Developing your communication skills for the job interview

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Communicate:
What you will learn...

- What to do before, during, and after the interview.
- How to handle different types of questions.
- How to follow-up professionally.
- How to negotiate offers and determine which position is right for you.
Communicate

- Telephone
- In-person individual
- In-person group
- The follow-up
Communicate: You will be contacted by phone or email ...

- The interview begins.
- Remember your rules of written communication.
- Your voice mail should reflect your professionalism.

Ask:
- The expected length of the interview.
- What does it involve? Multiple interviews, one person, a team, a tour, a meal?
- Who should you expect to meet with?
- Directions.
Communicate: Telephone Interviews

- Be prepared with notes.
- Screening.
- Goal is to get the in-person interview.
- Use the interviewer’s name.
- Find a quiet spot.
- Include examples which you can prepare ahead of time.
Communicate: Do not put the cart before the horse

- Only apply to those positions in the first place for which you qualify – MATCH YOUR SKILLS.

- Engage in self-exploration and apply for positions which are compatible with your INTERESTS AND VALUES, as well as your skills.
Communicate: Interviewing Goals

The 7 “C” s:

- Choose **Clothing** carefully
- Be **Confident**
- Carry yourself professionally
- Collaborate with your audience
- Clearly, Concisely yet **Creatively** express yourself
Communicate:
Tips to appear confident ... even when your not

• Tell yourself you deserve the job – not entitled to it.
• Envision yourself already in the job.
• Introduce yourself by name, practice answering questions about your goals.
• Be enthusiastic.
Communicate: Confidence

- Relates to how you carry yourself (voice tone, eye contact, language choice, posture).
- Think about your success story – how did you feel?
“Interviews aren’t the time to make a fashion statement about your individuality.”

-Wall Street Journal, Business Weekly

Clothing /Appearance

- Wear conservative suits, black or blue preferably, with matching shoes.
- Women, stockings should match skin tone.
- Women, hair pulled back if long, no perfume or heavy makeup or jewelry.
- Men, shave and have neatly groomed hair.
- Men, shine your shoes, iron your white button down shirt, and wear a tie.
Communicate: Dress

YES

NO
Communicate: Dress

Yes

No
Communicate: Dress

Yes

No

Too short and tight
Communicate: Confidence comes with preparation

Before the interview gain an understanding of ...

- The position
- The employer (products, services, business methods, history, philosophy, reputation, locations, standing in industry, organizational structure, prospects for growth and change)
- The industry
- The trends
- Your resume
- Practice how you will articulate the match between you and these aspects
Communicate:
Remember the night before ...

✓ Check the weather forecast

✓ Pack your briefcase or portfolio

✓ Relax, have a light dinner, no alcohol and go to bed early
Summary: Before the interview

- Travel plans and trial run – buy your fare or fill your tank, don’t be late!
- Have your agenda – who are you seeing? When do you have to be there?
- Make copies of your resume and reference sheets.
- Clothes are laid out and ready to go.
- Confirm plans for situations when you will be depending on someone else such as a babysitter – you can’t bring family.
- Research the organization – know the facts.
During the interview- tips

- RELAX! Find your “happy place”.
- Avoid too much coffee and sugar.
- Be about 10 minutes early.
- Breath in and count to ten if you are nervous.
- Observe your surroundings, do you feel comfortable?
- React cool under pressure – noise, something falls – the unexpected.
- When unsure of an answer, repeat the question first to “buy” yourself time to think.
During the Interview
Collaboration, Creativity, Clarity, Conciseness

- Engage the interviewer(s).
- Reduce barriers.
- Establish a relationship.
- Tell stories, but be relevant, clear and concise.
- Avoid politically charged subjects and religion.
- Smile.
- The “likable” factor.
- We are all human after all!
Carry Yourself Professionally During the Interview

• Eye contact
• It’s all in the handshake
• Be friendly courteous, and professional to everyone
• Be positive and never criticize others
• Be aware of your body language – tone of voice, posture, facial expressions, re-actions – clues to your “true” feelings and attitudes
• Express yourself well, speak clearly and audibly. Use complete sentences and avoid slang
• Be yourself – Don’t try to be someone you are not; Sincerity goes a long way
• Be a good listener and alert to non-verbal cues indicating to stop/start talking. Don’t think about your response while the interviewer is still talking.
• Respect for your audience – maintain a calm composure no matter what
Interview Types

- Behavioral Based – Most common
- Unstructured – “We’re so Impressed”
- The classic case study, brain teasers, and team games (consulting)
- Usually interviews are conducted with either one person or a group interviewing one candidate, however sometimes candidates are interviewed in groups
Open Ended and “Personality Fit” Questions

- Always put yourself in the interviewers shoes and ask yourself, “Why would this interviewer, for this particular organization, for this specific job, ask me this question?”

- Then tailor your answer.
Open ended Questions

The interviewer still wants to determine the “personality fit”, however these questions are much less structured. It is up to you to structure them. Use your education, experience, extracurricular, etc., to determine your holistic answer.

- Tell me about yourself.
- Why should I hire you?
- How would you describe yourself?
Personality Fit Questions

- When were you most satisfied / dissatisfied in your work? What was most satisfying / dissatisfying about that?
- What do you consider your strengths and weaknesses?
- Why did you choose the career for which you are preparing / have prepared?
- What animal would you be and why?

- Determining fit between the job, employer and candidate.
- What is fit? The extent to which the responsibilities of the job, the values and mission of the employer are consistent with the kind of environment in which the candidate envisions him / herself working.
Behavioral based questions

- Use the **CAR** approach
  Context, Action, Result

- **Context** = What was the situation? Set-up the scene. *Choose a related context or one that by describing it allows you to expand on related abilities*

- **Action** = What did you do? Say? And how did you do or say it? *Describe transferable skills*

- **Result** = What happened? *Only choose situations that have positive results*

- Otherwise known as **STAR**
Behavioral Based Questions

- What major problem have you encountered and how did you deal with it?
- Describe a recent accomplishment.
- If you were part of our team, and one of the members was not pulling his or her weight, what would you do?
- What would you do if ...(the following situation arose with a patient, client, student etc.)?
“Your resume is superb, so what would you like to know about us?”

It’s a test! You are being put at ease on purpose. You are being given control of a block of time and the interviewer wants to see how well you use it. Boring questions about the firm’s history or ambitions will not work.

“I’d like to spend about ten minutes each on three topics. First, your hospital’s training programs, what they are, how seriously they are taken and what are they designed to teach. Second, perhaps we could review why I’m confident that the skills and experiences on my resume fit well with ___. Third, I’d like to hear why you chose this hospital, how your own career has evolved and whether it has been what you expected. Shall we start with training first?”
Case Questions

“Let me tell you about a project I’ve been working on… Our client makes electronic widgets for the transportation industry. It’s been losing share recently and management wants us to figure out why. What do you think?”

“Who are the client’s competitors and which ones are gaining market share from us? Is the client losing all customers or just one segment? Are customers choosing other widgets because they cost less or because they work better?”
Questions YOU ask:

- Consult with your faculty or mentorship
- Nurse / patient ratio or Staff / customer ratio (depends on the industry)
- How support functions are handled (secretarial, supply, transportation)
- Seniority on the night shift for industries with this shift
- Orientation / training
- Expectations to work in other areas as needed / cross training
- Specific procedures or critical need areas
Don’t forget . . .

- To ask for a business card (s)
- To ask questions and clarify
- To ask about the next step
- To thank them for their time
- NOT to ask about salary and benefits unless brought up
Advanced interviewing

2\textsuperscript{nd} or 3\textsuperscript{rd} Round

- Not all employers require a 2\textsuperscript{nd} or 3\textsuperscript{rd} interview.
- They may be structured or unstructured.
- It may be confrontational “stress interview”.
- It will definitely be behavioral based to further learn how you work.
- It may last several hours to \(\frac{1}{2}\) or whole day if in the business world.
- It may involve lunch or dinner (socials).
- It may involve several people (together or separately) at all levels (nurse manager, partner, recruiter, new hire).
- Some organizations have human resources conduct the first interview and then the department / supervisor / that you would work for if hired, conduct the second interview.
- Some organizations interview first with a committee and then the second interview is with the department head, physician etc.
Questions to expect

- Some of the same questions to confirm or further define what was learned from the first round; consistency.
- Technical questions (managers, physicians, partners) pertaining to your education, very specific questions regarding your knowledge and ability to perform the tasks required of the position. Know what they are looking for by doing your homework.
- Situational questions, “What would you do if...” (behavioral based) How you react under pressure, assess your judgment and experience (management and higher).
How social should I be at a social?

- You are what you eat!
- Don’t drink alcohol!
- Use proper etiquette when eating (napkin on lap, don’t use your fingers).
- Don’t monopolize conversation yet don’t be a wall flower either.
- Tell them that you like hiking also, but not that you enjoy pounding a few beers when you go – be comfortable but remember where you are – limits!
Follow-up
(2\textsuperscript{nd} or 3\textsuperscript{rd} interview)

- Re-affirm interest / reiterate ability to “do the job” in your thank you letter.
- Clarify anything from the 2\textsuperscript{nd} interview that requires such in the same letter.
- Send a thank you letter to ALL that will, or may have input on the decision within 24-48 hours. Close it with:
  
  “Looking forward to the next step in the process”.
  
  “Looking forward to your final decision”.
Communicate:
Exercise: Interviewing

Practice in the mirror, with a trusted friend, family member or college staff
• Tell me about a challenging situation and how you handled it?
• Share your strengths and weaknesses.