

Job Interviews, Part 1

SUBMITTED BY: Kathryn McGinn

SUBJECT(S): Career Development

GRADE LEVEL(S): 9, 10, 11, 12

≡ OVERVIEW:

Students have finished working on résumés and cover letters and will begin thinking about the next stage of the job application process: interviews. Students will review interview tips and read a Knowledge@Wharton article about “emotional affect,” to consider the impact their attitudes can have on an interview. Finally, students will work in teams to brainstorm interview questions to ask one another.

≡ NBEA STANDARD(S):

- Career Development, V. School-to-Career Transition

≡ RELATED ARTICLES:

- [“Where Are You Working this Summer?”](#)
- [“Career Insight: Nick Halla on the Culture Inside a Silicon Valley Startup”](#)
- [“5 Ways to Prepare for Success in the New Year”](#)

Common Core Standard(s):

- ELA CCR Reading 1: Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

- ELA CCR Speaking and Listening 1: Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.
- ELA CCR Speaking and Listening 4: Present information, findings, and supporting evidence such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
- ELA CCR Speaking and Listening 6: Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and communicative tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.

Objectives/Purposes:

- Students will read and analyze an article for main ideas.
- Students will learn about the purpose, content and conventions of job interviews.
- Students will work constructively with peers to develop interview questions.

Knowledge@Wharton Article:

- [“Managing Emotions in the Workplace: Do Positive and Negative Attitudes Drive Performance?”](#)

Other Resources/Materials:

- Interview Tips ([Handout A](#))
- Common Interview Questions ([Handout B](#))
- Students' resumes and cover letters from the prior lessons in this unit

Activities:

1. Hand out “Managing Emotions in the Workplace” (just the first section, up to and including the paragraph that begins, “Barsade suggests that...”) Explain that while the article is about managing emotions on-the-job, it can also be applied to projecting a positive attitude and self-confidence on an interview. Students should read the excerpt and consider the following questions:

- What is emotional contagion? How can a negative attitude be harmful in the workplace?
- How can a negative — or simply unenthusiastic — attitude be harmful in an interview?
- What strategies can you employ to feel more positive and project that positivity?

(5 mins)

2. When students have finished reading, discuss the questions as a class. Answers may vary, but be sure to address the key points:

- What is emotional contagion? How can a negative attitude be harmful in the workplace?
 - Emotions travel from person to person: “employees’ moods, emotions, and overall dispositions have an impact on job performance, decision making, creativity, turnover, teamwork, negotiations and leadership.”
 - Negative emotions can worry/upset fellow employees, but on the other hand, always trying to project the appropriate emotion can be exhausting.
- How can a negative — or simply unenthusiastic — attitude be harmful in an interview?
 - Subtle displays of emotions can have an impact: potential employers may pick up cues you don’t even know you’re giving off about your attitude toward them, the job, their organization, etc.
 - Research demonstrates that positive people do better in the workplace, and employers may be reluctant to hire negative individuals.
- What strategies can you employ to feel more positive and project that positivity?
 - Do not let yourself be dragged down by others’ negative moods.
 - Try empathizing with your colleagues/clients, as a way of lessening the emotional burden of regulating your emotions.

3. Ask students to raise their hands if they’ve ever been on a job interview. Ask students what the interviews were like: what kinds of questions did the interviewer ask? Were they nervous? How did they prepare? Explain that the focus of this lesson is on interviewing skills.

(5 mins)

4. Hand out Interviewing Tips sheet and go over with students. Address any questions that students may have. Explain that these tips will make more sense when students begin to practice interviews themselves.

(10 mins)

5. Explain that for the next few lessons, students will be working in pairs to develop interview questions and to practice interviewing skills. Students will need their résumés, cover letters and descriptions of the jobs to which they are applying. They will trade these materials with a partner, and that partner will become the employer. It will be his/her job to come up with a list of interview questions based upon the job description and the candidate's résumé and cover letter. Hand out list of common interview questions, and tell the students they can draw from these questions, but they should also develop questions that are specific to the job description and their partner's qualifications. Go over the handout as a class.

(5 mins)

6. Students trade materials with partners. "Employers" learn about the job opening and the candidate, and brainstorm 7-10 interview questions. Partners should NOT share these questions with each other at this point.

(10 mins)

7. Employers find a new partner (not their job applicant) and share their work: discuss the position, the applicant and the interview questions. Partners should offer feedback, suggesting relevant questions and helping the employer decide the order in which to ask them. Employers should finalize their interviews.

(10 mins)

Tying It All Together:

Ask students what they learned from taking the perspective of an employer and writing interview questions. What insights did they gain for preparing for their own interviews?

(5 mins)

Practice Outside of the Classroom:

- Talk to adults about their experiences relating to job interviews. What are some commonly asked questions? What are the hardest questions they've ever been asked on an interview?

What Worked and What I Would Do Differently:

Students found the “Commonly Asked Interview Questions” handout particularly helpful, and we spent some class time discussing how they could answer some of the more difficult questions.

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