

Before Interview Research

Why do I need to research information about a company?

Before you go to a job interview, take time to research information about the company. Researching a company helps you in 3 ways: 1) You will give better answers to interview questions when you understand the company; 2) You will be able to evaluate pros and cons (good and bad) about a job offer; 3) You will be able to answer the question: Will I enjoy working at this company?

Do I need to research a company when I am only applying for a part-time job?

Yes! It is never too early to start practicing your interview skills. Take control of your part-time job interviews by treating each interview with respect. You show an employer respect when you have knowledge about the company and its products. Your knowledge about the company and its products will help you during the interview and impress the employer. When the employer is impressed, you may receive a better job offer.



How does research help me during the interview?

Having knowledge about the company prevents a "blank" look in your eye when the interviewer asks the question: "Why do you want to work for our company?" Read the following answers to select the applicant you would most likely hire if you were the manager:

- **Applicant Jeri:** "I admire Target's goal of offering quality merchandise, low prices, and great customer service. I support Target's mission of community support and service with 5% of profits used to help communities. I would enjoy being a member of the Target team."
- **Applicant Jason:** "I was in the store, and I thought Target is close to my home, so I applied for a part-time job. And, I need the money. And, my mom is bugging me to get out of the house and get a job."

Jeri took time to read Target's website to learn about the company. Jeri's answer shows interest in the company's needs. Jeri provided an unselfish answer to the employer. But, Jason's answer shows interest in his own needs. Jason provided a selfish answer to the manager. If you were the manager, which job applicant would you hire? The job applicant the employer will hire is **Jeri**.

How do I research a company?

Visit the company's website to discover: 1) Year company started. 2) Location of corporate (main) office. 3) Number of employees. 4) Products company sells. 5) What company says about products (advertising). 6) Company's community service. 7) Company's slogan (saying or motto) and logo (design and colors).



Search the company's website for a "News" page to read about company's current events. You may Google name of the company to read customers' comments. Also, check if the company has a Facebook page to visit.

What else should I think about before the interview?

- **Do company's activities agree with my interests and values?** You will have energy and better work if you are enthusiastic about what the company does. If you are a pacifist (against war as a way to

settling disagreements), you will not be happy working for a company that makes weapons for the military. Or, if you prefer foreign cars, you would not be successful selling American cars. Or, if you prefer healthy environments, you would not be happy in a candy store.

- **Where is the job located? What are the work hours? Is the pay acceptable?** If you need to drive to work, find out how much time and car expense it will take. Find out if you will work irregular hours, nights, weekends, holidays, or overtime. Think about how the work location and hours will impact your life. Also, is the pay acceptable to you for the work required?
- **Will I enjoy the job?** Try to **talk** to others who work at the company. You may say, "What are the benefits of working for this company?" and "What do you not enjoy about working for this company?" Also, **watch** workers to see if they appear happy and relaxed — or grumpy and stressed.
- **How will this job benefit me?** Even if a job opening is not in your career area, it may actually help you get hired into your career area in the future because: 1) Job will give you work experience to put on your future resumes and job applications; 2) Supervisors can be used as references on future resumes and job applications; and 3) Successful work experience shows a future employer that you have "work ethic skills" -- honesty, get to work on time, do a good job, work as a team, and others. Work ethic skills transfer to all jobs in the work world.

Take control!

Be prepared for an interview by researching the company.

Be prepared to accept or decline a job offer by knowing what you want in a job.

Be prepared to improve your work skills at each job.

Be prepared to use the work experience and contacts you gain for your future resumes and applications.

Be prepared to use all your work world adventures as stepping stones to your future career.

- yes
- no
- maybe



QUICK CHECK:

1. Researching helps you in what 3 ways?
2. For what is it never too early?
3. How do you show an employer respect?
4. What may happen when employer is impressed?
5. a) What does having knowledge about the company prevent? b) When the interviewer asks what question?
6. a) List 3 good things about the Target company Jeri said. b) What good thing did Jason say about the Target company?
7. What did Jeri read to find information about the Target company?
8. Explain the difference between an unselfish answer to an employer and a selfish answer.
9. a) If you were the employer, would you hire Jeri or Jason? b) Give a reason for your answer.
10. a) List 3 facts to research about the company on its website. b) What will you be able to read on the News page? c) What may you read when you Google the company name? d) For what else should you check?
11. Give an example of how a company's activities may **disagree** with your interest and values.
12. List 2 companies in your city that **agree** with your interests and values.
13. List 2 ways to find out if you will enjoy the job.
14. If a job opening is not in your career area, for what 3 reasons may the job actually help you get hired into your career area in the future?
15. Give 4 examples of work ethic skills.
16. To where do work ethic skills transfer?
17. List 5 ways to take control and "be prepared."
18. a) Will you research a company before a job interview? b) Give a reason for your answer.