

Chapter 3

The Job Interview

Outline

1. Interview techniques
2. Interview questions
3. Reading: Human Thought Process

Main Ideas

1. Interview techniques are ways to prepare yourself physically and mentally to be successful at an interview.
2. Interview questions can be practiced prior to an interview. Being aware of what to be asked and what to ask enhances more chances of being considered as an appropriate candidate for the job opening.
3. Reading and understanding “Human Thought Process” will improve your reading skills needed for your career.

Objectives

Students will be able to

1. prepare themselves for an effective interview,
2. use appropriate interview techniques in job interview,
3. ask and answer questions with self confidence and sufficient knowledge, and
4. have more skills in critical reading.

A clear and direct-to-the-point application letter that precisely demonstrates your qualifications, educational background and expertise usually results in a call for an interview. Learning interview techniques and preparing yourself well will eliminate nervousness and awkwardness in an actual interview. In other words, it is important that you know what to expect in an interview and how to deal with interviewers and their questions as well as the offer that may come up if your qualifications match what the company desires for.

1. Interview techniques

A job interview gives you an opportunity to find out more about the company and the job offered. At the same time, it provides a chance for an employer to see whether your qualifications, personality, attitude and skills truly match with the company's needs. Thorough preparation for a job interview certainly increases your chances in getting a job desired for.

Some points to be taken into consideration before going to a job interview are as follows.

a. Researching the company

Find out all you can about the company, its products, and the interviewers for the interview. Most companies have informative websites for you to be acquainted with their product line and activities. In addition, more information can be acquired through brochures and annual reports that contain summaries of activities. These can be secured from the Chamber of Commerce or from the company itself.

b. Finding out more details about job description

Getting a copy of job description and understanding the expectation of the company thoroughly will certainly avoid any misunderstanding that may occur after you are already employed. Learning about what you are expected to do in that position will help you decide more accurately toward taking up the job offered or not. Do not rely only on the job advertisement which usually does not provide full description.

Obtain as many details as possible about your future responsibilities and duties before making any decision.

c. Preparing for a presentation

Some jobs do requires clear, precise and persuasive presentation skills. Prepare yourself well with impressive presentation techniques adds up more chances to be recruited as a valuable asset to the company. Remember to use clear voice which shows your self confidence and do not exceed the stated time limit.

d. Learning useful vocabulary for better communication

It is advisable that you learn as many vocabulary and expressions regarding office work and a particular job you apply for as possible. The more you know the vocabulary, the better chance you have to understand the interviewer's questions. This will lead to a smooth and fruitful interview which will also create a good impression on the interviewer as well.

The following is a partial list of useful vocabulary and expressions that can be used for a job interview.

	meaning
an approach	=
an effort	=
an assessment	=
a candidate	=
a curriculum vitae	=
a corporation	=
a firm	=
a dictating machine	=
a graduate	=
a trainee	=
a peer	=

meaning

an organization	=
advantages	=
disadvantages	=
personnel	=
potential	=
living expenses	=
benefits	=
advancement	=
overseas	=
performance	=
self confidence	=
hesitation	=
enthusiasm	=
rank	=
pressure	=
seniority	=
insincerity	=
inflexibility	=
unreliability	=
stability	=
conditions of appointment	=
gender	=
emphasis	=
staff	=
reservation	=
qualifications	=
on-the-job training	=

meaning

extracurricular activities	=
feedback	=
adequate	=
apparent	=
assertive	=
ambitious	=
confident	=
competent	=
compatible with	=
energetic	=
gregarious	=
self-supporting	=
sufficient	=
racial	=
stressful	=
briefly	=
extensively	=
to earn a living	=
to go abroad	=
to start a family	=
to get married	=
to stand on one's own feet	=
to recruit	=
to obtain	=
to adjust	=
to be aware of	=
to be team oriented	=

meaning

to consider	=
to contribute	=
to demonstrate	=
to elaborate	=
to encounter	=
to express	=
to face	=
to fulfill	=
to further one's studies	=
to fidget	=
to get nervous	=
to get in touch with	=
to handle	=
to irritate	=
to keep in mind	=
to keep calm	=
to keep one informed	=
to launch	=
to lose temper	=
to make mistakes	=
to manipulate	=
to materialize	=
to negotiate	=
to overcome	=
to require	=
to relocate	=
to relax	=

meaning

- to stand out =
- to specialize =
- to supervise =
- to solve a problem =
- to suppress =
- to transfer =
- to tackle =
- to undertake =

Activity 1 A

Give a correct part of speech for the following.

Verb	Adjective	Adverb	Noun
1. to train	_____	_____	_____
2. _____	_____	_____	dictation
3. _____	reliable	_____	_____
4. _____	_____	_____	seniority
5. to extend	_____	_____	_____
6. _____	_____	briefly	_____
7. to irritate	_____	_____	_____
8. _____	negotiable	_____	_____
9. _____	_____	considerably	_____
10. _____	_____	_____	manipulation

Activity 1 B

Write a correct word from the scrambled letters in each item.

- 1. c r t n u e o n e = _____
- 2. e q r i r e u = _____

3. i b u s t m i o a = _____
4. r e g i o a g s u r = _____
5. t e r u r i c = _____
6. e u p r s e s r = _____
7. s o r s v e a e = _____
8. a n c i d t d a e = _____
9. t o p n t l a c i = _____
10. n f t s e b i e = _____

To be well prepared before going to an interview is a good start. Now, you are ready for the big day. To get or not to get a job you have applied for depends on how well you present yourself at an actual interview. The following are some interview techniques that have proved helpful in overcoming an interviewee's nervousness and awkwardness that will lead to a chance of getting the job desired for.

1. Do not be late for an interview

Always check your traveling time and find out the exact location for your interview. Allow yourself at least half an hour before the time scheduled in order to check your appearance and get acquainted with the place. This helps calm you down before the interview starts.

2. Dress appropriately

Do not over or underdress. A knee-length skirt with a jacket is advisable for a woman and a suit and tie is more recommended for a man. Try not to put too much make up and not to wear fancy earrings. Keep yourself proper and neat. In other words, be somewhat conservative. Cleanliness in appearance is much appreciated.

3. Be assertive and demonstrate enthusiasm

Present yourself in a clear, concise way with good communication skills. Be prepared for an impromptu presentation about a product or the ways to deal with

certain job-related problems. Remember that smile is always a plus since it denotes friendliness. Be enthusiastic about your career and show some initiative. This might relate to your past job or experience.

4. Maintain eye contact

To show that you are sincere, it is necessary to maintain eye contact. Do not avoid eye contact with westerners since this shows you have something to hide and worse than that it suggests that you are insincere. Looking into a person's eye seems to be impolite in Thai or oriental culture. However, the westerners consider eye contact an important feature to show a person's true self.

5. Listen carefully and answer loud and clear

If your listening skills are not so good, don't panic. Be self confident. It does not hurt to ask the interviewer to repeat the questions. However, do not exceed two times per question. This will certainly irritate the interviewer. A good way out is to practice as much as you can before the interviewing day. Before you answer any question, allow yourself some time to think carefully. Then speak clear and loud. It is alright to laugh or joke a little, but not too much.

6. Prepare to ask some questions about the position

During an interview, you may want to ask your prospective employer a few questions regarding the job you have applied for. This will show that you have prepared yourself and you have an idea of what you are looking for and what you are expected to do.

7. Be realistic about salary

You should know the salary range for the position you have applied for. Do not introduce the subject of money yourself. Wait and see what the interviewer is going to offer. Be honest about your past salaries. Start negotiating as high in the range as possible. However, if the salary is lower than you have expected, think of other

areas of fringe benefits such as vacation time, flexible working hours or relocation expenses, etc.

Your appearance and behavior play important roles during an interview. Therefore, make sure that you look decent, neat and clean. Lack of self confidence normally costs you a job. Be assertive and articulate. Remember that first impressions are the most lasting. If you make mistakes during an interview, stay calm. Make yourself understood as much as you can. Laugh and relax a little to help ease your nervousness. Try to elaborate your answers to give more details. However, don't talk too much. If you have any unpleasant habits such as blowing your nose too loud or laughing piercingly, try to suppress them. Overall, let your prospective employer see your true personality as written out in a resume. It won't take long to find out that you are not an "enthusiastic, outgoing, and team-oriented" as you have stated in your curriculum vitae.

Activity 1 C

Fill in the blank with your personal information.

Prime Hotel

84 Ramkhamhaeng Road, Bangkok, BKK 10240

Tel: (662) 3101562-9 Fax: (662) 3101570

e-mail: primehotel.com

Employment Application		1" photo
Position:	Salary Expected:	
Name in Thai: _____		
Name in English: _____		
Present Address:		
Area Code:	Tel. No. Home:	Office:

Personal Information					
Date of Birth:	Age:	Sex:	ID. Card No:	Birth Place:	
Race:	Nationality:	Religion:	Height:	Weight:	
Father's Name:		Age:		Occupation:	
Mother's Name:		Age:		Occupation:	
Marital Status <input type="checkbox"/> Single <input type="checkbox"/> Married <input type="checkbox"/> Divorced <input type="checkbox"/> Separated No. of children:					
Spouse's Name:		Age:	Occupation:		
Living Status <input type="checkbox"/> Owned House <input type="checkbox"/> Rented House <input type="checkbox"/> Live with Parents <input type="checkbox"/> Live with others					
Military Service <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Exempted					
Kinds of Vehicles You Possess <input type="checkbox"/> car <input type="checkbox"/> motorcycle <input type="checkbox"/> none					
Educational Background					
Education	Name of School	Graduated on	Major	Certificate	
Primary School					
Secondary School					
Vocational School					
University/College					
Others					
Employment Records					
Most recent job first					
From	To	Employer's Name	Position	Salary	Reasons for Leaving
Training/Seminar					

Courses		Institutions and Location			Years	
Languages	Speaking		Understanding		Writing	
	Good	Fair	Good	Fair	Poor	
		Good	Fair	Poor	Good	Fair
English						
Others Specify	1.					
	2.					
	3.					
Contact Persons other than relatives						
Name	Relationship	Office Address	Position	Telephone		
Special Abilities <input type="checkbox"/> computer <input type="checkbox"/> typing <input type="checkbox"/> others						

2. Interview questions

Successful candidates are those who come to an interview well prepared. Think about possible questions an interviewer might ask and prepare yourself answering them will help you overcome nervousness and awkwardness on the big day. Your answer will enable the interviewer to judge your motivation, enthusiasm, and ability to fit into the organization. The following is a list of possible questions to be asked by an interviewer as well as some hints on how to deal with them as suggested by Susan Jaderstrom, Leonard Kruk and Joanne Miller in **Complete Office Handbook**, pages 36-37.

Q: Tell me something about yourself.

Hint: Outline several strong work-related points and accomplishments; make a summary statement and then stop talking.

Q: Tell me about your professional experience. What are your most important achievements?

Hint: Mention the most impressive achievement first; prepare success stories ahead of time.

Q: What are your goals?

Hint: Be general and mention that you see yourself gaining increased responsibility, if the firm has opportunities for advancement.

Q: What are your major strengths?

Hint: Highlight qualities that will help you succeed in the job available (for example, you work hard, learn quickly, and are conscientious).

Q: What are your major weaknesses? What areas do you need to improve?

Hint: Disguise weaknesses as strengths (for example, "I like to stick with a problem until I solve it"; "Sometimes I have ignored my family to finish a project"); select a problem you solved early in your career and describe how you overcame it.

Q: Why are you looking for a new position? Why did you leave Company X?

Hint: Indicate a desire for greater responsibility and challenge or an opportunity to use talents not used in the present position; avoid mentioning money, personality conflicts, or anything that is not a major component of the job. Never deride a former employer.

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

Hint: Show familiarity with the company; draw on the research you did.

Jadestrom, Kruk and Miller also provide some suggestions for answering open-ended questions as follows:

- Listen to the question and answer all parts of it.

- Show that the question has been anticipated by answering questions directly.
- Describe education and work experience in a clear, concise way.
- Describe the most important results and accomplishments of your career or experiences.
- Ask the interviewer to clarify the question if you are in doubt about its meaning.
- Let the interviewer set the pace of the discussion. An interviewer should be in control.
- Avoid giving either lengthy answers or simple "yes" or "no" answers. Keep your answers to the point.
- Discuss problem areas briefly and honestly.
- Do not criticize former employers. Avoid displaying bitterness and a negative attitude. (p.37)

Interviews are most times stressful. Your job opportunity depends on your personality and question answering strategies. You have to try to make yourself and your qualifications stand out from other candidates. Most of all present yourself as a mature and qualified adult who is able to manage your responsibilities tactfully and preferably in team-oriented environment.

The following is a list of questions you may want to ask your interviewer.

- Why is this job open?
- Would you describe a typical day?
- Why did the person who previously held this job leave?
- What are your expectations for this job?
- To whom would I be reporting?
- What are the promotional and career opportunities in the organization?
- With what kind of team will I work?
- Does the company promote or sponsor advanced education for its employees?

- Are my background and experience a good match?
- When do you expect to make a decision on this position?
- When can I expect to hear from you?
- Please show me where my work area will be. (This gives you an idea of whether the work space is comfortable and attractive and a chance to see what the other workers are like.) (Jaderstrom, Kruk and Miller, p.39)

Activity 2 A

Write the correct occupation from the letters provided.

1. p t s i y t _____
2. t p s e n d i r e _____
3. a o t n c n t u c a _____
4. e a g m r n a _____
5. r m o p m g a r e r _____
6. s i e r p i t e c n o t _____
7. r s o u r i v p e s _____
8. p l a e s r n s e s o _____
9. p o b o e r e k e k _____
10. r s a e t c r e y _____

Activity 2 B

Suppose you are an interviewer, create five questions that you may ask an interviewee.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

5. _____

3. Reading: Human Thought Process

Pre-Reading Activities

1. Do you believe in: a) ghosts b) lucky/unlucky numbers
c) lucky/unlucky colors d) lucky/unlucky signs?

2. Look at the following Western superstitions. Say if you think they are good or bad luck.
 - a) You accidentally spill salt in a restaurant.
 - b) You see a black cat cross your path.
 - c) You break a mirror.
 - d) You cut your fingernails or hair on a Sunday.
 - e) A bird flies over your head and drops droppings (*kee nok*) on your head.

3. Do you know of any interesting Thai superstitions? Explain.

4. Would you describe yourself as superstitious or non-superstitious?

5. Do you think people are more superstitious nowadays than in the past or less superstitious? Explain.

Human Thought Processes

Ask a psychologist, a sociologist or an anthropologist what makes us superstitious and they will tell you the same thing. When people have no control over events, they will suspend their belief in the rational and step into a world where the rules seem more flexible.

If levels of superstitious behavior and interest in magic are a reliable measure of the extent to which we feel in control of our destiny, then these are worrying times indeed. A century ago, it was confidently predicted that science and technology would drive out all superstition and religion within a generation or so. But science gave us the worldwide web, and the web is full of sites on magic -- with numerology and geomancy and 101 ways to win the lottery.

Although human thought is prodigious, it is not without weaknesses and uncertainties. In a number of situations, we are prone to irrational rather than rational behavior. We make erroneous conclusions, show biased judgement and ignore important information. At the heart of much superstition lie a number of cognitive failings. In particular, superstitious thinking stems from misunderstandings of probability and random processes, errors of logical reasoning, and cognitive shortcuts that sacrifice accuracy.

In a recent study on the thought processes people use when gambling, one researcher was struck by our ability to kid ourselves about our chances of success when the desire to win is sufficiently strong. Essentially, if you want something badly and there's not much chance you're not going to get it, you probably think that the probability of getting it is higher than it actually is. But if there's something negative

that could happen to you, then you tend to think that it won't happen. With the lottery, where the chances of winning are 60 million to one, people think, "Yeah, I could win that." But with things like lung cancer and smoking, where the chances are actually quite high, it's "Oh well, it probably won't happen to me." The more you want something, the more you are likely to ignore the odds and battle on.

Glossary

1. anthropologist = a scientist who studies people, society and culture
e.g. A number of well-known **anthropologists** have studied the customs and beliefs of the Hmong.
2. superstitious = believing in things that are not real or possible, for example magic, lucky / unlucky numbers etc.
e.g. She was extremely **superstitious**; she wouldn't sleep in a room where someone had died, for instance, and would never walk under a ladder.
3. suspend = (here) to temporarily stop using
e.g. The open-air protest was **suspended** due to bad weather.
4. flexible = easily changed and adapted to different situations and circumstances as they occur
e.g. He can come anytime you like. He's **flexible**.
5. destiny = the force that some people believe controls that happen to you in your life fate / the things that will happen to someone in the future, esp. those that cannot be controlled
e.g. Her grandfather had been a doctor as had her father; not surprisingly, therefore, she felt it was her **destiny** to practice medicine.
6. drive out = to force someone or something to leave / make something disappear or stop operating
e.g. The Iraqi forces were **driven out** from Kuwait.

7. numerology = the study of numbers in the belief that they may have special significance in a person's life
e.g. **Numerology** is the study of the hidden meanings of numbers and their supposed influence on human life.
8. geomancy = the study of magic and the sitting of buildings
e.g. **Geomancy** involves the hidden interpretation of lines, symbols and geographic features.
9. prodigious = very large or impressive
e.g. He has a **prodigious** memory.
e.g. Microsoft makes **prodigious** amounts of money.
10. prone to = have a tendency to do something or be affected by something
e.g. She's still **prone to** stage fright.
e.g. Fair-skinned people are **prone to** develop skin cancer.
11. erroneous = beliefs, methods, or opinions that are erroneous are incorrect or only partly correct
e.g. The press published an **erroneous** report regarding his guilt.
12. biased = influenced so much by something that one's judgment is likely to be unfair
e.g. The judge was **biased** against him because he was black and Moslem.

13. cognitive = related to the process of knowing, learning and understanding something
e.g. After the car accident, several of her **cognitive** abilities were damaged.
14. failing = a fault or weakness
e.g. Lack of concentration is one of his main **failings**.
15. stem from = to develop as a result of something else
e.g. His mistrust of others **stems from** being left by his father when he was young.
16. random = happening or chosen without any definite plan, aim, or pattern
e.g. The winning numbers in the lottery are chosen at **random**.
17. sacrifice = to give up (something valuable or important) to obtain something else for yourself or for other people
e.g. He **sacrificed** his health for the sake of his career.
18. be struck by = if you are struck by something, you think it is very impressive, noticeable or interesting
e.g. He **was struck by** her beauty.
e.g. The police **were struck by** the complete lack of evidence at the crime scene.
19. kid oneself = to allow yourself to believe that something is true (because you wish that it were)

e.g. If he believes he can pass the exam without working, he's **kidding himself**.

20. odds

= the probability or chances of something happening

e.g. The **odds** of winning the lottery are a million to one.

21. battle on

= keep on trying despite difficult circumstances

e.g. Despite the death of their father, the family is continuing to **battle on**.

Activity 3A

Vocabulary Quiz: Fill in the blanks in the sentences below with words from the following list. Make any grammatical changes that may be necessary.

irrational odds prone stem from erroneous
sacrifice biased ignore random struck

1. Yesterday, it suddenly _____ him that he hated his job.
2. Don't send clay pots by sea mail; they are _____ to breakage.
3. Her parents made many _____ to give their daughter a good education.
4. The _____ of her passing the final exam are not very high.
5. The idea that you can win the war against drugs simply by arresting drug dealers is an _____ notion.
6. Many road accidents _____ drunk driving.
7. She felt that the interviewers were _____ in favor of applicants from universities such as Chula and Thammasat.
8. People who take amphetamine (*yaa baa*) are characterized by their _____ behavior.
9. The numbers in the lottery are chosen at _____.
10. Senior police officers who _____ corruption in the areas under their command will be punished.

Activity 3B

Choose the best answer.

1. The main idea of paragraph one is that _____.
 1. psychologists, anthropologists and sociologists study superstitions
 2. psychologists, anthropologists and sociologists will tell you the same thing
 3. people who feel helpless in the face of events tend to act in a rational manner

4. when faced with uncontrollable events, people will turn to superstition
2. The main idea of paragraph two is that we live in worrying times because _____.
1. we are currently in complete control of our destiny
 2. superstition and magic measure our collective destiny
 3. despite scientific progress superstition is increasing
 4. the worldwide web is full of magic and superstition
3. Which of the following is NOT true of paragraph three?
1. Frequently people's eyes and ears often fail them.
 2. People often misunderstand the laws of chance and probability.
 3. Humans are often guilty of faulty reasoning.
 4. Human beings frequently overlook important information.
4. When gambling, people _____.
1. take into account the mathematical possibilities
 2. get what they want if they want it hard enough
 3. try to avoid negative thoughts altogether
 4. let the desire to win fool them as to the actual possibility of winning
5. The word 'it' (final paragraph, line 8) most probably refers to _____.
1. smoking
 2. the lottery
 3. lung cancer
 4. one
6. Which of the following statements is NOT true according to the passage?
1. The spirit of scientific inquiry has failed to replace superstition.
 2. Superstitious thinking fails to take into account the laws of chance.
 3. People often ignore the probability of something negative happening.
 4. Science has succeeded in driving out superstitious thinking.

7. Which of the following would make the best title for this passage?

1. The History of Modern-Day Superstition
2. Human Thought Processes Explained
3. The Persistence of Superstitious Thinking
4. Irrational Behavior in Human Beings

Good ware make quick markets

Good wine needs no bush.