

INTERVIEWING



AGENDA

- Starter
- Shake
- Questions and Answers
- Interview Jitters
- Conclusion
- Student Assessment

Objectives

Students will identify how to demonstrate confidence when they greet someone.

Students will practice answering difficult interview questions.

Students will discuss last-minute interview preparation techniques.

Materials Needed

- One copy of the “Tough Questions” activity sheet for each student (Part II)
- One copy of the “Interview Preparation Checklist” activity sheet for each student (Part III)

Starter (3 minutes)

Choose two volunteers. Ask one volunteer to come into the classroom smiling and standing up straight. This student should walk around the room shaking hands and saying hello to classmates. Tell the other volunteer to slink into the classroom, give a weak handshake, and mumble hello without looking the other students in the eyes.

After the volunteers have greeted several of the students, ask the class, “What was your impression of the two volunteers? Whom would you be more inclined to hire? Why?”

Explain to students that it is important to show that they are confident individuals while on an interview. Tell students that they learned about preparing for an interview in Lesson 2, and now they are going to explore ways to show their self-confidence.

Part I Shake (10 minutes)

Purpose: Students identify techniques for greeting someone with confidence.

1. Students identify what makes a good handshake.

Ask students, “What makes a good handshake?” Write responses on the board. (Students may say: strong, firm, confident, not limp.)

Explain that the best way to shake hands well is to master the “web to web” handshake. Place the part of your hand where the thumb and index finger are connected (the “web”) against the web of the hand you are shaking.

Ask for a volunteer to help demonstrate the “web to web” handshake. Explain that it is important to have a firm, but not too strong, handshake. Tell students that it is not a contest with the other person; an interviewer would not be likely to hire someone who hurts their hand in a handshake.

2. Students identify what other actions are involved in a good handshake.

Remind students of the starter and ask them to identify some of the other differences between the ways the two volunteers entered and walked around the room.

Lead students to the understanding that to complete the impression of a confident and friendly person, an interviewee needs to look the interviewer in the eye and say (while they are shaking hands) that they are pleased to meet them.

3. Students practice their greeting.

Tell students that they have all of the ingredients for a successful greeting. They know the “web to web” handshake, how to make eye contact, and what to say.

Tell students to walk around the room and practice greeting each other. Allow a few minutes for this. Move around the room and shake hands with every student.

Tell students that the first part of an interview is very important. Some experts say that a decision to hire or not to hire a candidate is made in the first three minutes, and that the balance of the time is spent justifying the decision. A good greeting can get the student off to a positive start in an interview.

Part II Questions and Answers (20 minutes)

Purpose: Students practice answering difficult interview questions.

1. Students review difficult questions and identify ways to respond.

Divide the class into pairs. Tell students that the best way to be prepared for a difficult interview question is to practice what to say if asked one.

Distribute copies of the “Tough Questions” activity sheet. Explain that the activity sheet has some diagrams on it to stimulate thinking about answers to difficult questions.

Tell students how to complete the activity sheet:

- In the first space, identify a weakness you have.
- In the second space, write about how the weakness makes you work harder or pay attention to details—characteristics any employer wants in an employee.
- In the third space, describe a positive strength that comes from overcoming this weakness.

Allow students several minutes to complete the activity sheet.

2. Students see the importance of ending an answer positively.

Ask students to explain what they observe about the last boxes for the questions on the activity sheet.

Lead students to understand that they should always conclude their answers with something positive. Point out that they should respond to all interview questions, even straightforward ones, with a positive answer.

3. Students practice responding to difficult questions.

Write the following question on the board: “If you could change one thing about yourself, what would it be and why?” Tell students to reflect on how they would respond to an interviewer who asked this question.

Remind students to focus on something positive. Tell them to practice their responses with their partners.

Students may feel anxious about an interview after going through this exercise. Remind them that they know the answers to the questions and they are prepared to go into the interview.

Explain that an interviewer has a problem to solve: they must select and hire someone. The interviewee's task is to show that they are capable of handling the job.

Part III Interview Jitters (15 minutes)

Purpose: Students discuss last-minute interview preparation techniques.

1. Students recognize that it is normal to be nervous going into an interview.

Tell students that everyone is nervous about an interview. Point out that even interviewers likely had to interview to get their job—and probably felt nervous, too! Students should keep in mind that the goal is not to eliminate anxiety, but to keep it from getting in the way.

2. Students review how to prepare for an interview.

Distribute copies of the “Interview Preparation Checklist” activity sheet. Ask a volunteer to read the checklist out loud to the class. Have students identify items they feel unsure of and discuss ways they can be better prepared.

Explain to students that when they feel nervous while on an interview, they should remind themselves that they are well prepared. This is the best strategy for staying calm.

3. Students use relaxation techniques.

Ask students to identify the signs that might indicate that a person is nervous. Write student responses on the board. (Students might respond: sweaty palms, fidgeting, tapping feet, tapping pencils, avoiding eye contact, speaking in a low voice, giving short answers to questions.)

Tell students to review good communication skills (see *Module One: Communication Skills*). Explain that interviews are good opportunities to use active listening skills and to pay attention to the nonverbal messages they are sending.

Remind students of the stress management techniques learned in *Module Six: Skills for School and Beyond*. Tell students to remind themselves, while on an interview, that they've done all the right things to prepare for it and that they are ready. Ask students to visualize a successful interview. What images do students see?

Conclusion (2 minutes)

Ask students to describe the characteristics of a successful job interview. Elicit from students the following **key points** that were taught in this lesson:

- A firm handshake and eye contact imply confidence.
- Prepare answers for difficult questions by focusing on and ending with something positive.
- Everyone feels nervous about an interview, but relaxation and stress management techniques can be used to remain calm.

Student Assessment

1. List three things you should do in an interview to show that you are confident and friendly.
2. Describe the differences between an unsuccessful job interview and a successful one.

LESSON EXTENSIONS

Using Quotations

“Eighty percent of success is showing up.” –Woody Allen

Tell students that the other 20% is preparation. Have students create a list of things to remember when going on job interviews.

Using Technology

Have students take a virtual interview at <http://resources.monster.com/tools> and note the feedback they receive.

Discuss the questions that students encountered and the feedback they received.

Writing in Your Journal

Have students complete the following sentence: “Interviews make me nervous because...”

Have students work with a partner to develop an affirmation that will help them overcome their nervousness (e.g., if their response was “because I’m worried I won’t get the job,” students could remind themselves that they’d be a great addition to the company).

Additional Resources

Have students review the chapter on work from *Speaker’s Sourcebook II* by Glenn Van Ekeren. This book offers quotes and stories about loving your work and giving your all.

Have students explain the importance of a can-do attitude.

Homework

Have students review the articles about interviews on <http://career-advice.monster.com/job-interview/careers.aspx>. Have them also create packets containing all the materials they will need for interviews, such as resumes and references.

Divide students into small groups. Groups should develop checklists to help them make sure they have everything they need for an interview.

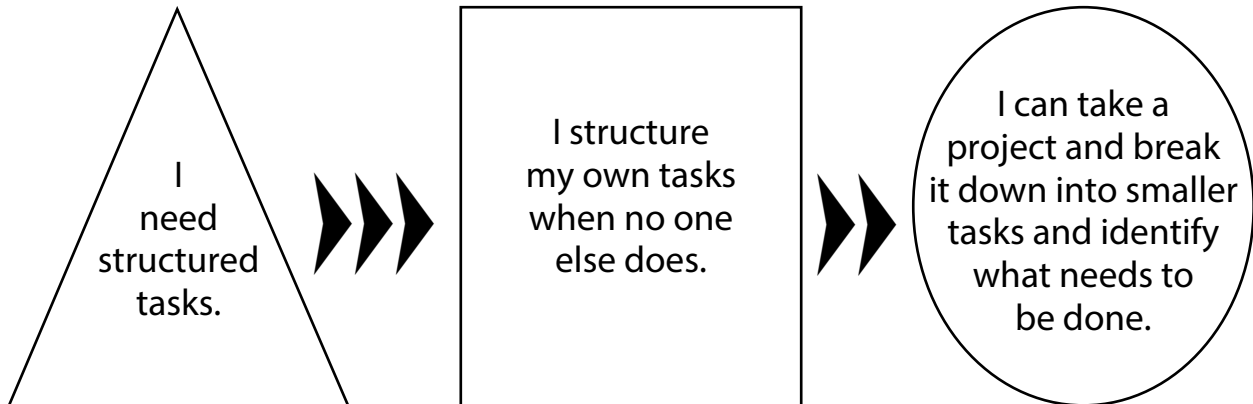
Additional Resources

Ask a personnel manager or human resources director from the community to speak about what to expect in an interview.

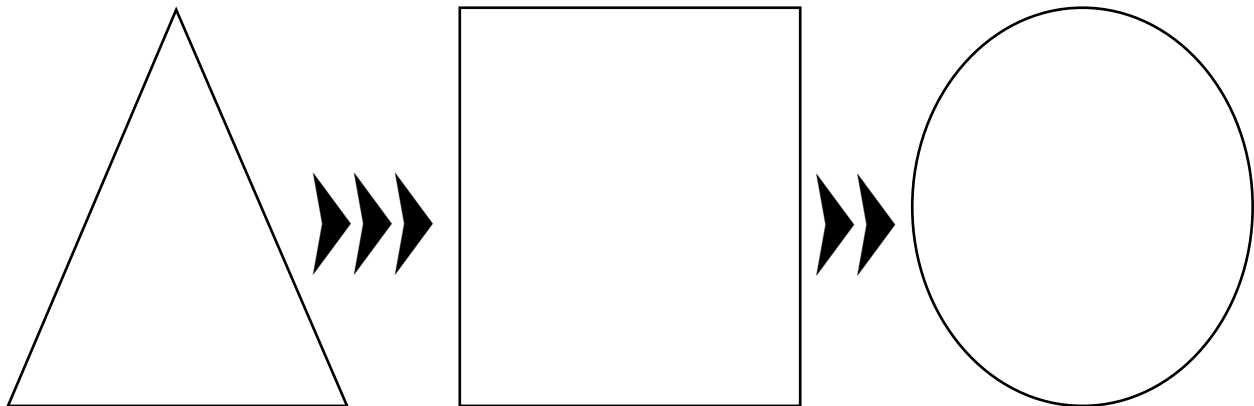
Have students write a paragraph summarizing the information given.

TOUGH QUESTIONS

WHAT IS YOUR BIGGEST WEAKNESS?



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- ▲ In the triangle, identify your weakness.
- In the rectangle, talk about what you do to overcome that weakness or what you've learned from your mistake. Think about how this has made you work harder and how it has helped you grow.
- In the circle, write about a positive strength that comes from overcoming this obstacle.

INTERVIEW PREPARATION CHECKLIST

DO I HAVE...

- COPIES OF MY RESUME
- THREE QUESTIONS TO ASK THE INTERVIEWER

INFORMATION I MIGHT NEED IN ORDER TO FILL OUT AN APPLICATION

- Social Security number
- Name of an emergency contact
- Names and telephone numbers of references

APPROPRIATE CLOTHING AND GROOMING

- Clean shoes
- Hair is clean and out of my face
- Clothes aren't wrinkled
- Not wearing a hat
- Not wearing anything that distracts the interviewer from what I'm saying
- Tie is straight
- Shirt is tucked in
- Clean-shaven, if appropriate
- Blouse
- Suit or dress pants
- Professional skirt or dress