

EDUCATOR INTERVIEW PREPARATION

Interview Basics

Preparation

- Determine the requirements of the job
- Research the school (philosophy, values, etc.)
- Determine the interviewer’s name, title, and status
- Prepare answers for the questions you are likely to be asked about (see list of questions below)
- Develop relevant questions to ask (these can be written down and taken with you in a padfolio, if possible)
- Take copies of your resume and cover letter, too
- Plan your appearance. Look professional (shiny shoes, suit jacket, wrinkle free, etc.)
- Double-check location and time of the interview. Be on time (actually, about 15 minutes early!)

Initial Stages of the Interview

- Greet the interviewer by name, with a smile, and make direct eye contact
- Offer a firm, but gentle handshake if the interviewer extends a hand
- Take a seat only after the interviewer invites you to be seated or has taken their own seat
- Sit tall, facing the interviewer
- Listen for cues that tell you what the interviewer wants to hear (listen to both the wording of the question and the emotions/attitude behind it)
- Assume a poised and confident attitude/body language
- Avoid gum chewing, smoking, fidgeting, and other displays of nervousness

During the Interview

- Maintain a “YOU” attitude with a focus on “employer” needs and interests
- Display a genuine smile at appropriate times
- Convey interest and enthusiasm
- Listen attentively and actively so you can give intelligent responses
- Take minimal notes and remember key points
- Sell the interviewer on hiring you

- Answer questions wisely and honestly
 - Keep responses brief, clear, and to the point
 - Avoid exaggeration and convey sincerity
 - Avoid slighting references to former employers. Stress the positive. Never criticize anyone or anything
- Avoid alcoholic beverages if you are interviewed over lunch

Salary Discussions

- Most salary information for positions in schools can be obtained prior to the interview since it is a matter of public record
- Do research for average salaries for similar positions in the same area
- Let the interviewer initiate the discussion of salary

Closing Stages of the Interview

- Tactfully ask when you might hear further information about the hiring decision
- If you are offered the job on the spot, ask for time to consider the offer
- With a warm smile and a handshake, thank the interviewer for meeting with you

Interview Follow-Up

- Send a thank-you letter immediately following the interview
- Stress your positive impressions; highlight your strongest qualifications again
- DO NOT constantly check on the status of the decision with the employer
- Evaluate your interview performance. What went well? What could you improve on?

Illegal Interview Topics

Race, Religion, Ethnicity • Age or Place of Birth • Family Information (i.e. marital status, spouse or children information) • Personal Data (i.e. height, weight, health) • Economic Status (i.e. credit rating)

Interviews to Prepare For

Interviews vary! In any interview, there may be a number of people giving feedback beyond the individuals whom are formally questioning you (i.e. janitors, other teachers, secretaries). Always treat everyone with respect and show your personality-- Remember, you want to see if you are a fit with their school culture as much as they are trying to determine fit, too. Be your true and professional self. **Schools may utilize one or, more likely, a combination of interviewing styles and techniques.** The various styles are below:

Screening Interview

- Short duration to determine basic qualifications
- Usually conducted by one person via phone

Group Interview

- Typically 3 to 5 interviewers meet with interviewee simultaneously or in a series
- Concept: Team perspective on candidate is better than one

Structured Interview

- Interviewers have specific questions to ask

Behavioral Interview

- Questions are formed for candidates' responses to show how they have handled similar situations
- Based on belief that past behavior is a good predictor of future behaviors
- Typically look at logic, creativity, resourcefulness, conceptual ability, verbal communication skills

Assessment Centers

- Used to measure and predict the probability for -successful performance of key job elements
- May be asked to teach a lesson or complete a -writing assignment

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If asked to teach a lesson:

- They will likely give you the topic in advance
- If is okay to ask for details... Topic, length, who will be the audience, etc.
- Be sure to model that you know the content but, more than that, how you can ENGAGE and CONNECT with your students/the audience in the interview lesson
- Practice. Practice. Practice.
- Show who you are as a teacher-- Humorous? Use it. Show your pedagogy. Be you.

Questions?

We welcome you to schedule a mock interview or conversation to help you prepare.

UNI Office of Career Services
102 Gilchrist Hall
(319) 273-6857

Visit our website for other helpful resources.
careerservices.uni.edu/educators

