**Additional Interview Resources:**

ASU Ira A. Fulton Schools of Engineering Career Center (FSECC) career.engineering.asu.edu

ASU Career Services website <https://eoss.asu.edu/careerguide/thejobsearch/interviewing>

CareerSpots- on the FSECC website

Optimal Resume Interview module- access through Handshake Resource page

The Company’s website and the job description!

**Interview Etiquette** First impressions do count. Your resume earned you a job interview. Now, business etiquette will add some polish to your presentation. Etiquette—good manners—is based on the idea that certain social behaviors put people at ease and make interaction pleasant. Here are seven rules for interview etiquette:

1. **Be on time o**r arrive 5 minutes early. Being late says you're disorganized and not very good at time management. Drive the route to the organization the day before your interview so that you know exactly how long the commute will take.
2. **Turn off your cell phone an**d leave it in your car. You don't want to be distracted as you offer your expertise to an employer, and an employer doesn't need to know your ringtone sounds like Beethoven's Symphony #5.
3. **Respect those already employed.** It doesn't matter whether you're interviewing to be an entry-level employee or the next CEO of an organization. Be polite to everyone you meet, including the receptionist. You never know who may be asked, "So, what did you think of this candidate?"
4. **Dress like you mean it .**Dress in business attire, even if you're interviewing in a business-casual office. Suits for men; suits or dresses for women. Go easy on the aftershave or perfume—better yet, don't wear fragrance at all just in case someone you are about to meet has allergies. Go light on the jewelry—earrings, a watch, and nothing else. No T-shirts, tank tops, or flip flops.
5. **Be handy with your handshake.** Hand out. Clasp the extended hand firmly, but gently. Pump once. Release. A flimsy handshake feels like dead fish and is unimpressive. A bone-crunching grasp may crush your potential boss' tennis swing and your chance of getting a job. Practice ahead of time with a friend.
6. **Have a presence.** Speak well, make eye contact, sit up straight. Use your interviewer's name (in moderation), enough to show you're awake and attentive, but not so much as to annoy the hiring manager. Looking the hiring manager in the eye as you talk shows you're confident and engaged in the conversation. Don't stare—that's rude and creepy. Sit up straight. Slouching or sliding down in the chair makes you look tired, and no one wants to hire someone who is tired before they've started the job.
7. **Say thank you. Twice.** The first thank you—at the end of the interview, the last few seconds before you leave the office (and while you're shaking hands for the second time)—may come naturally. "Thank you for your time. I look forward to hearing from you," shows you appreciate that someone has taken the time to talk to you and consider you for the job. Say thank you by e-mail to each person who interviewed you immediately after you get back to your home. Spell everyone's name correctly and use their correct titles (find the information on the organization's website).

A thank-you note does several things:

It says you appreciated the time your potential boss spent with you.

It suggests you'll follow up on important things (like the boss' business).

It's a great time to reiterate (very briefly) how your qualifications are a good match and how interested you are in getting the job.

*Courtesy of the* [*National Association of Colleges and Employers*](http://www.naceweb.org)*.*

## Interview Rubric

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Excellent interview: You should get a job offer!** | **Average interview: You could get called back, but it is not certain.** | **Interviewing skills need significant improvement: You would not get this job.** |
| **First Impressions** | Your appearance is professional; you are wearing a business suit. You greet and shake hands with your interviewer correctly. Your conversation is enthusiastic and engaging. | You look nice, but you do not wear a suit. Your greeting is appropriate, but you forget to shake hands with your interviewer. Your conversation is enthusiastic and engaging. | Your attire is unprofessional: You wear jeans or shorts to the interview. You do not greet or shake hands with your interviewer. Your conversation is not energetic. |
| **Interview Content** | You are knowledgeable about the organization and position. You display poise and confidence. You relate your skills to the job very well. | You are knowledgeable about the position, but not about the organization. You display adequate confidence in your answers. You state your skills, but do not adequately relate them to the job. | You are not knowledgeable about the position or organization. You are not confident in answering questions about yourself. You do not state the skills you have to do the job. |
| **Interview Skills / Techniques** | You have excellent eye contact with your interviewer (without staring). Your language and grammar are appropriate. (No use of "um".) You speak at the correct speed. | You have adequate eye contact with your interviewer. Your language and grammar are adequate. You use "um" and other inappropriate terms, but not enough to disrupt the interview. You speak a little too quickly or too slowly. | You look at the floor or ceiling when speaking. Your grammar and language are inappropriate. You speak too quickly or too slowly. |
| **Closing** | You successfully convey your interest in the position. You ask appropriate questions. You thank the interviewer. | You convey some interest in the position. You are not prepared to ask questions. You thank the interviewer. | You do not show any interest in the position. You do not ask any questions. You do not thank the interviewer. |

*by Amy Diepenbrock. Courtesy of the* [*National Association of Colleges and Employers*](http://www.naceweb.org)*.*

**Top Tips for Answering Interview Questions**

Employers believe the best predictor of future behavior is recent past behavior. For example, do you know someone who is always late to class? What’s the likelihood that she’ll be late to class tomorrow?

That’s the principle of “behavioral-based interviewing,” a common interviewing technique. Interviewers want to get a picture of how you have behaved *recently* in a situation because it will help them determine how you’ll behave in a similar situation on the job. Answering these questions takes insight into what employers are seeking.

**Prepare for the interview**  
Before going to an interview, look at the job description (if one is not available, use the job posting as a basis) and think about some of your most important milestones: projects, grades, presentations, and work experiences that make you proud. You’ll use these milestones as examples when answering questions. Use your best examples to concisely tell the story to the interviewer.

In addition, there are some standard attributes that many companies look for, including:

* Strong communicator
* Adaptable/flexible
* Able to work in teams
* Self-directed/motivated
* Demonstrates honesty and integrity
* Goal-oriented
* Strong follow-through

Think through your activities and experiences, and identify those that you can use to show you have these attributes.

**During the interview**  
The interviewer says: "Tell me about a time when you were a part of a difficult team and what you did to get the team back on track." Include the following in your answer:

* **Situation:** Explain the situation in detail. Was it a class team? What was the project? What was difficult about the project?
* **Action**: What did YOU do to pull the team together? What specific action did you take? Don’t talk about what “we” did or “they” did. Talk about *your role* in the situation.
* **Outcome:** Discuss the outcome of the project or team. Did the team succeed? How did you know the team was successful?
* **Learning:** Sometimes you’ll be asked about a situation in which you weren’t successful. Talk specifically about what you learned, how you modified your behavior, and how you’ve incorporated this lesson into your routine.

Keep your answer focused on recent job-related experiences. Whenever possible, use examples from your internship, class work, professional association, or other degree-related experiences.  Do not use personal or family examples, or examples from religious organizations.

**Additional interview advice**

* Make sure your response is clear and concise. Watch the interviewer’s body language. If he/she seem uninterested, wrap up your answer.
* If you can’t think of an answer, say so. Don’t try to bluff your way through because the interviewer will know it.
* The best candidates are able to speak to everything on their resume.

**Technical Interview Questions**

## Interview Time Is Show Time

Want to tell a potential employer that you’re creative? A problem solver? Flexible?

Instead of describing yourself as a “self-starter,” tell a story about how you took action when you saw an issue that needed to be fixed.

Don’t say you are “flexible”—tell the hiring manager about a change in your job (or schoolwork demands) and what you did to deal with the change.

Well-worn phrases won’t help you get the job, but concrete examples will!

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Don’t say** | **The story you need to tell** |
| Highly qualified | Highlight your accomplishments in previous jobs. Emphasize your specific skills and note any certifications you have earned. |
| Hard worker | Explain exactly how you've gone the extra mile for your job. For instance, did you regularly meet tough deadlines, handle a high volume of projects, or tackle tasks outside your job description? |
| Team player | Provide examples of how you worked with colleagues or individuals in other departments to meet an objective or complete a project. |
| Problem solver | Highlight a difficult situation you encountered and how you handled it. |
| Flexible | Describe how you responded to a major change at work (or in your schoolwork) or dealt with the unpredictable aspects of your job. |
| People person | Can you offer examples of your strong communication skills? Can you describe how you’ve worked with co-workers and customers? |
| Self-starter | What can you contribute immediately to the company or to the department you work in? Describe how you took action when you saw an issue that needed to be fixed. |

Courtesy of the [National Association of Colleges and Employers](http://www.naceweb.org).

**Tough Questions Interviewers Ask and How to Answer Them**

An interview isn't a contest to see if the interviewer can stump the job candidate. However, interviewers *can* ask some thought-provoking, tough questions. Here are some questions we've collected from recruiters and suggestions for answering them:

1. **Tell me about a time when you had to make a decision, but didn't have all the information you needed.**  
   Use a real anecdote from your experience to answer this question. The answer doesn't have to be great and grand. It could be a simple situation that was handled well. It could demonstrate ability in your field. For example: You may want to tell the interviewer how you selected your college from among all the colleges you applied to. Were you satisfied with your choice? Why or why not?
2. **What suggestions do you have for our organization?**  
   Let's say you're interviewing with a retailer and you're asked this question. Don't answer with the expected answer—anything to do with upkeep of the organization's stores. Instead, talk about merchandise that you might want to add...or how you would rearrange the stores' layout and why. Your answer should reflect your creativity.
3. **What is the most significant contribution you made to the company during your internship/co-op?**  
   Tell a story about an accomplishment that added value to the company, demonstrating skills that show initiative or resilience. Tell the interviewer about the options and the outcome of your work.
4. **What is the biggest mistake you've made?**  
   Be honest. You'll show credibility and integrity. While mistakes aren't rewarded, sometimes making a mistake can show that you've pushed yourself to the limit. Be careful, however, to concentrate your answer on describing what you learned from your mistake.
5. **Was there anything today that you were afraid I was going to ask you? Why did it make you uncomfortable?**  
   The trick here is to keep your cool. Many people blurt out the question that they didn't want asked—and that could raise new questions in the interviewer's mind.

Courtesy of the [National Association of Colleges and Employers](http://www.naceweb.org).