

BEFORE THE INTERVIEW WORKSHEET

THINGS TO BRING:

- Copy of resume, personal references page, copies of documents (such as certificates earned).
- Social security card and driver's license. Copies of your recommendation letters.

THINGS TO DO:

- Leave in plenty of time, arrive ten minutes early, and go into the interview alone.
- Make sure teeth are clean and breath is fresh (no smoke odor). No gum.
- Make sure clothes are clean, neat, and appropriate for the job. Turn cell phone OFF!

THINGS TO SAY:

Pretend that you will interview for a sales clerk job at the Home Store.

- Tell me about yourself.** The goal of this question is to see how you handle yourself under pressure. Tell the interviewer about your skills (including computer skills) and experiences (club, sports team, etc.) from school, volunteer position, or job — not about your hobbies unless your hobbies are a skill. In addition, list personal traits such as “I am a dependable person who can be counted on to do the job right.” Personal traits include: organized, dependable, self-motivated, work as a team member, and sales ability. The answer should be about one minute long. Write your answer to the question — **“Tell me about yourself.”**

Skills and work experience:

Personal traits:

- Why do you want to work for this company?** The interviewer wants to know if you have made an effort to learn about the company, products, and why the company is important to you. The interviewer likes to feel that his or her company is special (“I think this is a great store with quality products”). Let the interviewer know why you selected his or her company as a special place to work. Write your answer to the question — **“Why do you want to work for this company?”**

Say something good about the company and company's products and services:

- What did you dislike about your previous job?** Do not complain about your former supervisor or coworkers. There is no guarantee that the supervisor and coworkers at the new job will be any better. Only mention things that may be considered positive. For example, “I liked the job, but there was no opportunity for advancement,” “I would like to gain additional experience and learn new skills in a different environment.” Write your answer to the question — **“What did you dislike about your previous job?”**

Say something positive. Do not bad mouth former employer or coworkers:

4. **What are your strengths?** Strengths include personal strengths: “I learned excellent teamwork skills as a member of the football team (or debate club)” — or “I enjoy working with people towards a goal”; skill strengths: “I won a drafting contest,” or “I enjoy learning new computer programs”; and work experience strengths: “I have training in customer service skills from my job at Del Taco,” or “I have learned excellent human relation skills from my volunteer work at the hospital”). Write your answer to the question — **“What are your strengths?”**

Personal strengths:

Skill strengths:

Work experience strengths:

5. **What are your weaknesses?** Only mention one (1) weakness and turn it into a strength. For example, “It may take me longer to complete a task because I want to make sure the job is done right,” or “I like to talk a lot and that is an advantage when explaining product benefits to customers.” Do not mention a weakness that will affect your job performance, such as “I’m always late for class.” Write your answer to the question — **“What are your weaknesses?”**

Weakness with a positive spin:

6. **What are your future plans?** Interviewers want to know if you have goals. You do not have to have detailed plans, but you should know the general direction you want to go in your work life such as I plan to enroll in college and major in business. Do not mention a future plan that may eliminate you from the job such as, “I plan to quit when I turn 18 in three months.” Write your answer to the question — **“What are your future plans?”**

Your general future plans that would sound good:

7. **Do you have questions for me?** Be sure to have one or two questions ready to ask the interviewer. Possible questions include: “What are the opportunities for advancement?” “When do you expect to make a decision?” “What are the company’s goals for the future?” “Do you have any more questions about my skills and qualifications?” Do not ask about raises, and vacation pay. Write your answer to the interview questions— **“Do you have questions for me?”**

One questions for interviewer. Do not ask about raises, or taking time off:

8. **What will your former coworkers or classmates say about you?** The interviewer wants to know about your relationship skills: how well you work with others; how you handle conflicts; and how you improve the work environment. Answer with your personality strengths and teamwork strengths. "My coworkers will say that I am dependable, hard-working, and positive. They will say that I am a valuable crew (or team) member because I do my share of the work, and help out wherever needed. Write your answer — **“What would your former coworkers or classmates say about you?”**

Personality strengths:

Teamwork strengths:

9. **If you were an animal, what type of animal would you be and why?** The interviewer uses this question to see if you can think quickly to provide an answer. If you answer "bunny," you will make a soft, quiet impression. If you answer "lion," you will be seen as aggressive. Select an animal that has qualities to help you succeed in the job. For example, "I would be a racehorse because racehorses are strong and dependable." Write your answer — **“If you were an animal, what type of animal would you be and why?”**

Animal with positive qualities that would fit the job:

10. **Tell me a story.** The interviewer is testing your thinking skills under stress. Don't start telling about Alice in Wonderland. Tell a short story (one to two minutes) describing a time when you accomplished a project that took academic, technical, mechanical, or social skills such as rebuilding a motor, starting a club, organizing an event, helping a customer or other person. Tell a story that makes yourself look good. Write your answer to the question — **“Tell me a story.” (Use back side of paper if necessary)**

One to two minute story:

11. **Tell me about one of your biggest accomplishments in life.** The interviewer is trying to understand your history and values. Select an accomplishment that relates to the work world. Start with general comment: "I have several accomplishments in my education, personal life, and work experience." Then give an example: "One example of an accomplishment in my education is when our drafting class worked together as a team to design and build club booths for Back to School night. I was in charge of buying the supplies." Write your answer: **“Tell me about one of your biggest accomplishments.”**

Start off general, then provide one example:

12. **What skills do you bring to our company team?** Managers need employees (team players) to work successfully together to get the job done, satisfy customers, and earn money. List your teamwork skills such as: Good listener and learner. Ask questions to help clarify team's goals. Respect team members. Encourage team members. Share information. Accept and give construction feedback. Keep track of progress. Help create solutions to problems. Committed to team's success. Organize and keep records. Create positive environment to prevent conflicts. Cooperate as a follower and can lead when necessary. Willing to help when and wherever needed. Write your answer to the question — **"What skills do you bring to our company team?"**

List your teamwork skills in complete sentences:

13. **Give me 5 words that describe you.** Include your transferable skills — also called "work ethic" skills needed for all jobs: dependable, punctual, organized, friendly, honest, cooperative, outgoing, easy to get along with, hardworking, energetic, take pride in my work, responsible, teamworker, dedicated. Write your answer to the question — **"Give me 5 words that describe you."**

List 5 words that describe your transferrable skills (also known as work ethic skills):

14. **Why is this job opening interesting to you?** Use a 3-step answer. 1) Explain why you like the company. 2) Explain why your skills and experience fit the job opening. 3) Explain how this job will help your future career. "The Home Store has quality lumber and paint supplies. My classes in drafting, wood shop, and metal technology prepared me with skills to work in the Home Improvement Department. Work experience at the Home Store will help my future plans to become a contractor." Write your answer to the question — **"Why is this job opening interesting to you?"**

15. **How do you handle criticism?** The interviewer wants to know if you can handle criticism without becoming upset and negative acting. Answer with positive comments: "I try to see criticism as an opportunity to learn how to improve my work." "I prefer to think of criticism as feedback. I welcome feedback to help me improve my skills." "When criticized, I do not make excuses; I prefer to talk to reach solutions." Write your answer to the interview question— **"How do you handle criticism?"**

Positive answer to show you are not offended by criticism:
