

# Interview Tip Sheet

## Interview Purpose

An interview is an opportunity for you to communicate your suitability and fit for the position and for the company:

- for the employer to assess if you are the right candidate for the job
- for you to assess if this is the right position, company and environment for you

The more you prepare, the more confident you will feel, the better you will perform.

## Before the Interview

- research the company
  - website, corporate literature, values, mission statement, products, services, social media, etc.
- review the position and required skills
  - highlight the key qualifications required; think of examples that you can share to demonstrate that you possess the required skills, experience and knowledge
- **book a virtual mock interview** or practice with a member of the Seneca Works team
- select and prepare appropriate attire; avoid perfume/cologne and smoking
- know the exact location of the interview, time, date and who you are meeting
  - arrive 10 to 15 minutes early
  - turn off your phone or put on silent
  - be professional and courteous to everyone
- ask if you need to prepare anything or bring anything with you
- gather all the necessary documents
  - pen and paper, copies of resumé, list of references, copy of job posting, questions for employer, portfolio, etc.

## During the Interview

- make a great first impression
  - smile
  - wait to be seated
  - be prepared to shake hands
  - show confidence
- be aware of your non-verbal communication/body language
  - hand gestures
  - eye contact
  - facial expression
- communicate effectively
  - speak clearly, avoiding slang and use of words such as “like”, “um”, “kinda”
  - be positive
  - pause briefly to compose your answers; you may ask for a question to be repeated
- sell yourself
  - explain how you can add value, referring to your skills, education and experience
  - quantify your examples; include amounts, dollars, time frames, cost savings, percentages

## Closing the Interview

- ask questions that relate to the company and the position
- provide a copy of your List of References if requested
- thank interviewer(s) for their time
- obtain business card(s)
- confirm next steps

## Follow up

- send a thank you email to the interviewer(s) within one to two business days reaffirming your interest, closing with how you look forward to joining the company
- call or email if you haven't been contacted within the given time frame

## Types of Interview Questions

### Traditional

Open-ended questions that allow you to share information of your choice with the interviewer

- Tell me about yourself
- Why did you apply for this position?
- Where do you see yourself in five years from now?

### Situational

Questions about how you would handle hypothetical situations

Use **ARC** method:

- explain what **A**ctions you would take to solve the problem
- explain your **R**eadson for this conclusion
- share what factors you would **C**onsider in making that decision

### Behavioural

Questions about how you have handled specific situations

Use **STAR** method:

- describe the **S**ituation
- discuss the **T**ask that needed to be accomplished
- explain what **A**ctions you took to perform the task
- share the **R**esults of your actions

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## References

Prepare a List of References and bring it with you to the interview. The list can include a mix of professional, academic and personal references. Include the following information for each reference listed:

- name of reference
- job title (if applicable)
- company (if applicable)
- phone number
- email address
- relationship to you (e.g., Manager, Professor, Hockey Coach)

Choose references who know you well enough to speak knowledgeably about your strengths, character and/or good on-the-job performance. Seek the individual's permission before using them as a reference.

Who you can ask:

- |                         |              |
|-------------------------|--------------|
| ▪ Managers              | ▪ Customers  |
| ▪ Supervisors           | ▪ Professors |
| ▪ Volunteer supervisors | ▪ Coaches    |
| ▪ Placement supervisors | ▪ Landlords  |
| ▪ Co-workers            |              |

Notify your reference(s) about the position you interviewed for in case they are contacted.

## 10 Tips to Improve your Interview Performance

1. Practice good verbal and non-verbal communication
2. Dress for the job/company
3. Listen to questions carefully to determine the competency the employer is trying to assess
4. Be concise in your answers and focus on the job qualifications
5. Provide examples when appropriate
6. Be professional and polite
7. Use appropriate language and terminology
8. Show confidence, interest and enthusiasm
9. Be honest, yet strategic. Don't voluntarily share your weaknesses unless asked. Emphasize your strengths.
10. Ask questions that will help you determine if the company and position are the right fit for you

## Human Rights

Know your rights: <http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/learning/elearning/hr101-3rd-edition>

## More information

Website: [senecacollege.ca/student/sw](http://senecacollege.ca/student/sw)

Phone: 416.491.5050 ext. 26007

Job postings: [sw.senecacollege.ca](http://sw.senecacollege.ca)

# Practice Interview Questions

**Seneca** WORKS

**Write, answer out loud or record and listen to your answers to the following questions to help you practice your interview skills.**

1. Tell me about yourself.
2. What do you know about our company?
3. Why did you apply for this position?
4. How has your education and experience prepared you for this job?
5. What are your strengths?
6. What are your weaknesses?
7. Tell me about a time when you had to deal with an angry or difficult customer.
8. Tell me about a time when you had a problem with a coworker. How did you handle it?

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9. What are your short-term goals? Long term goals? Where do you see yourself in one year? five years? 10 years?
10. Tell me about your greatest accomplishment.
11. What salary are you seeking?
12. How do you feel about working overtime or irregular hours?
13. Why should we hire you?
14. What would your previous manager say about you?
15. What would a previous coworker say about your work?
16. Tell me about a time when you went above and beyond your regular duties.
17. What would be the most difficult part of this job for you?