

# PRACTICE INTERVIEWS: STRENGTHEN YOUR INTERVIEWING SKILLS

JOB SEEKERS OF MONTCLAIR, MARCH 15, 2023

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# TONIGHT WE'LL PRACTICE ANSWERING INTERVIEW QUESTIONS:

## **Standard questions:**

- Why do you want to work here?
- Where do you think this industry will be in 5 years?
- Why did you leave/are you leaving your last job?
- What are you best at?
- Have you ever failed? Have your work criticized?
- What did you do least well in your last job?
- How much money are you looking for?
- Sell me this watch.
- Should we hire you, What's the greatest challenge you think you will find in this role?

## **Stress questions:**

- I've seen ten candidates with qualifications equal to yours: why should I hire you?
- Have you ever been fired?

## **Illegal questions (they may be asked anyway):**

- How does your family feel about a job with this much travel?
- Do you have sufficient child care to work overtime two nights a week and every other Saturday?
- When did you graduate from college?
- What is your current or most recent salary? (Illegal in NY, NJ, other states, selected cities)

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## MORE QUESTIONS

### **Skills-based questions (behavioral based):**

- Tell me about a time when you led a team project to success.
- What is your level of experience with\_\_\_\_\_? (*e.g.* survey design, Excel, Python, event planning, cooking Thai food, boiler repair)
- When have you persuaded a manager or colleague to reverse a decision?

### **Thought processing questions (case-method):**

- How can you tell if the light is working inside a refrigerator when the door is closed?
- Why are all manhole covers round?
- You want to export an American cheese to France: should you, and why or why not?
- How many baby diapers are sold in the US each year?
- Note: consulting firms and federal government agencies ask complex business decision making questions that can take an hour or more to devise a solution

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## AND MORE?

- The question you most dread?

### **Questions that appear nonsensical, but have been used by companies with household names:**

- You are going to cook and serve a meal for a group of your colleagues. What do you plan to make?
- Do you prefer Coke or Pepsi?

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# COMMUNICATION BEYOND YOUR WORDS

- Tone: warm?
- Smile often!
- Speed: can listener capture your words? Native English speakers can talk too fast, especially in New York City. Non-native speakers often need to slow down so that listeners can process foreign accents.
- Enunciation: Native English speakers can be sloppy enunciators.
- Loudness of your voice: confident? Too soft? Too loud?
- Eye contact: in US culture, builds trust and conveys honesty but don't glare!

## **Body language:**

- arms crossed shuts your interviewer out.
- Foot tapping, playing with your hair convey nervousness
- Leaning back in the chair conveys nonchalance, cockiness, unwarranted informality

## **What you are wearing:**

- Dress for the job you want to have in this organization.

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## Questions to ask your interviewer?

- What do you expect within the first three months from the person hired into this position?
- What will be the greatest challenge for a person new to this position and organization?
- How will my performance in this position be measured?
- Why is this position open? (a way to learn if the company promotes from within)
- Do you have any unanswered concerns about my candidacy?
- What is the next step in your selection process?