

Student name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## **MODULE 33**

### **Practice skills needed to be successful in a job interview.**

#### **Objectives:**

**A. Prepare for an interview.**

**B. Demonstrate appropriate behavior in an interview.**

|                                     |
|-------------------------------------|
| <b>MODULE 33: INFORMATION SHEET</b> |
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***TO THE STUDENT:** Read and study this information sheet and then complete the student activities at the end of this module.*

#### **Introduction**

The interview is perhaps the most critical event of the job search process. Few people are hired without first being interviewed. Understanding what an employer will look for in an applicant is an important basis for knowing how to respond in an interview. Identifying key skills and being able to support them is a critical interview issue.

It is clear that the dynamics of an interview are complex. It is not simply a verbal exchange—though that is complex in itself. For example, while the telephone contact is primarily a verbal one, job interviews require control of many things other than the voice. Employers will not only hear the job seeker, they will also see, touch (a handshake), and smell them (perfume or aftershave). Physical appearance and grooming become major factors, as does the often mystical factor of body language.

This Module will cover the basics of the interview process. Because of the importance of the interview itself, students will role play and practice interview skills. Good interviewing skills can be the difference between getting a job and not getting a job. Students will learn basic interviewing skills including the importance of making a good first impression, answering problem questions, closing the interview effectively, and following up after the interview. They will also learn to analyze an interview question and to use a technique to answer the real concern of the employer.

**Personal characteristics an employer looks for during an interview:**

1. Enthusiasm and interest
2. Dedication and dependability
3. Alertness, quickness of mind
4. Honesty and integrity
5. Desire to work
6. Desire to help others
7. Desire to improve oneself

**Guidelines for dressing for an interview.**

*(NOTE: It is very important that the applicant make the best impression possible from the beginning of the interview. Most interviewers form an opinion within the first four to six minutes of the interview.)*

1. Dress to fit the job for which you are applying  
*(NOTE: Dress better for the interview than you normally would for a day on the job.)*
2. Coordinate clothing  
*(NOTE: Consider colors, patterns, fabrics, and suitable styles for your shape and body structure.)*
3. Be conservative  
*(NOTE: Avoid wearing high-fashion items or the newest fads.)*  
*EXAMPLES: Wear simple jewelry, natural-looking makeup; avoid strong colognes or aftershaves; avoid wearing sunglasses during the interview.*
4. Be modest and well-groomed  
*EXAMPLES: Clean, simple styled hair, clean and neatly trimmed nails and facial hair, buttoned shirt/blouse; fashionable but modest skirt length; well-fitting clothes (not too tight); polished shoes.*

**Recommended interviewing practices.**

*(NOTE: Your behavior before, during and after your interview will strongly influence the impression that you make. The following practices will help you "sell yourself" during the interview.)*

1. Prepare for the interview by researching the company and practicing for the interview.

2. Arrive early for the interview (10-15 minutes).
3. Go to the interview alone unless otherwise requested.  
(NOTE: Occasionally, you may be asked to bring your spouse.)
4. Introduce yourself to the receptionist or secretary and the interviewer; state the purpose of your visit.
5. Greet by name the person who will interview you.  
(NOTE: Be sure to pronounce the name correctly.)
6. Shake hands if the interviewer extends the offer.  
(NOTE: Make sure that your handshake is firm.)
7. Sit down when the interviewer indicates that you should.
8. Sit quietly until the interviewer opens the interview. While waiting, you may want to observe things in the room that may help you find a common ground or develop rapport with interviewer.
9. Try not to show nervousness.  
(NOTE: Keep hands clasped in lap, if necessary, to keep them motionless.)
10. Maintain good posture. Leaning slightly forward shows interest.
11. Maintain eye contact with interviewer.
12. Listen carefully.  
(NOTE: This will enable you to answer the questions directly.)
13. Do not smoke or chew gum, even when invited to do so.
14. Show a real interest in the job for which you are interviewing.
15. Use good manners.  
(NOTE: Be courteous. Say "thank you" for services and attention given to you. Have a ready smile and a friendly attitude.)
16. Be brief, positive, and honest when answering questions.  
(NOTE: You should explain your answers fully. It is usually necessary to explain "yes" or "no" answers.)
17. Avoid using slang and offensive language.

18. Be ready to talk about individual work experiences and special skills.
19. Discuss positive aspects of self, not negative aspects of others or previous companies.
20. If you don't understand a question, it's OK to ask for clarification or to have the question rephrased.
21. Wait until the end of the interview to ask questions you have written down concerning the job.  
*EXAMPLES: When you will be notified; whether you must return.*
22. Politely thank the interviewer for his or her time and consideration.
23. Offer to provide the interviewer with any additional information.
24. Be ready to take a performance test.  
*EXAMPLES: Shorthand, writing, typing.*
25. Develop and use a pleasant speaking voice.
26. Follow-up interview with a letter thanking the interviewer for interviewing you.
27. Ask for a business card so you have the proper name and spelling for a thank you note.
28. Take extra copies of your resume to the interview.
29. Take samples of your work, if available.

**MODULE 33: STUDENT ACTIVITIES**

**Activity 1-1: Personal Grooming checklist (Females)**

Directions: Rate yourself on the following items. Give yourself four (4) points for each "Always," two (2) points for each "Sometimes," and no (0) points for "Never." When you have completed the form, total the score and compare your rating with the rating scale provided.

|  | <u>Always</u> | <u>Sometimes</u> | <u>Never</u> |
|--|---------------|------------------|--------------|
| 1. Do you wear clothes that are appropriate for the occasion?                            | _____         | _____            | _____        |
| 2. Are your clothes clean and pressed?   | _____         | _____            | _____        |
| 3. Do you check garments for split seams, ripped hems, and loose buttons before wearing? | _____         | _____            | _____        |
| 4. Do you check your hose for snags and runs before wearing?                             | _____         | _____            | _____        |
| 5. Do you put on clean undergarments and hosiery each day?                               | _____         | _____            | _____        |
| 6. Do you keep your shoes brushed, polished, and in good repair?                         | _____         | _____            | _____        |
| 7. Is your hair neat and appropriately arranged?   | _____         | _____            | _____        |
| 8. Do you wear a minimum of makeup that is in good taste?                                | _____         | _____            | _____        |
| 9. Do you brush your teeth at least twice a day?   | _____         | _____            | _____        |
| 10. Are your fingernails clean and trimmed?  | _____         | _____            | _____        |
| 11. Do you keep your body clean and use a deodorant daily?                               | _____         | _____            | _____        |

Total Points \_\_\_\_\_ **RATING SCALE:** 38-44 You meet business standards  
 30-37 Employer may grudgingly tolerate you  
 Below 30 Better get to work on your appearance!

**Activity 1-1: Personal Grooming checklist (males)**

Directions: Rate yourself on the following items. Give yourself four (4) points for each "Always," two (2) points for each "Sometimes," and no (0) points for "Never." When you have completed the form, total the score and compare your rating with the rating scale provided.

|   | <u>Always</u> | <u>Sometimes</u> | <u>Never</u> |
|---|---------------|------------------|--------------|
| 1. Do you wear clothes that are appropriate for the occasion?                           | _____         | _____            | _____        |
| 2. Are your clothes clean and pressed?  | _____         | _____            | _____        |
| 3. Do you wash your hair often enough to keep it clean?                                 | _____         | _____            | _____        |
| 4. Do you put on clean socks and underwear daily?                                       | _____         | _____            | _____        |
| 5. Are your shoes shined and in good repair?  | _____         | _____            | _____        |
| 6. Is your hair trimmed and combed?   | _____         | _____            | _____        |
| 7. Do you check your clothes for spots, missing buttons, or split seams before wearing? | _____         | _____            | _____        |
| 8. Do you brush your teeth at least twice a day?  | _____         | _____            | _____        |
| 9. Are your fingernails clean and trimmed?  | _____         | _____            | _____        |
| 10. Are you clean shaven?   | _____         | _____            | _____        |
| 11. Do you keep your body clean and use a deodorant daily?                              | _____         | _____            | _____        |

Total Points \_\_\_\_\_ RATING SCALE: 38-44 You meet business standards  
 30-37 Employer may grudgingly tolerate you  
 Below 30 Better get to work on your appearance!

**Activity 1-2: Role Play a Job Interview**

You and another student should role play this sample job interview. Please have your instructor watch your performance.

A = Applicant

I = Interviewer

- A (Enters room, pauses, smiles, and approaches Ms. Jones whose hand is extended. They shake hands.) Hello, Ms. Jones, I'm Joe Hunter and am applying for the job of meat wrapper which you advertised in Friday's Daily Press.
- I Hello, Mr. Hunter. Won't you have a seat?
- A Thank you. I have a resume which may be helpful to you. (Hands Ms. Jones the resume and sits down.)
- I This is a very well prepared data sheet. Well, Joe, tell me about yourself.
- A I'm a junior at Anytown High School where I'm enrolled in a career and technical food service program. I'm interested in working in a business like yours while going to school and when I graduate. My older brother works in a related business in Big City, and I think there are a lot of future opportunities in this field.
- I Joe, have you had any work experience or are you currently working anywhere?
- A Yes, I am working as a courtesy clerk for Mady's Meat Market. I am responsible for keeping the checkout area clean and well-stocked with sacks, as well as carrying groceries for the customers. I have also done odd jobs for my relatives and neighbors.
- I What do you think you have learned from your job at the meat market?
- A Probably the most important thing I have learned is how to deal with customers.
- I What kind of person is your employer and how do you get along?
- A My employer has several good qualities. He offers very good service to the customers, and we get along well.
- I Why do you want to leave?
- A I feel there would be more opportunity for me to develop the skills necessary to reach my occupational objective in a business such as yours.
- I How did you get the job at the meat market?

- A A friend of mine who used to work there recommended me as his replacement.
- I When would you be able to start and what hours could you work?
- A I could start as soon as I give my present employer two weeks notice. I will be able to work from 2:30 to 5:30 PM on weekdays and all day on weekends and holidays.
- I Which school activities are you involved in this year?
- A I am a member of the FHA, student council and glee club. I should know about any trips with these groups early enough to make arrangements with you and another employee so there will be no problems with missing work.
- I Do you have any financial obligations, such as a car payment?
- A No, Ms. Jones.
- I Have you ever had any difficulty with the police other than a traffic violation?
- A No.
- I How much do you expect to earn?
- A I understand from some of the other employees that a person may begin at the minimum wage and advance with time and experience.
- I That's right. Here is a brochure explaining our pay scale and other benefits.
- A Thank you.
- I Thank you for talking to us. We will let you know about the job soon.
- A (Stands) Thank you for your time, Ms. Jones. Have a good day. (Shakes hands and leaves.)

**Activity 1-3: Consider Job Interview Questions**

Answer the following questions on a separate sheet of paper. The following are some questions that you might be asked when you are applying for various jobs. Keep this assignment sheet to review before going for any actual interview.

*(NOTE: Questions about your personal life may not be legally asked. In fact, it is illegal for any employer to ask your maiden name or your father's surname if you are a female applicant; your marital status; who lives with you; the church you attend or the name of your spiritual leader; how many children you have, their ages, or who will care for them while you are at work; whether you own or rent your residence; whether you have ever had your wages garnished; and whether you have ever been arrested. However, many interviewers, particularly in smaller businesses, may ask such questions. Whether or not you choose to answer the questions depends on how badly you want the job.)*

Review the following questions. Why do you think each question might be asked?

1. Where do you go to school? When will you graduate?
2. Do you (did you) earn any of your own expense money while in school?
3. Why did you leave your previous job(s)?
4. What did you like best and what did you like least about your classes?
5. What books have you read lately? What are your favorite magazines?
6. Are you in good health?
7. What do you expect to be doing five or ten years from now? What is your chosen field of work?
8. At what salary do you expect to start?
9. What are some of your special abilities? What skills do you possess? What tools or equipment can you operate?
10. How would you rate your training for this job? Very good? Fair?
11. What personal characteristics do you think are needed to succeed in your career?

12. In what area do you need the most improvement?
13. Do you like to work with other people or do you work best alone?
14. Do you have any questions you want to ask us?
15. Do you think your extracurricular activities are well worth the time you devote to them?
16. How could you contribute to our organization? Why should we hire you?
17. Tell us about your family and any plans for marriage or further education.  
*(NOTE: Remember legally you do not have to answer this question. However, it is a good idea to prepare an answer in case such a question is asked.)*
18. For what other job(s) have you applied?
19. Do you have any military obligations to fulfill?
20. Give us an example of a project you finished under pressure.
21. May we write or call your last employer?
22. How many people have you supervised at work or through organizations of which you are a member?
23. How do you feel about the progress you have made salary wise?
24. Would you be able to work all day Saturday and Sunday?
25. If you could start school (or work) over again, what would you do differently?
26. What is your school attendance record?
27. Have you done the best school work of which you are capable?
28. Do you require attention? Does criticism disturb you?  
*(NOTE: These questions are usually asked in a more subtle and indirect way.)*
29. What motivates you?
30. Would you be willing to relocate?

31. What size city do you prefer?
32. Have you saved any money?
33. Define cooperation.
34. What job with our company would you choose if you were entirely free to do so?
35. How do you feel about working overtime?
36. Would you be willing to submit to a drug test?
37. Brainstorm some questions you might have at the end of an interview:

**Activity 2-1: Participate in a Job Interview**

Now that you are prepared for an interview, team up with another student in class. Assume the roles of interviewer and applicant and then switch so each of you gets to play both roles. Apply for the job you now have, for one you would like to have, or use the sample interview at the end of this assignment sheet. You may want to use the want ad in a local newspaper to find out what jobs are available. Let your other classmates evaluate your performance using the job interview evaluation form below. Videotape the practice sessions if possible.

**JOB INTERVIEW EVALUATION FORM**

| <b>Preparing for the Interview</b>  | Yes   | No    |
|---|-------|-------|
| 1. Were you clean, well-groomed and neat?   | _____ | _____ |
| 2. Did you wear appropriate clothes and shoes for the type of job for which you were applying?  | _____ | _____ |
| 3. Did you take an ink pen and resume with the information you may need about social security number, references, addresses, dates employed, and dates attended school?   | _____ | _____ |
| 4. Did you go alone, not taking parents, children, spouse, or friends with you?   | _____ | _____ |
| 5. Were you on time for the interview?  | _____ | _____ |
| 6. Did you know the name and title of the interviewer?  | _____ | _____ |
| 7. Did you know pertinent facts about the company, such as name, kind of business, products and services, reasons you want to work there, how old the company is, and where the plants, offices, or stores are located? | _____ | _____ |
| 8. Were you prepared with appropriate questions?<br><i>EXAMPLES: How many other people do this job?<br/>Who will be my supervisor?<br/>Are there job advancement opportunities?</i>                                     | _____ | _____ |
| 9. When you met the receptionist did you smile, introduce yourself, state that you have an appointment, follow the receptionist's instructions, and wait patiently?   | _____ | _____ |
| <b>Participating in the interview</b>   |       |       |
| 10. Did you enter with poise and greet the interviewer by name?   | _____ | _____ |

|   | Yes   | No    |
|---|-------|-------|
| 11. Did you shake hands firmly if the interviewer offered his or her hand?  | _____ | _____ |
| 12. Did you introduce yourself and state the purpose of the call?   | _____ | _____ |
| 13. Did you seat yourself only at the interviewer's invitation?   | _____ | _____ |
| 14. Did you show signs of nervousness?<br>(NOTE: If you do not know where to put your hands, leave them on your lap and keep them still.) | _____ | _____ |
| 15. Did you not place personal things on interviewer's desk, smoke or chew gum?   | _____ | _____ |
| 16. Did you look alert, interested, and enthusiastic?<br>(NOTE: Sit slightly forward in the chair to give an alert appearance.)           | _____ | _____ |
| 17. Were you confident and courteous?   | _____ | _____ |
| 18. Did you answer questions clearly and not interrupt?   | _____ | _____ |

**Anticipating Employer's Questions and Volunteering Proper Information**

|  |       |       |
|--|-------|-------|
| 19. Did you avoid giving all "yes" or "no" answers?  | _____ | _____ |
| 20. Did you avoid criticisms of former employers or competitors?   | _____ | _____ |
| 21. Did you avoid talking about personal problems?<br>(NOTE: The interviewer must be interested more in what you can contribute to the business than what the business can do for you. Don't use a sob story about how desperate you are for a job.)                     | _____ | _____ |
| 22. Did you show copies of your work if applicable?  | _____ | _____ |
| 23. Did you state that you are willing to start at the beginning salary?   | _____ | _____ |
| 24. Did you find a true, positive statement concerning your reasons for leaving previous jobs, even if you were fired?<br>Examples:<br>"I was laid off, but I learned from my mistakes."<br>"I left because they did not need as many employees during the slow season." | _____ | _____ |

|  | Yes   | No    |
|--|-------|-------|
| 25. Did you try to mention your best qualities in relation to something concrete?<br><i>Example: "I earned 75% of my expenses while going to school" is better than "I am a hard worker and want to get ahead."</i>  | _____ | _____ |
| 26. Did you give the lead back to the interviewer, if you found yourself talking too long, by saying "Perhaps you have some other questions to ask me?"  | _____ | _____ |
| 27. Were you prepared for personal questions about your home life and your parents' occupations?   | _____ | _____ |
| 28. Were you prepared to respond to questions concerning politics, religion or economics?  | _____ | _____ |
| 29. Did you answer questions about career objectives using specific terms about what you would like to do in the near future in that particular field without limiting your opportunities?<br><i>Example: A position in sales or training program that will eventually lead to a marketing or management position. No location preference.</i> | _____ | _____ |
| 30. Did you look directly at the interviewer, smile, use correct English, and speak in clear, moderate tones?  | _____ | _____ |
| 31. Did you show an interest in the company and/or job by asking questions?  | _____ | _____ |
| 32. Did you really try to sell yourself?<br><i>(NOTE: Never refer to yourself as just average or fair. Always look for a positive response.)</i>   | _____ | _____ |
| 33. Did you give the interviewer the opportunity to mention salary and fringe benefits?<br><i>(NOTE It is usually not appropriate to ask about salary/ benefits until you're actually offered the job.)</i>  | _____ | _____ |
| 34. Did you remind the interviewer of the conversation topic if interrupted by a telephone call?   | _____ | _____ |
| <b>Closing the Interview</b>   |       |       |
| 35. Did you watch for signs that the interview was over, such as the interviewer shuffling papers and moving around in a chair?  | _____ | _____ |
|  | Yes   | No    |

36. Did you ask, "May I say one thing more?" or "Would you be interested in...?" if the interview seemed to be ending before all important selling points had been made? \_\_\_\_\_
37. Did you thank the interviewer for the time and leave promptly? \_\_\_\_\_
38. Did you ask for the interviewer's business card so you have the correct information and spelling of the interviewer's name for the thank you note? \_\_\_\_\_
39. Did you remember to ask when the interviewer may expect to make a decision? (i.e. if the interviewer says he/she plans to make the decision on Friday and you don't get a call in a few days after that, it's OK to call and inquire if he/she made a decision and state that you're still interested.) \_\_\_\_\_

**Following Up the Interview**

40. Did you write a follow-up letter, call or visit again to express interest in the job and appreciation for the opportunity to interview? \_\_\_\_\_

*(NOTE: Even if the interviewer does not offer the position, you should learn from every situation and try to improve your interviewing techniques.)*

**Activity 2-2: Dressing for an Interview**

*Directions:* Your teacher will have told you to dress as if you were going to an interview today. Assume that you are the employer and that each of your classmates has come to apply for a job. As you evaluate each person, have him or her evaluate you. When you have finished, give each other the forms you filled out.

**Name of Applicant** \_\_\_\_\_ **Yes** **No**

**Hair**

|                              |     |     |
|------------------------------|-----|-----|
| Is hair clean?               | ___ | ___ |
| Is it neatly combed?         | ___ | ___ |
| Is it an appropriate length? | ___ | ___ |
| Is it an appropriate style?  | ___ | ___ |

**Clothes**

|  |     |     |
|--|-----|-----|
| Are they clean and free of unpleasant odors, such as perspiration and cigarette smoke? | ___ | ___ |
| Are they appropriate?  | ___ | ___ |
| Are they becoming?   | ___ | ___ |
| Are they in good condition?  | ___ | ___ |
| Are they free of wrinkles?   | ___ | ___ |

**Shoes**

|   |     |     |
|---|-----|-----|
| Are they an appropriate color?            | ___ | ___ |
| Are they an appropriate style?            | ___ | ___ |
| Are they in good condition?               | ___ | ___ |
| Are they clean, polished, or well shined? | ___ | ___ |

**Nails**

|                             |     |     |
|-----------------------------|-----|-----|
| Are they clean?             | ___ | ___ |
| Are they in good condition? | ___ | ___ |

**Makeup (for girls only)**

|   |     |     |
|---|-----|-----|
| If she is wearing makeup, is the makeup applied in a becoming manner? | ___ | ___ |
| Is it conservative, or appropriate, for day wear?                     | ___ | ___ |

**Comments:**

**Your Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**MODULE 33: STANDARDS ADDRESSED IN THIS MODULE****Pennsylvania's Academic Standards for Career Education and Work****13.2.11. Career Acquisition (Getting a Job)**

- A. Know and demonstrate industry acceptable job interviewing techniques.

**Pennsylvania's Academic Standards for Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening (RWSL)****1.1.11. Learning to Read Independently**

- E. Establish a reading vocabulary by identifying and correctly using new words acquired through the study of their relationships to other words. Use a dictionary or related reference.

**1.6.11 Speaking and Listening**

- E. Participate in small and large group discussions and presentations.
- Initiate everyday conversation.
  - Participate in a formal interview (e.g., for a job, college)

**Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS)****PERSONAL QUALITIES**

**Responsibility:** Exerts a high level of effort and perseverance toward goal attainment. Works hard to become excellent at doing tasks. Displays high standards of attendance, punctuality, enthusiasm, vitality, and optimism.

**Self-Esteem:** Believes in own self-worth and maintains a positive view.

**Sociability:** Demonstrates understanding, friendliness, adaptability, empathy, and politeness in new and ongoing group settings.

**Self-Management:** Assesses own knowledge, skills, and abilities accurately; sets well-defined and realistic personal goals; self-starter.

**Integrity/Honesty:** Can be trusted.