

1

***Social skills***

Social skills are a cluster of skills necessary to get along well with others, including respecting others and expressing appreciation, resolving conflict, and behaving according to social norms. Social skills predict all four types of workforce outcomes (employment, performance, income/wages, and entrepreneurial success), are sought by employers, and are seen as critically important by experts in the field. A study set in New Zealand found a positive relationship between sociability and establishing relationships at age 18, and occupational attainment and work stimulation at age 26. In Great Britain, a study found that social skills measured at age 10 predicted higher wages among entrepreneurs. Employers in Egypt, India, and Vietnam seek social skills when hiring new employees.

2

***Communication skills***

Communication skills include effective expression, transmission, understanding, and interpretation of knowledge and ideas. There is evidence that communication skills are related to three of the workforce outcomes studied for youth. They are the most frequently sought skill among employers, and they were strongly endorsed by stakeholders in this project. In Europe, 35 experts identified communication as the number one skill required in the workforce and recommended its inclusion in academic curricula. In India, non-verbal skills such as recognizing non-verbal cues and body language were identified as important by employers.

3

***Higher-order thinking***

Higher-order thinking enables young employees to solve workplace problems independently using available resources, prior knowledge, and experience. Higher-order thinking is very much sought by employers and is critical for all four workforce outcomes in all regions of the world. For example, problem solving was identified as a top skill in employer surveys in Pakistan, Macedonia, and Lebanon. Decision-making was highly ranked by employers in both India and Brazil.

4

***Self-control***

Self-control refers to a person's ability to delay gratification, control impulses, and regulate behaviors. Employers look for self-discipline or employees who can manage their emotions. Self-control is highly supported by rigorous literature as related to all four workforce outcomes. For example, a child's level of attentiveness at age eight was predictive of their employment in upper-level, white collar jobs at age 42 in Finland. It is also related to entrepreneurial success. In the West Bank, a survey of young entrepreneurs nominated "patience" as a key skill for success as an entrepreneur.

5

***Positive self-concept***

Positive self-concept was also found to be among the most important skills across all outcomes, and specifically for job performance and income outcomes among youth. Self-awareness, self-confidence, job search self-efficacy, and self-esteem are important for obtaining work in multiple countries worldwide.

## 30 Second Commercial

### What is it?

A chance to “sell yourself” – it is also called the elevator pitch. You only have a short period of time to speak with someone - what are the most important things you want a potential employer to know about you?

### How do I write it?

1. What are you looking for (a OR b)?

a. I am looking for full time/part time work as a: \_\_\_\_\_.

b. I am looking for full time/part time work in the \_\_\_\_\_ industry.

2. What is your work experience and how does it relate (use several of the options)?

a. I am currently training at CWS in:

\_\_\_\_\_

b. I have previously worked for:

Employer 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Employer 2: \_\_\_\_\_

Employer 3: \_\_\_\_\_

c. My duties included:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

d. I have \_\_\_\_\_ years of experience in this field.

e. My education/training includes – certificates, etc?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. What are your strengths? (Examples: great communication skills, motivated to excel, works well in a diverse workplace, passion for the field, etc.)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### Where can I use it?

1. In an interview. A perfect answer to “Tell me about yourself.”

2. As a paragraph in your cover letter.

3. At a job fair or open house.

## Interview Do's and Don'ts

### Do's:

- ☑ Arrive 10-15 minutes early to show eagerness and have a chance to get a feel for the environment but not so early that you impose or seem desperate.
- ☑ Wear conservative clothing.
- ☑ Women should wear neutral pantyhose that compliment your suit (no fishnets, patterned hosiery, or bare legs).
- ☑ Carry a briefcase or portfolio to hold all of your paperwork.
- ☑ Turn off your cell phone before you get into the building.
- ☑ Greet the interviewer with a smile and a handshake.
- ☑ Answer questions thoroughly, but don't ramble on.
- ☑ Maintain good eye contact.
- ☑ Ask questions about the job and organization to show your interest.
- ☑ Show some knowledge of the company, position and career field.
- ☑ Write and send a thank you note within 48 hours of the interview.

### Don'ts:

- × Chew gum.
- × Smoke before your interview.
- × Wear heavy makeup.
- × Put on strong aftershave, perfumes, or colognes; many people are allergic to certain scents.
- × Have tattoos showing.
- × Wear unnatural hair colors or styles.
- × Wear excessive piercings.
- × Give just two word answers. The interviewer is trying to get to know you; talk to him or her.
- × Interrupt the interviewer.
- × Be afraid to pause and think about an answer before you begin speaking.
- × Look at your watch or the clock during the interview.
- × Talk negatively about former employers, coworkers, supervisors, mentors, or advisors.

# Mock Interview Q&A

**Write your best answer for each question.**

**Discuss your answers with your mentor for feedback and suggestions.**

## **1. Tell me about yourself.**

*\*This should be your “30 Second Commercial” – Handout. Talk about related work experience. Touch on your soft (strengths and qualities as a worker) and hard skills (knowledge and skills related to the job).*

## **2. Where was your last job? How long did you work there?**

*\*Don't forget to mention main duties of the job. Name the company, your position, and length of employment.*

## **3. Why did you leave/are you leaving your last job?**

*\*Do NOT be negative. If you were laid-off say that the organization “downsized.” Looking for a growth opportunity, change of field, heard good things...all good points to make, if they are true.*

## **4. How do you handle stress and pressure?**

*\*Tell a story about a time on the job when you handled a stressful situation successfully. It is also appropriate to discuss your stress recovery methods: listening to music, going for a walk, dancing, running, etc.*

**5. Why do you want this job?**

*\*Why have you picked this career field? This is your opportunity to show that you have researched the organization and understand your field of work.*

**6. Describe a time when you took initiative.**

*\*Tell a story using "I." Think of a time when you thought outside the box, were creative, or went above and beyond. Describe a specific situation on the job.*

*Example: "I suggested a more efficient way of requesting schedule changes. It was a simple thing that ultimately saved my supervisor some time and frustration."*

**7. Describe a time on the job when you made a mistake.**

*\*Be sure to include how you fixed the mistake. Did you tell the boss? Who helped you fix the situation? Remember – no serious mistakes.*

*Example: You gave the wrong order to a customer. Be sure to indicate that you apologized, took responsibility for the error and how you learned from your mistake.*

**8. Tell me about a difficult decision you have made.**

*\*Keep it work-related! Make sure the outcome was a positive one.*

*Example: Prioritizing tasks. How did you then make the decision?*

**9. What are your strengths?**

*\*Pick ones that relate to the jobs you are interviewing for and explain (use specific examples of your strengths and why they are beneficial to the position you are applying for). You should come up with at least 7-10 strengths.*

*However, when answering the question, only state three.*

1. \_\_\_\_\_

6. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

7. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

8. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

9. \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

10. \_\_\_\_\_

**10. Tell me about your weaknesses.**

*\*Everyone has weaknesses, but not everyone will admit to it. Employers look for workers who can recognize their own weaknesses and also take steps to overcome them. Describe a weakness that you have and what steps you are currently taking or have taken in the past to resolve and work on this weakness.*

*Example: Public speaking. "I find I get nervous speaking in front of large groups. It is a difficult thing to practice, but I am determined to improve."*

**11. How would you describe your most recent boss? Your ideal boss?**

*\*Do NOT bash your old boss – take about the positive qualities of your past boss. Your ideal boss: use vague words (i.e. honest, trustworthy, fair, etc.)*

**12. Why should I hire you?**

*\*Highlight your strengths and accomplishments. Show enthusiasm. Give one or two brief examples.*

**13. What were three important responsibilities in your last job?**

*\*Give 3 responsibilities and a little detail about each of them. Even if it is something that seems small, anything that impacts service and/or customer satisfaction is always important.*

**14. Where do you see yourself in 3 to 5 years?**

*\*Be sure to have a goal that is related to the field (or position) that you are applying for! It shows that you have initiative – even if it is simply to hone your skills and learn and grow.*

**15. What are your salary expectations?**

*\*Open; negotiable. What do you typically pay for this position? OR What is the salary range for this job? Researching the market-rate for the position (or similar) will give you a ballpark. Benefit package should also be considered when evaluation overall compensation.*

**16. What do you consider your greatest accomplishment?**

*\*This answer can be professional or personal. Even if it is something that seems small, if you worked hard or overcame challenges, it is worth sharing.*

**17. Describe your perfect job.**

*\*Don't describe the job you're applying for – they'll think that you're lying. Never mention salary or benefits. Talk about maybe moving up in the company or an elevated position from the one you are interviewing for.*

**18. What were you doing during your work gaps? (if applicable)**

*\*Make gaps as positive as possible without lying about it. You do not need to go into detail, especially if it was for personal reasons.*

**19. What motivates you?**

*\*Challenge, achievement, recognition, etc. What job aspects (responsibility, teamwork, environment, etc) excite you?*

**20. Do you prefer to work on a team or independently?**

*\*It is usually best to say both and then explain WHY you like each.*

**21. Give some examples of teamwork.**

*\*Be specific. Provide a work related story of when teamwork was a positive experience for you. Explain how your skills/abilities contributed and complemented those of the other people on the team.*

**22. How do you evaluate success? Do you consider yourself successful?**

*\*What do you think would identify you as a successful person? Need to strike the balance between confidence and humility – you are working towards a successful path by participating in Stand & Deliver, how might you strive for improvement?*



**23. What interests you about this job?**

*\*This is your chance to show the research you have done about the specific position and the organization itself. Also talk about why you like the type of work you are interviewing for.*

**24. What qualifications and experience do you have?**

*\*Be specific! Sell yourself! You can review the information that is already on your resume.*

**25. Why do you want to work for this organization?**

*\*Be sure that you know something about the company!*

**26. Have you ever been convicted of a felony and if so, is there anything you would like to discuss?**

*\*Focus on what you have done since/to overcome the situation. End with a positive! Admit the offense in one sentence (keep it as simple as possible). Reduce the offense to one word (e.g. aggravated assault to assault). Convey remorse and regret ("I was young and I made some poor choices) Show that you are making positive changes in your life (give an example – focus on your qualifications).*

**27. Do you have any questions?**

*Always ask questions! It shows you are interested in the job and/or company.*

*Write a bunch down before your interview. Many may get answered during the interview.*

*See examples on the next page.*

### **Questions to Ask in an Interview:**

How would you describe a typical day in this position?

Who does this position report to?

What are the opportunities for advancement?

What do you like about working here?

How will my performance be supervised and evaluated?

Are there other questions I can answer for you?

What are you looking for in an ideal employee?

Is there anything else I can tell you about my qualifications?

Do you have any concerns about my suitability for the position?

When can I expect to hear from you?

Can I have your business card?

### **Questions NOT to Ask in an Interview:**

What are the responsibilities of this position? (Do your homework ahead of time!)

If I get the job when can I take time off for vacation? (Wait until you get the offer to mention prior commitments)

Can I change my schedule if I get the job? (If you need to figure out the logistics of getting to work don't mention it now!)

Did I get the job? (Don't be impatient. They'll let you know.)