



ଓଡ଼ିଶା ରାଜ୍ୟ ମୁକ୍ତ ବିଶ୍ୱବିଦ୍ୟାଳୟ, ସମ୍ବଲପୁର, ଓଡ଼ିଶା
Odisha State Open University, Sambalpur, Odisha
Established by an Act of Government of Odisha.

DIPLOMA IN MANAGEMENT (DIM)

DIM -08

Business Communication and Soft Skill

Block

4

Resume Writing and Interview Skills

Unit – 1

Curriculum Vitae/Resume Writing

Unit – 2

Interview Skills and Techniques

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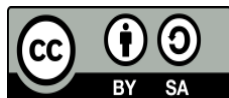
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Printers by : Sri Mandir Publication, Sahid Nagar, Bhubaneswar



Unit – 1

Curriculum Vitae/Resume Writing

Learning Objectives

After completion of the unit, you should be able to:

- Explain the meaning and concept of Curriculum Vitae/Resume.
- Describe the objective and importance of Curriculum Vitae/Resume.
- Understand the difference between Curriculum Vitae and Resume.
- Explain how to write a CV/Resume.
- Know the Dos and Don'ts in CV/Resume Writing
- Understand how to Write a Cover Letter.

Structure

- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Concept and Definition
- 1.3 Objective/ Purpose of CV/Resume Writing
- 1.4 Importance of CV/Resume Writing
- 1.5 Difference between a CV and a Resume
- 1.6 Tips for CV/Resume Writing
- 1.7 How to write a CV/Resume?
- 1.8 Dos and Don'ts in CV/Resume Writing
- 1.9 How to write a Cover Letter
- 1.10 Let's Sum-up
- 1.11 Key Terms
- 1.12 Self-Assessment Questions
- 1.13 Further Readings
- 1.14 Model Questions

1.1 Introduction

A resume or curriculum vitae (CV) is a summary of your education, employment experience, skills and relevant aspects of your extra-curricular life. It's also a marketing document to promote your suitability to a recruiter or prospective employer.



Your application may be your first contact with that person, so it's important to make a good first impression by presenting your qualifications, skills and achievements positively, enthusiastically and truthfully.

To market your skills effectively it's very important to tailor your resume to each job vacancy.

It's important to consider both format and content. In doing so, don't underestimate the time it takes to put together a good resume.

Resume describes one's education, employment experience and other personal data. A successful resume inspires a prospective employer to employ the resume holder. An ideal resume should possess the following features or qualities:

Honesty: An effective resume should always include accurate information. It should be free from exaggeration and false information.

Cleanliness: Employer gets a primary impression about the job applicant from the appearance of the resume. It indicates the carefulness and eagerness of the application towards the job. Therefore, the resume should be neat, clean and attractive. Its attractiveness depends on clear typing or writing, layout of the writing, quality of papers, necessary margin etc.

Full disclosure: An accurate and effective resume gives detailed information about the applicant. The related information includes identifying information, career or job objective, educational background, work experience, references etc. without full disclosure of these facts, employer cannot evaluate a resume.

Brevity: Resume should be concise in nature. Inclusion of unnecessary information or repetition of information may irritate the employer.

Appropriate format: Resume can be drafted in three different formats such as, chronological format, functional format, and combination of chronological and functional format. Selection of format depends on nature of information to be included in the resume; selection of an appropriate format for particular information will obviously enhance its acceptability and appeal.

Updated information: A good resume always contains updated information. *Resume* is the only information sheet that an employer has in determining whether to call the application in the interview. Therefore, the resume should be updated including new skills, experiences and abilities.

1.2 Concept and Definition

A *resume* is a summary of one's identification, qualification and intended career path. It is a formal arrangement of one's personal inventory. In other words, resume can be defined as a written statement that includes a person's personal data, education and employment background etc. it is also known as 'curriculum vitae', 'qualifications document', or 'qualification brief'. It acts as an advertisement of a



person's qualifications and stimulates the potential employers to call the person to the **interview**.

Murphy and Hildebrandt defined, "Curriculum Vitae is a document labeling one's qualifications and career path."

In the opinion of **Bovee, Thill and Schantznan**, "A resume is a structured, written summary of a person's educations, employment background and job qualification."

According to **Kitty O. Locker**, "A resume is a persuasive summary of one's qualifications for employment."

1.3 Objective/ Purpose of CV/Resume Writing

The purpose of a resume is to provide a summary of your skills, abilities and accomplishments. It is a quick advertisement of who you are. It is a "snapshot" of you with the intent of capturing and emphasizing interests and secures you an interview. It is not an autobiography. Since your resume is a primary tool in your job search, it needs to be carefully written and critiqued.

The purpose of a resume is to "sell" your professional expertise to the hiring manger. The summary statement, professional profile, or career objective is the first "advertisement" of your skills and expertise that a hiring manger will see. Each one has a slightly different intent and feel. In the past, most job seekers included a career objective on their resumes to tell hiring managers what type of position they were looking for. A more recent trend is to include a summary statement or a professional profile in place of the objective.

1.4 Importance of CV/Resume Writing

The importance of a well written Professional Resume cannot be stressed upon enough. A Resume is a medium for advertising yourself, it's the first means in which you use to present yourself as a job applicant and try to claim that you are the best choice candidate to a prospective employer.

Remember though that a Professional Resume is always an evolving document, which improves over the period of time, during your career, so keep modifying and improving on it after its first draft and keep its different versions with you as you move forward in your chosen career.

Did you know that on average an employer or Recruiter takes only around 10-15 seconds to screen your Resume and Job Application Cover Letter before considering an applicant to either be shortlisted for a pre-screen telephone interview or not. Sometimes it can be even less than this. Hiring and engaging with a Resume Writing



expert who really understands the importance of a Resume and addressing the key selection criteria of a role and a company culture. You spend the most hours of each week working full-time sharing your ideas and plans with a group of people at work, so why would it not be important to invest in your job application to that perfect role?

1.5 Difference between CV and Resume

Although both the nomenclatures (CV and Resume) are used interchangeably, some experts in the field prefer to make some points of difference between the two as mentioned below:

	Curriculum Vitae	Resume
Audience	Academics in your field of study	Employers hiring you for a specific position
Length	Highly flexible	1–2 pages
Focus	Represents your academic achievements and your scholarly potential	Represents skills, job-related experience, accomplishments, and volunteer efforts
Essentials	List of publications, presentations, teaching experience, education, honours, and grants	Skills and experiences related to the job you're seeking
Extraneous	Complete list of publications, presentations, and titles of classes you've taught	Activities unrelated to academic pursuits
List of references	Include	Don't include
Goal	Present a full history of your academic credentials, including teaching, researching, awards, and services	Present a brief snapshot of your skills and experiences that communicates your ability to perform the job you're seeking

1.6 Tips for CV/Resume Writing

A Curriculum Vitae (or Resume) is a concise summary of your skills, achievements and interests inside and outside your academic work. Employers may initially spend a very short time studying your CV, so it must be engaging, conveying the most relevant points about you in a clear, accessible way. The primary challenge is to make it easy for the recruiter to find exactly



what they are looking for. Focus on their core requirements and adjust or adapt your CV for each specific application.

Be concise

- Keep it to one or two full pages (only academic CVs can be longer).
- Use bullet points to package information succinctly.
- Avoid too much context, excessive detail or unfocused material that will dilute the impact of your most relevant messages.

Remember the purpose

- Your CV is to get you the interview or meeting, NOT the job itself – highlight what you have achieved so that the reader wants to learn more by meeting you.

Target your CV

- Target your CV to each position applied for – it should not be a list of everything that you have done.

Be evidence based

- Provide evidence of your contribution and impact
- Focus on “actions taken” rather than “responsibilities” to showcase your skills.
- Use numbers, percentages and values to quantify your impact and give a sense of scale to your actions.
- Avoid unsupported assertions or opinions.

Be clear

- A well laid out CV is inviting to read and easy to scan quickly.
- Use simple language – avoid jargon, acronyms and technical details which may not be understood or provide too much detail.
- Avoid writing in paragraphs – space is limited and prose makes it slower to find key points.
- CVs are (mostly) a record of what you have done, so completed tasks and activities are written in the past tense.

1.7 How to write a CV / Resume

HOW TO WRITE A RESUME



Your resume (sometimes called your "CV") is your most important tool when applying for a job. It doesn't matter how qualified you are, or how much experience you have - if your resume is poorly presented or badly written, you're going to have trouble getting the job you want - or even an interview.

Taking the time to work on your resume is really important. The information on this page offers some tips and advice on how to make your resume the best it can be.

The purpose of a resume

Your resume is a marketing tool. It needs to demonstrate:

- That you are employable
- How you meet the job and the organisation's requirements
- That you have the right qualifications and education
- That you have the right experience and skills
- That you have the right level of professionalism for the job

How long should my resume be?

There is no set length for a resume. A resume varies in length depending on your experience and education. If you haven't worked much before, one or two pages is best, but three pages is okay if you've got a lot of study and work behind you.

Make sure you don't pad out your resume. If your resume is only one page, as long as it's well-presented it might get better results than a two-page resume full of unnecessary information.

How should I order my resume?

Generally it's always good to present the information on your resume in this order:

- 1) Contact details
- 2) Opening statement
- 3) List of key skills
- 4) List of technical/software skills
- 5) Personal attributes/career overview
- 6) Educational qualifications
- 7) Employment history/volunteering/work placements
- 8) References/referees



Not everything in this list must appear on your resume every time, and the order can change from application to application.

The most important thing is to get the most useful information across first. For example, if your education history is not specifically related to the job, put it toward the end of your resume, behind the information that *is* related to the job.

Do I need to change my resume for each application?

You need to tailor your resume to every job application so that it responds to the specific requirements of the job you're applying for.

You might not need to change much, but you do need to make sure your opening statement, your key skills and your personal attributes all respond to the needs of the role, based on the job ad (if there was one) and the research you've done into the job.

You should also tailor your resume to show how your work experience specifically meets the needs of the job you're applying for.

How to tailor your resume

Ways that you can tailor your resume include:

- Using your opening statement to link your experience and education to the organisation and the requirements of the job
- Listing your most relevant key skills first
- Including examples of achievements that meet the advertised requirements of the job
- Including specifically relevant key words and phrases throughout your resume (see "Keywords" in "What Your Resume Should Include", below)

Contact details

Make sure you include your name, email address and a contact phone number on your resume. You don't have to include your home address, although there might be some situations when doing so would be a good idea.

Don't include your contact details in the header of your resume. Recruitment software sometimes has difficulty reading information in headers or footers, so it's a good idea to avoid headers altogether.

You can put your contact details in the footer of your resume, but if you do, you must make sure they're also in the main body of the document.



Opening statement

An opening statement is a summary of who you are, where you've studied and/or worked, and what you bring to the job. It should be about six lines long and written in first person without the personal reference (i.e., don't say "I did this" - say "Did this" instead).

Your opening statement should start with one sentence about who you are and what you bring to the job, then describe the skills and attributes you have that suit you to the job.

Key skills & strengths

Your resume should include a list of between 10 and 15 skills that link your experience to the job you're applying for.

If the job you're applying for was advertised, either the ad or the position description may provide a list of skills and experiences that are essential for doing the job. It may also provide a list of "desirable" skills and experience. Your list of key skills & strengths needs to respond to all of the items on the "essential" list and as many items as possible on the "desirable" list.

When putting together this list, think of things you've done or learned to do as part of:

- Jobs you've had
- Your studies
- Any work placements you've done
- Any volunteering you've done

Technical/software skills

This is a short list of the names of software or technology you know how to use. Examples might include:

- Word processing or spreadsheet software
- Programming languages

Personal attributes

If you haven't got much work experience, a list of personal attributes can be another way to demonstrate that you're the right person for the job.



Things you could include in this section might include ways you can demonstrate that you are reliable, honest, trustworthy or quick to learn new things.

You can include between three to five personal attributes, but make sure you don't include them instead of your key skills.

Educational history

Your Educational History only needs to show your highest level of education. You don't need to include your results, unless showing them proves how well you are suited to the job.

If you can, you should also include a few bullet points listing your academic achievements (e.g., school or class captaincies, awards you've won, or groups you've been part of).

Employment history

When providing your employment history, start with the your most recent job and go backwards from there. Give the position title and the dates you worked there.

If you haven't had a job before, you can use other things to demonstrate your experience, including:

- Work experience you've done through school
- Work placements or internships that you've done through university or TAFE
- Volunteer work you've done

For each job provide a list of the things that you achieved while in that job, and the significant contributions you made to the organisation. Make sure that these achievements and contributions match the key skills and strengths listed earlier on your resume.

References/referees

Your resume should list two people who can positively recommend you as an employee. Ideally your references will be people that you have worked with before. Provide their name, their position title, and a way that they can be contacted.

Testimonials

A testimonial is another good way to prove that your skill and experience is what the employer is looking for.



Getting a testimonial can be as easy as asking a colleague, teacher or previous employer to write a couple of sentences about you. Ideally the people you get testimonials from should also be included in your references.

You can include any testimonials you get as part of your educational history or your employment/volunteering/work placement history.

Usually it's enough to include one or two testimonials in your resume. Any more than two is probably too many.

Keywords

A lot of recruitment agencies use software that scans applications for key words and phrases. Applications that don't use the right keywords tend to be automatically rejected.

Key words and phrases that this software looks for can include the names of:

- Skills
- Jobs
- Activities
- Qualifications
- Software
- Tools

To make sure your resume has the right key words and phrases, check out the job ad and make a list of the words and phrases it uses. If you don't have a written job ad to refer to, you can use a job search engine to find other ads for similar jobs and see what kind of keywords those ads use.

Once you have a list to work from, start adding those words and phrases to your resume. Good places to add keywords include :

- Your opening statement
- Your list of key skills
- Your educational history
- Your employment history

1.8 Dos and Don'ts in CV/Resume Writing

- Use bullet points. A CV should be a quick snapshot of your history of work and education. Keep it concise.



- Put the most important information first. You'll want to list your work and education experience in chronological order. Make your path from student to dentist very clear and intentional by organizing your CV in the way you want it read. But for sections such as skills or organizations you're active in, list the most important ones first.
- Remove older work experiences, like the summer job you held when you were 17. Unless it has to do with dentistry, leave it out.
- Use white space to break up heavy areas of text to make it easier to read and more visually pleasing.
- Use easy-to-read fonts (like the one in the sample, Calibri).
- Use numbers to back up your achievements. If you were fundraising chair, total the amount raised while you held the position. This puts your achievement into perspective.
- No hobbies. Unless you are 100 percent sure that a hobby will support your candidacy, leave it off. Hobbies may come up in an interview, but don't waste precious page space in your CV talking about your kickball team.
- No jargon is to be used.
- Keep your CV to 2-3 pages.
- Never lie on your resume. Be sure to double-check your facts and dates.

1.9 How to write a Cover letter?

Always write a cover letter to go with your application. It personalizes your application and is a chance for you to emphasize your most relevant qualifications for the position.

What to put on your cover letter

Contact Information

- Include your name, address, telephone, and e-mail.
- Keep the format of this section consistent with your resume.

Date

- State the month, day, and year (e.g., April 11th, 2017).

Employer's Information

- Include the name of the contact person, job title, company name, address, and postal code.
- Try to obtain as many of these details as possible through mail and contacts.

Salutation



- Begin with “Dear” or “To”.
- Address the contact person by the last name starting with “Mr.” or “Ms.”
- If you don’t know the person’s name, address the person by their job title or address your letter to “Human Resources” Department.
- Avoid “To Whom It May Concern” or “Dear Sir/Madam”.

Opening Paragraph

- Open with strong sentences that grab the employer’s attention.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the position: say why you are interested, mention two or three strengths that qualify you for the position.
- Mention the position you are applying for and how you learned about the job.
- Name your referral if relevant.
- If you are responding to an advertisement, refer to the advertisement and date.

Follow-Up Paragraphs

- Describe specific accomplishments from your past work, volunteer, and academic experiences that show your strengths.
- Target your strengths to the needs and requirements identified in the ad or from your research.

Next-To-Last Paragraph

- Explain why you are interested in working for this employer.
- Do research to show you know something about the organization’s values, culture, or areas of prospective growth.
- Describe how these values are similar and relevant to you and your previous accomplishments.

Closing Paragraph

- Mention your interest in an interview or discussion about opportunities.
- Provide information on your availability and how the employer may contact you.
- When appropriate, take a more proactive approach by arranging to call the employer.

1.10 Let’s Sum-up

Your resume (sometimes called your "CV") is your most important tool when applying for a job. It doesn't matter how qualified you are, or how much experience you have - if your resume is poorly presented or badly written, you're going to have trouble getting the job you want - or even an interview. Taking the time to work on your resume is really important.



A Curriculum Vitae/ Resume are a concise summary of your skills, achievements and interests inside and outside your academic work. A *resume* is a summary of one's identification, qualification and intended career path. It is a formal arrangement of one's personal inventory. In other words, resume can be defined as a written statement that includes a person's personal data, education and employment background etc. it is also known as 'curriculum vitae', 'qualifications document', or 'qualification brief'. It acts as an advertisement of a person's qualifications and stimulates the potential employers to call the person to the **interview**. The purpose of a resume is to provide a summary of your skills, abilities and accomplishments. It is a quick advertisement of who you are.

1.11 Key Terms

Curriculum Vitae: A summary of a job applicant's experience and educational background, along with other relevant information regarding the candidate's qualifications.

Resume: Refers to the summary of applicant's education, employment experience, skills and relevant aspects of along with extra-curricular activities.

Testimonial: A testimonial is another good way to prove that your skill and experience is what the employer is looking for.

References/referees: Your resume should list two people who can positively recommend you as an employee. Ideally your references will be people that you have worked with before.

1.12 Self-Assessment Questions

1. Explain the basic objective or purpose of resume writing.
2. Highlight the Dos and Don'ts in Curriculum Vitae/Resume Writing.
3. Write what are the contents included in how to write a cover letter.

1.13 Further Readings

1. James Innes; The CV Book: Your definitive guide to writing the perfect CV, Bookbarn International, Wells Rd, Bristol, UK.
2. How to Write Better Resumes and Cover Letters, Barron's Educational Series, Hauppauge, New York.
3. Gopaldaswamy Ramesh, The ACE of Soft Skills: Attitude, Communication and Etiquette for Success. Pearson Education India, Noida, U.P.

4. Neogy Jayant, Success in Interview, Unicorn Books Pvt Ltd., Darya Ganj, New Delhi.



1.14 Model Questions

1. “A resume is a persuasive summary of one’s qualifications for employment.” Examine the statement.
2. Identify the differences between Curriculum Vitae and Resume.





Unit – 2

Interview Skills and Techniques

Learning Objectives

After completion of the unit, you should be able to:

- Understand the meaning and concept of interview.
- Explain the purpose/Objective of interview.
- Know the various types of interview.
- Understand the ways to succeed in an interview.
- Understand the dress code and interview checklist.

Structure

- 2.1 Introduction
- 2.2 Concept and Definition
- 2.3 Purpose/Objective of Interview
- 2.4 Types/Classification of Interview
- 2.5 Guidelines for Effective Interview
- 2.6 Preparing for the Interview Process
- 2.7 Dress Code for Interview
- 2.8 Commonly asked Questions in Interview
- 2.9 Interview Checklist
- 2.10 Let's Sum-up
- 2.11 Key Terms
- 2.12 Self Assessment Questions
- 2.13 Further Readings
- 2.14 Model Questions

2.1 Introduction

Interviews are important because they offer a chance for companies and job applicants to learn if they might fit well together. Candidates generally go into interviews hoping to prove that they have the mindset and qualifications to perform the job in question.

Interviews, even phone and video interviews convey attributes that a resume and cover letter cannot. For example, an interview helps demonstrate a candidate's



personality and how he presents himself. They also work to the candidate's benefit by conveying information on workplace culture and how people in an organization treat one another. During an interview, candidates learn many things about a business and job that they could not from networking or an advertisement.

Many applicants go through at least two rounds of interviews per company or organization. The purpose of the first interview is typically for the business to weed out unsuitable candidates. The second interview often involves a candidate's potential supervisors and co-workers, and is more geared toward finding the right person for a job rather than screening out people who do not fit.

A candidate should bring copies of his resume, cover letter and other application materials to an interview. He can practice by brainstorming questions and developing answers. Finding out information on the company before the interview is also critical.

2.2 Concept and Definition

Interview is the widely used (election method. It is a face-to-face interaction between interviewee and interviewer. If handled carefully, it can be a powerful technique in having accurate information of the interviewee otherwise unavailable. At the same time, if the interview is not handled carefully, it can be a source of bias, restricting or distorting the flow of communication.

Different scholars have defined 'interview' differently. According to **Scott** and others, "an interview is a purposeful exchange of ideas, the answering of questions and communication between two or more persons". **Bingham** and others define an interview as a 'conversation with a purpose'.

According to **L.P. Alford** and **H.R. Beaty**, "The employment interview is for the purpose of determining the suitability of the applicant for the job and of the job for the applicant. In simple words, interview is an attempt to secure maximum information from the candidate in a face to face dialogue.

Thus, interview can be defined as an attempt to secure maximum amount of information from the candidate concerning his/her suitability for the job under consideration.

It tries to achieve an accurate appraisal of the applicant in terms of his/her educational qualification, training, family background, previous work experience and judge the applicant's certain qualities like manners, appearance, conversational ability, meet other people pleasantly, etc.



2.3 Purpose/Objective of Interview

The basic purpose of the interview is to identify behaviour patterns of the interviewee or candidate. Occurrence and reactions to situations that are repeated in the applicant's experience suggest characteristics reaction pattern. Interview enables the interviewer to judge certain qualities like manners, appearance, ability to speak, grasp of things etc., of the candidate.

Objectives of Interview:

Some of the objectives of interview are discussed as follows:

1. Judgement of Applicant:

Interview gives an opportunity to the interviewer to know about the applicant. The information gathered from application- blank and tests is verified by talking to the candidate.

It provides a chance to know whether the information (about previous experience and training, etc.) supplied by the candidate is justified by him or not. The appearance, ability to communicate, attitude, nature, etc. of the applicant are also judged at the time of interview.

2. Give Information to The Applicant:

Interview is undertaken not only to know about the applicant but also to use it as an opportunity to give him information about the company and the job. Applicant is given full information about the nature of job, hours of work, medical facilities, and opportunities for advancement, employee benefits and services, etc. Thus, the applicant can make a decision of joining or not joining the new job.

3. Promote Goodwill:

An interview also gives an opportunity to create and enhance goodwill of the company. The interviewee should be treated with curtesy. If not selected, then reasons for the same are explained offering constructive suggestions.

2.4 Types/Classification of Interview

The following types of interviews for selection have been identified.

These are:

1. Preliminary Interview:

The interviews conducted to screen the applicants to decide whether further detailed interview will be required are called preliminary interviews. The candidate is given freedom by giving job details during the interview to decide whether the job will suit him.



One of the drawback associated with the preliminary interview is that it might lead to the elimination of many desirable candidates in case interviewers do not have much and proper experience in evaluating candidates. The positive argument, if any, for this method is that it saves time and money for the company.

2. Patterned Interview:

In this interview, the pattern of the interview is decided in advance. What kind of information is to be sought or given, how the interview is to be conducted, and how much time is to be allotted to it, all these are worked out in advance. In case interviewee drifts, he/she is swiftly guided back to the structured questions. Such interviews are also called standardised interviews.

3. Depth Interview:

As the term itself implies, depth interview tries to portray the interviewee in depth and detail. It, accordingly, covers the life history of the applicant along with his/her work experience, academic qualifications, health, attitude, interest, and hobbies. This method is particularly suitable for executive selection. Expectedly, depth interview involves more time and money in conducting it.

4. Appraisal Interview

Once a year, all employees of the company have to undergo appraisal interview with their line manager. This interview evaluates the interviewee's performance over the past year, reviews the tasks and objectives for the next year. The appraisal interview is used as a tool by the managers of personnel department for planning training programmes.

On day-to-day basis, managers do not have time to discuss long-term and basic conditions with regard to employee's employment and commitments. Therefore, the companies want that all employees should have an opportunity to participate in annual appraisal interview to secure that competence of the individual employees is used in the best possible way in connection with company's goals.

This interview improves:

- a. Performance of employees on the job,
- b. Employer-employee relations, and
- c. Communication between managers and employees.

5. Promotion Interview

This interview is faced by a person when he is due for promotion. This interview is conducted to test his aptitude for assuming job of higher importance, even if a person is the only candidate to appear for the interview. If there is more than one candidate for the promotion interview, management can select the best candidate on the basis



of selected criteria. A promotion interview is linked to growth of the person and the organisation he is working for.

It is not possible for management to keep record of the successes and failures of all the employees on their jobs and have access to them in order to decide the candidate most suitable for the job. Managers have to find the kind of people suitable for higher positions and conduct the interview to that mind set.

Though interviewer and interviewee already know each other, this interview may start in an informal way, yet the interviewee cannot treat the interviewer as his friend. He should act professionally and consider the interview as a formal one.

6. Stress Interview

Such interviews are conducted for the jobs which are to be performed under stressful conditions. The objective of stress interview is to make deliberate attempts to create stressful or strained conditions for the interviewee to observe how the applicant behaves under stressful conditions.

The common methods used to induce stress include frequent interruptions, keeping silent for an extended period of time, asking too many questions at a time, making derogatory remarks about the candidate, accusing him that he is lying and so on. The purpose is to observe how the candidate behaves under the stressful conditions – whether he loses his temper, gets confused or frightened.

However, stress-inducing must be done very carefully by trained and skilled interviewer otherwise it may result in dangers. Emotionally charged candidates must not be subjected to further stressful conditions. The candidate should be given sufficient chance to cope with such induced stress before he leaves.

7. Exit Interview

Exit interview is one of the most widely used methods of getting employee feedback. An exit interview is a meeting between at least one representative from the company's human resources (HR) department and the departing employee. (The departing employee may have voluntarily resigned or is laid off or fired). The HR representative asks the employee questions or asks him to complete a questionnaire, or both.

Exit interview is a survey conducted with an employee when he leaves the company. The information from each survey is used to provide feedback on why employees are leaving, what they liked about their employment and what areas of the company need improvement. Exit interviews are effective when the data is compiled and tracked over time.



2.5 Guidelines for Effective Interview

Below are given some guidelines, if observed, can make interview more effective:

1. The interview should have a definite time schedule known to both the interviewers and the interviewee.
2. Interview should be conducted by the competent, trained and experienced interviewers.
3. The interviewers should be supplied with specific set of guidelines for conducting interview.
4. The interviewers should ensure an element of privacy for the interviewee.
5. A resume for all the candidates to be interviewed should be prepared and the same be made available to the interviewers before the interview starts.
6. The interview should not end abruptly but it should come to close tactfully providing satisfaction to the interviewee.
7. The interviewers should show their sensitivity to the interviewee's sentiments and also sympathetic attitude to him/her.
8. The interviewers should also evince emotional maturity and a stable personality during the interview session.

Some findings and research studies on the interview seem worth mentioning:

1. Structured interview are more reliable than unstructured interviews.
2. Interviewers are influenced more by unfavourable than by favourable information.
3. Inter-rater reliability is increased when there is a greater amount of information about the job to be filled.
4. A bias is established early in the interview, and this tends to be followed by either a favourable or an unfavourable decision.
5. Intelligence is the trait most validly estimated by an interview, but the interview information adds nothing to test data.
6. Interviewers can explain why they feel an applicant is likely to be an unsatisfactory employee but not why the applicant may be satisfactory.



7. Factual written data seem to be more important than physical appearance in determining judgments. This increases with interviewing experience.
8. An interviewee is given more extreme evaluation (positive/negative) when preceded by an interviewee of opposing value (positive/negative).
9. Interpersonal skills and motivation are probably best evaluated by the interview.
10. Allowing the applicant time to talk makes rapid first impressions less likely and provides a large behaviour sample.
11. Nonverbal as well as verbal interactions influence decisions.
12. Experienced interviewers rank applicants in the same order, although they differ in the proportion that will accept. There is a tendency for experienced interviewers to be more selective than less experienced ones.

2.6 Preparing for the Interview Process

BEFORE THE INTERVIEW

Take a copy of your application form/CV with you in a folder, a pen and paper and the interview contact number, just in case you are delayed and need to contact them. Make sure you arrive in plenty of time, but not too early. About 10 minutes is perfect as this gives you time to freshen up, calm yourself, perhaps with deep breathing exercises and to take the opportunity to get a 'feel' of the place. Remember your interview starts the moment you enter the building and anyone you speak to may feed back to the interviewer.

Be pleasant to the receptionist and take time when waiting for your interview to note what is happening around you. You should have turned off your mobile phone by now. Can you get a feel of the atmosphere of the company? Your interview is not just about the company finding out about you – it is a two-way process as you should also be finding out about what it would be like to work there.

When you are called in for your interview take a deep breath and be C A L M.

DURING THE INTERVIEW

Give a firm but gentle handshake when you meet your interviewer(s), sit when invited to do so, make direct eye contact and remember to **smile**. From the moment you meet, your communication with the interviewer forms part of the decision-making as to whether to recruit you; in fact most decisions are made within the first **three** minutes! So, you need to be aware of both your verbal and non-verbal communication skills.



Verbal communication

- Show genuine interest in the position
- Listen and answer the questions asked
- Never argue a point
- If you do not understand or hear a question, ask for it to be repeated
- Do not interrupt

Non-verbal communication

Appearance and mannerisms are VERY important – think of body language and facial expressions

- Put your feet squarely on the floor or cross your legs at the ankle
- Put anything you are carrying on the floor
- Rest your hands in your lap
- Nod your head to show you are listening
- Do not fidget
- Be serious but do not forget to smile

AFTER THE INTERVIEW

- Thank the interviewer and shake hands
- Remember that the interview does not finish until you have left the building
- If you have not heard from the company after the agreed time, contact them to find out if they have had time to make a decision.

2.7 Dress Code for Interview

You also need to prepare what you are going to wear in advance. What you wear does not have to be new, but it does have to be clean and neat. Dress smartly in an outfit which is comfortable to wear and fits. It is probably preferable to wear a suit of a dark, plain colour and men should wear a tie. Women can wear a skirt or smart trousers with a coordinating jacket. Your shoes should be comfortable and clean. Your hair should be neat and remember to keep any jewellery to a minimum. Your visual appearance is very important and you want to make the right impression. Looking good will also boost your confidence.

2.8 Commonly asked Questions in Interview

The best way to prepare yourself for the interview is to know what questions may be coming and practice in advance. The following are some of the most difficult questions you will face in the course of your job interviews. Some questions may seem rather simple on the surface—such as "Tell me about yourself"—but these questions can have a variety of answers. The more open ended the question, the wider the variation in the answers. Once you have become practiced in your



interviewing skills, you will find that you can use almost any question as a launching pad for a particular example or compelling story.

Others are classic interview questions, such as "What is your greatest weakness?" Questions most people answer improperly. In this case, the standard textbook answer for the "greatest weakness" question is to provide a veiled positive such as: "I work too much. I just work and work and work." Wrong. Either you are lying or, worse yet, you are telling the truth, in which case you define working too much as a weakness and really do not want to work much at all.

The following answers are provided to give you a new perspective on how to answer tough interview questions.

1. Tell me about yourself.

It seems like an easy interview question. It's open ended. I can talk about whatever I want from the birth canal forward. Right?

Wrong. What the hiring manager really wants is a quick, two- to three-minute snapshot of who you are and why you're the best candidate for this position.

So as you answer this question, talk about what you've done to prepare yourself to be the very best candidate for the position. Use an example or two to back it up. Then ask if they would like more details. If they do, keep giving them example after example of your background and experience. Always point back to an example when you have the opportunity.

"Tell me about yourself" does not mean tell me everything. Just tell me what makes you the best.

2. Why should I hire you?

The easy answer is that you are the best person for the job. And don't be afraid to say so. But then back it up with what specifically differentiates you.

For example: "You should hire me because I'm the best person for the job. I realize that there are likely other candidates who also have the ability to do this job. Yet I bring an additional quality that makes me the best person for the job—my passion for excellence. I am passionately committed to producing truly world class results. For example..."

Are you the best person for the job? Show it by your passionate examples.

3. What is your long-range objective?

The key is to focus on your achievable objectives and what you are doing to reach those objectives.

For example: "Within five years, I would like to become the very best accountant your company has on staff. I want to work toward becoming the expert that others rely upon. And in doing so, I feel I'll be fully prepared to take on any greater



responsibilities which might be presented in the long term. For example, here is what I'm presently doing to prepare myself..."

Then go on to show by your examples what you are doing to reach your goals and objectives.

4. How has your education prepared you for your career?

This is a broad question and you need to focus on the behavioural examples in your educational background which specifically align to the required competencies for the career.

An example: "My education has focused on not only the learning the fundamentals, but also on the practical application of the information learned within those classes. For example, I played a lead role in a class project where we gathered and analyzed best practice data from this industry. Let me tell you more about the results..."

Focus on behavioural examples supporting the key competencies for the career. Then ask if they would like to hear more examples.

5. Are you a team player?

Almost everyone says yes to this question. But it is not just a yes/no question. You need to provide behavioural examples to back up your answer.

A sample answer: "Yes, I'm very much a team player. In fact, I've had opportunities in my work, school and athletics to develop my skills as a team player. For example, on a recent project..."

Emphasize teamwork behavioural examples and focus on your openness to diversity of backgrounds. Talk about the strength of the team above the individual. And note that this question may be used as a lead in to questions around how you handle conflict within a team, so be prepared.

6. Have you ever had a conflict with a boss? How was it resolved?

Note that if you say no, most interviewers will keep drilling deeper to find a conflict. The key is how you behaviourally reacted to conflict and what you did to resolve it.

For example: "Yes, I have had conflicts in the past. Never major ones, but there have been disagreements that needed to be resolved. I've found that when conflict occurs, it helps to fully understand the other person's perspective, so I take time to listen to their point of view, then I seek to work out a collaborative solution. For example..."

Focus your answer on the behavioural process for resolving the conflict and working collaboratively.

7. What is your greatest weakness?

Most career books tell you to select a strength and present it as a weakness. Such as: "I work too much. I just work and work and work." Wrong. First of all, using a strength and presenting it as a weakness is deceiving. Second, it misses the point of the question.



You should select a weakness that you have been actively working to overcome. For example: "I have had trouble in the past with planning and prioritization. However, I'm now taking steps to correct this. I'm now using a planning app to better plan and prioritize..." then pull out your mobile to show how you are using the app.

Talk about a true weakness and show what you are doing to overcome it.

8. If I were to ask your professors (or your boss) to describe you, what would they say?

This is a threat of reference check question. Do not wait for the interview to know the answer. Ask any prior bosses or professors in advance. And if they're willing to provide a positive reference, ask them for a letter of recommendation.

Then you can answer the question like this:

"I believe she would say I'm a very energetic person, that I'm results oriented and one of the best people with whom she has ever worked. Actually, I know she would say that, because those are her very words. May I show you her letter of recommendation?"

So be prepared in advance with your letters of recommendation.

9. What qualities do you feel a successful manager should have?

Focus on two words: leadership and vision. Then tell of how that leadership and vision translated into your personal delivered results.

Here is a sample of how to respond: "The key quality in a successful manager should be leadership—the ability to be the visionary for the people who are working under them. The person who can set the course and direction for subordinates, keeping them focused on what is most important for delivering the highest priority results. The highest calling of a true leader is inspiring others to reach the highest of their abilities. I'd like to tell you about a person whom I consider to be a true leader..."

Then give an example of someone who has touched your life and how their impact has helped in your personal development.

10. If you had to live your life over again, what one thing would you change?

Focus on a key turning point in your life or missed opportunity. Yet also tie it forward to what you are doing to still seek to make that change.

For example: "Although I'm overall very happy with where I'm at in my life, the one aspect I likely would have changed would be focusing earlier on my chosen career. I had a great internship this past year and look forward to more experience in the field. I simply wish I would have focused here earlier. For example, I learned on my recent internship..." then provide examples.

Stays focused on positive direction in your life and back it up with examples.

In reviewing these interview answers, please remember that they are only examples. Do not rehearse them verbatim nor adopt these answers as your own. They are meant



to stir your creative juices and get you thinking about how to properly answer the broader range of questions that you will face.

2.9 Interview Checklist

For the shake of gaining momentum of success in an interview, you need to follow and understand the following Dos and Don'ts:

DO

- Remember that first appearances count – how you dress and act
- Smile, make eye contact and acknowledge all members of an interview panel
- Shake hands in a firm but gentle way, not crushingly strong
- Wait to be asked to sit down
- Make sure you sit correctly and comfortably before starting
- Show interest
- Answer the question asked
- Keep positive at all times

DO NOT

- Be late
- Fidget or look at your watch
- Argue
- Put anything on the interviewer's desk
- Say anything negative
- Appear indifferent
- Appear aggressive or act in a superior way – nobody likes this!
- Show too much interest in money and holidays

2.10 Let's Sum-up

Interview can be explained as an attempt to secure maximum amount of information from the candidate concerning his/her suitability for the job under consideration. It tries to achieve an accurate appraisal of the applicant in terms of his/her educational qualification, training, family background, previous work experience and judge the applicant's certain qualities like manners, appearance, conversational ability, meet other people pleasantly, etc.

The basic purpose of the interview is to identify behaviour patterns of the interviewee or candidate. Occurrence and reactions to situations that are repeated in the applicant's experience suggest characteristics reaction pattern. Interview enables the interviewer to judge certain qualities like manners, appearance, ability to speak, grasp of things etc., of the candidate.



Many applicants go through at least two rounds of interviews per company or organization. The purpose of the first interview is typically for the business to weed out unsuitable candidates. The second interview often involves a candidate's potential supervisors and co-workers, and is more geared toward finding the right person for a job rather than screening out people who do not fit.

A candidate should bring copies of his resume, cover letter and other application materials to an interview. He can practice by brainstorming questions and developing answers. Finding out information on the company before the interview is also critical.

2.11 Key Terms

Group: Means a collection of individuals who have contact and frequent interaction, mutual influence, common feeling of camaraderie, and who work together to achieve a common set of goals.

Discussion is the process whereby two or more people exchange information or ideas in a face-to-face situation to achieve a goal.

Group discussion: It refers to a communicative situation that allows its participants to express views and opinions and share with other participants.

Interview can be explained as an attempt to secure maximum amount of information from the candidate concerning his/her suitability for the job under consideration.

2.12 Self Assessment Question

1. What is meant by an interview? Discuss the various objectives with which interview are conducted.
2. Mention some of the commonly asked questions in an interview as per your own experience
3. What should be the proper dress code for the interview purpose?

2.13 Further Readings

1. James Innes, The Interview Book, Pearson Education Limited, U.K.
2. Sajitha Jayaprakash, Interview Skills, Himalaya Publishing House, Mumbai.
3. Sen, Leena. Communication Skills. New Delhi: Prentice-Hall of India Limited.
4. Subramanian, Sharmila. Essentials of Communicative English. Delhi: Vrinda Publications.



2.14 Model Questions

1. Explain the various types of interview process. Which type you like most and why?
2. What steps are to be taken while you are preparing yourself for the interview process?
3. Discuss the guidelines you need to follow to be more effective in interview.

