

# Interview Packet

## Interview Guidelines

Before the interview:

- Research the employer and carefully review the job description
- Print error free resumes on resume paper
- Prepare questions to ask the employer
- Iron and clean your suit and dress shoes
- Know your driving directions or interview location and parking information
- **Practice interviewing through a mock interview with career services**
- **Use interviewstream on [www.hireOSUgrads.com](http://www.hireOSUgrads.com).** To access it click interview button on left menu then click practice interviews. You can access this with any computer that has a camera or webcam, 24/7.

During the interview:

- Arrive 10-15 minutes early
- Make strong eye contact
- Shake hands firmly, two pumps and release
- Be the best, professional version of yourself
- Take a beat to think and organize your thoughts before answering challenging questions
- Take 30-90 seconds to answer each question, using examples and stories from your experience
- Speak clearly and don't rush
- Be positive and enthusiastic
- If you get stuck avoid saying "I don't know", instead ask to come back to the question later
- Show your confidence but not arrogance
- Do not ask about benefits or salary

After the interview

- Ask the employers your prepared questions, take notes on answers
- Ask for business cards so you can send a thank you card or email
- Shake hands and thank them for their time
- Follow up promptly with a thank you card or email
- Maintain professional communication, complete any further instructions given at the interview
- Attend other events on campus when the employer is present

**Oklahoma State University**

**Andrea Skimbo**

**Senior Coordinator, Arts & Science Career Services**

**[cascareers.okstate.edu](http://cascareers.okstate.edu)**

**[andrea.skimbo@okstate.edu](mailto:andrea.skimbo@okstate.edu)**

**[www.hireOSUgrads.com](http://www.hireOSUgrads.com)**

# Sample Interview Questions

## 1. Tell me about yourself.

This question is extremely common for an opening question. Take 60-90 seconds to give an overview of who you are. This can include your major, graduation date, home town, reason for choosing this field of study or industry and key experiences from your resume. You shouldn't spend a lengthy amount of time on any one area but instead briefly mention all the key details you want them to know. This is also the perfect time to make sure you point out anything from your resume that you want them to know.

## 2. Why did you choose your academic major?

Describe your thinking process that led you to choose your academic major. Include details about the classes you found most interesting, the concepts/skills you were able to master with ease or the projects/reading/mentors who helped to develop a passion for the materials.

## 3. Why do you want to work for our company?

This is the time to show your company research and explain why working for this company or in this specific job would be a good fit for you. What made you apply? Describe what attracted you to the job.

## 4. What qualifications do you have?

Explain in detail how your **education and experiences** have prepared you for this job. You can talk about jobs, internships, classes, class projects, volunteer positions or campus involvement that demonstrates how you built skills that directly connect to the job. Pull examples from more than one experience and make ties to the position you are applying.

## 5. Behavioral Based Questions

- a. Tell me about a time when ....
- b. Give me an example of...

Use the STAR method to help outline your response

Situation + Task Required + Your Actions Taken = Result

Answer these questions by telling a story from your personal, academic or work experience. Follow the STAR formula in order to stay on track but also include enough detail to stay unique and memorable. Before the interview determine what stories and examples you could share so the information is fresh in your mind. Practice your delivery but don't memorize the dialog so you can be flexible with delivery.

### Behavior Based question examples:

- Tell me about a time you worked with a team.
- Give me an example of a time you had to solve a problem.
- What experience do you have with communication?
- Tell me about a time you failed.
- Give me an example of a time you worked through a difficult situation.
- Tell me about a time you had a leadership role.
- What was your biggest accomplishment or success?
- What was your favorite/most challenging class?
- Tell me how you built a skill you listed on your resume.
- Give me an example of a project/task you completed independently.
- Tell me how you have helped others/ considered the needs of others.
- Give me an example of an ethic decision you had to make.

**6. What motivates you?**

Answer this honestly, and the content is likely to be personal. Avoid money motives, but the possibilities are endless. Respect, helping others, problem solving, accomplishment, goal driven are some options.

**7. What are your strengths?**

Be able to list 1-3 strengths you can offer the company and outline where you used them or where you learned them. This answer will be stronger when you can prove you have the skills by including examples.

**8. What are your weaknesses?**

It's time to be honest and identify an area that needs development. Don't mention something that would make this job impossible for you but put some thought into an area you want to improve. Finish this answer with a positive spin by talking about how you have overcome this weakness or what you are doing to improve in this area.

**9. What are your long and short term goals?**

This requires you to describe where you see yourself in the future. Don't answer with goals that wouldn't align with the company. Even if you don't plan to work there forever the employer needs to see you as someone they can invest in and will work with them for a while.

**10. Do you prefer to work on a team or independently?**

Think of your response in light of the requirements of the position, and also your true nature. Which are you naturally drawn to? What would come easiest to you? What fits your personality and skill set best?

**11. What are your salary expectations?**

Do your research ahead of time so if asked (and ONLY if asked) you can provide a fair salary range. Career services can help you find this information from recent grad surveys, glassdoor.com and NACE salary data. Determine a salary with a 2,000 - \$5,000 range based on this data and cost of living in the area.

**12. Why should we hire you?**

This is your time to sell yourself. Describe what makes you different from other students, tell them what you can bring to the table and describe key experiences or skills that set you apart. You have something to offer – here is where you show that!

**13. Do you have any questions for us?**

Now it's your turn to ask a few questions to employer. Don't ask something that can be found on their website or in the job description. Prepare 4-5 questions but likely you will only ask a couple. They may answer a few of them before you can ask so it's better to have a few extra questions prepared. Avoid the "what's in it for me?" type of questions. NEVER ask about salary or benefits.

- What drew you to work for this company? What is your favorite part of this company?
- Tell me about a typical career path for this position?
- Describe the office culture.
- What type of leadership is there within the company?
- Describe the supervision style of my manager/supervisor.
- Is there a mentor program for new hires?
- Can you provide examples of the types of projects I might work on?
- What are some of the long or short term strategic directions of the company?
- What advice do you have for someone entering the company in this position?
- Who evaluates employee performance and how is success measured?
- What is your timeline like for hiring?
- I am very interested in this position. What is my next step in the hiring process?

# Types of Interviews

## Phone/skype Interviews

- Reserve a quiet, private place (360 union interview rooms or a library room)
- Be ready 15 minutes before the scheduled call/skype and make sure to account for time zone changes
- Make sure your phone/ipad is charged and has a strong signal
- Keep a note pad near you, write down the names of the interviews when introduced
- Take your time, speak loudly and clearly, enunciate your words
- Expect normal pauses in conversation, resist the urge to keep talking if you answered the question well
- Look at the camera, not the screen when speaking
- Smile and rest your hands comfortably in your lap or the table in front of you

## On-Campus Interviews:

- Sign up Log on to hireosugrads.com
- Use the “Search Jobs & On Campus Interviews” tab
- Click the advanced search to sort the positions
- For some positions the application for the job is a request for an on campus interview
- Follow all instructions prompted
- If you are selected for an interview you will receive an email with a timeline for when you will have access to choose a time slot for your interview. Pay close attention to these dates as you will be notified before they open and only have a limited time to accept an interview. This timeline is outlined for each position on the hiresystem.
- Dress appropriately: just like any interview you should choose a full suit in a dark color and conservative style, even if you plan to attend class before or after
- Bring copies of your resume printed on resume paper in a black portfolio
- Arrive 10-15 minutes early to 360 Student Union and check in with the front desk
- Send a thank you card or email to each interviewer

## No Show Information:

- Whenever possible you should avoid canceling your interviews. If absolutely necessary to cancel, you should do so 2 business days in advance.
- If you know you are not going to be able to make an interview call the Career Services front desk at (405) 744-5253 to notify us of your situation.
- A late cancellation (less than 24 hours in advance) or failure to appear for a scheduled interview will result in restriction from the on-campus recruiting program. Bring a written letter to the employer with postage attached to OSU career services no later than one week passed the missed interview. As second copy of the letter should also be provided for OSU career services’ files. Access to the hire system will be completely blocked until the letter is received.
- After two no shows or cancellations, a meeting with OSU Career Services administration will be necessary to determine eligibility for continued participation in the program.
- If an employer must change or cancel a campus visit, OSU Career Services will notify students as quickly as possible via email or phone. Please ensure your contact information on your hiresystem account is accurate so we can reach you.

## Scholarship or Graduate School Interview

- These will focus on academic achievement and preparation
- Be prepared to answer questions about why you chose this career/academic path
- Outline your involvement in the classroom and on campus