the position and organization.
- To present the organization in a positive manner and supply accurate information about it to you.

Step One – Prepare

Prepare all necessary documents needed for the interview—resume, cover letter, etc.

You will always want to bring along extra copies of your resume, transcript, and references. Consider purchasing a leather portfolio to hold your documents and a pen and paper to record notes.

Plan your attire.

First impressions are powerful, so you will want to look your best. Suggestions for professional dress for an interview include:

- Suits/Dresses: Conservative, in dark colors (dark blue, black, gray, or tan), skirt length just above knee, no miniskirts!!
- Shirts/Blouses: Simple, in soft colors and not revealing.
- Hair: Conservative hair style that does not distract from professionalism.
- Handbag: Medium or small size.

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Step Two - Research the Organization and the Position

Learn as much about the organization and position you are applying for before the interview. Visit the organization's web site. Analyze the job description and try to match your experiences, interests, and abilities to the requirements for the position.

Step Three - Know Yourself

Prepare to discuss your strengths, weaknesses, education, work experiences, personal goals, and values. Read the job description thoroughly, anticipating questions that focus on your qualifications, the organization, and how the two fit together. Questions you may be asked include:

- Tell me about yourself.
- What are your goals?
- Why do you want to work for this organization?
- Why should we hire you?

Step Four - Make a List of Questions to Ask

The questions you ask will reveal much about your level of interest in the organization and your level of preparation for the interview. Ask questions that demonstrate a genuine interest in and knowledge of the organization and position. Although each situation will warrant specific inquiries, some suggested questions include:

- What characteristics do you look for in a successful employee?
- What are a few of the problems I will be expected to solve?
- If I may ask, what is your timetable for filling this current position?

Step Five - Follow Up

Write a brief letter of thanks for the interview. In the letter you need to reiterate your interest in the position and briefly state why you are the best candidate. If you do not hear from anyone in a week, then call to express your continued interest in the position.