

How to face an Interview Board



Committee for Members in Industry and Business (CMI&B)
THE INSTITUTE OF CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS OF INDIA
(Set up by an Act of Parliament)



Message



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Congratulation to all Newly Qualified Chartered Accountants!

We congratulate all the newly qualified Chartered Accountants and heartily welcome you to the profession that is respected worldwide for its integrity and transparency. It surely evokes a great sense of accomplishment being proud members of the venerable fraternity of Chartered Accountants. Adherence to the core values of our profession, Independence, Integrity and Excellence together with regular updation of technical knowledge, professional skills and latest developments with ever changing economic environment will help you to scale newer heights of any organisation.

Chartered Accountants (CAs) serving in industry play a critical role in promoting economic growth and financial stability across the globe by providing strategic guidance, planning, decision making and control thereby adding value to the organisations and ensuring sustainable development.

Wherever there is business there are work opportunities for people with accounting skills. CAs, by virtue of their technical knowledge, practical experience as well as being tech savvy, play a key role in business organisation for providing accurate, relevant and reliable financial information that is crucial in making critical economic decisions and is vital to build investor's confidence. As a newly qualified CA, you have many options available to begin your career in Industry. It is also to the advantage of any corporate to recruit newly qualified Chartered Accountants, a fresh talent, who may be better acclimatized to the requirements and environment of the organisation.

The Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI) through its Committee for Members in Industry & Business (CMI&B) organizes Campus Placement Programme almost all over the country twice a year and acts as an enabling channel to connect Newly Qualified CAs and recruiters on a common platform.

The CMI&B of ICAI has made an effort to help the candidates by bringing this *e-booklet* that will mainly cover such areas which are commonly touched upon by interviewers. *This e-booklet will provide significant information in relation to soft skills, group discussion skills, business etiquettes, and points to be considered while facing the interview.*

We wish all the newly qualified Chartered Accountants a bright and successful career ahead.



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Section I

Introduction & Brief Overview

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“Arise! Awake! And stop not until the goal is reached”

– Swami Vivekanand

“Learning gives creativity, creativity leads to thinking, thinking provides knowledge, knowledge makes you great”

– A. P. J. Abdul Kalam

“Confidence and hard work is the best medicine to kill the disease called failure. It will make you a successful person”

– A. P. J. Abdul Kalam



Introduction & Brief Overview

Brief about ICAI

The Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI), established 68 years ago, by an Act of Indian Parliament, continues its operation as the single largest statutory accounting body of the world. ICAI stands on four pillars – Regulator, Standard Setter, Educator and Partner in Nation Building and has been functioning under the administrative control of the Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA) of the Government of India, as an extended arm. In short, Independence, Integrity and Excellence remain the core values of ICAI. ICAI enjoys the privilege of being the founder members of the International Federation of Accountants (IFAC), International Accounting Standard Board (IASB), South Asian Federation of Accountants (SAFA) and Confederation of Asia Pacific Accountants (CAPA). Again, ICAI is the first Professional body in the country which has been nominated by the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India to take the Swachh Bharat Abhiyaan forward.

Objective of CMI&B

Maintaining strong and spontaneous relationship with the industry and other business houses remains the main focus of the Committee for Members in Industry & Business (CMI&B) of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI). An initiative in that effect remains the Campus Placement Programme (held twice a year) that provides a platform to both the Newly Qualified Chartered Accountants (NQCA) and the organizations looking for to hire the best available talents to fulfill their Human Resource requirement. ICAI simply acts as a facilitator to bring the recruiter and NQCA together.



Expectation of recruiters from newly qualified CAs

The CA professionals are believed to be highly skilled, combined with commercial acumen and awareness, and well informed citizens of the world as they are supposed to continually update and upgrade their skill sets to remain relevant and effective in their role. The complexities of commerce in a global economy are constantly changing and it requires the CAs to maintain the highest degree of professional and personal integrity as ethical requirements are also increasing.

The following range of competencies and skills are typical and usually sought-after by the recruiters with an expectation that such attributes will translate into effective performance and efficient functioning of the new recruits in their chosen field:

- A passion for finance with an interest and ability to work with figures
- Commercial awareness with an interest in business including knowledge of any current political/legislative/financial issues that may have an impact on your chosen field
- Communication and inter-personal skills with ability to communicate complex information clearly and to build relationships with others at all levels within the business
- Ability to demonstrate evidence of team working
- The stamina and commitment to work for long hours
- Presentation skills, report writing and attention to detail
- Leadership and negotiation skills
- Problem-solving and analytical skills

Having transferable work experience in the chosen sector is crucial and that in turn, will ensure you are going to enjoy the work and culture of the organization into which you are ultimately recruited. Organizations are also keen to understand your motivation either for applying to accountancy and your interest in finance and business or readiness to join at locations of their choice. Questions are usually asked based on and closely related to the skills and attributes that you mentioned in the application forms, profile on the portal.

How CAs ensure industrial growth and sustainable development

The profession of CA is concerned with adding value to economies.

The CAs workings within organizations tend to focus more on financial futures and stability of that organization. This might involve work such as forecasting, preparing



financial statements so the business can make financially informed decisions, auditing internal systems to improve the many processes that impact on major corporate costs, advising on improving business performance, providing input on strategic planning, providing financial advice to various management functions and engaging with multi-disciplinary projects that require financial planning. Cost reduction and control contributes largely to productivity and profitability. Consistent growth with ethical behaviour leads to sustainable development

Career paths available for Chartered Accountants

1. **Practice** - To aim for a career path to Director/Partner of leading CA Firms
2. **Join Industry/Public Sector** - May join the industry .
3. **Entrepreneurship** - The qualified Chartered Accountants having an entrepreneurial aptitude can initiate setting up their own business.

Career options in Industry

“There exist limitless opportunities in every industry. Where there is an open mind, there will always be a frontier”- Charles F. Kettering

As a newly qualified CA you need to make an informed choice and decide your next career move to a sector that suits you the most. The economic activities undertaken by industries, commercial houses, Public Enterprises and Not-for-Profit (NPO) organizations have been conveniently bifurcated into two broad categories, as below:

Banking & Financial Services	Commerce, Industry & Professional Services
SECTORS COVERED:	SECTORS COVERED:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asset management • Commodities • Corporate banking • Hedge funds • Investment banking • Private equity • Retail banking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retail and FMCG • Chemical and pharmaceutical • Technology/media/telecoms • Energy and utilities • Legal, professional and business services • Construction, infrastructure and real estates • Manufacturing • Transport and distribution • Health care, hospitality and tourism • Education Industry



Interview

A Campus Interview, in simpler terms, implies - a short spell of interaction between the interviewee and interviewer(s) that facilitates apparent assessment of the former's three essential attributes such as appearance, qualities and attitude besides ascertaining the suitability of his/her career profile and credentials spelt in the application form for the intended job. The quote - "you will never get a second chance to build your first impression" speaks volume to comprehensively define how to face an interview comfortably and confidently. The interview success largely depends on your preparation (commercial acumen and awareness), presentation (how do you present yourself before the Board) and personality (art of communication). Being a fresher, the recruiter may prefer to test mostly the candidate's aptness of academe flavour and flair than practical exposure. Lack of proper preparation not only risk chances of failure but also cause a crack on confidence level to face so later. Nothing is new that a few will feel weak, lack attention and experience tension. Remember, less is the level of fear more could be the chances of becoming winner. So be fearless and face it boldly and brilliantly; 'luck favours the strong'.

Interview Preparation

The prerequisite of gaining technical knowledge, professional skills and practical experience to become a CA helped you to develop in depth understanding across accountancy, business and finance. Moreover, the CA qualification improves your ability in certain key areas such as, communication, problem solving, decision making, team working, and technical skill, compliance, adding value, conviction and ethics. It is quite likely those attributes would help you immensely to remain calm and face the interview quietly.

Preparation is the first essential step forward towards a successful interview. It is important to ensure complete understanding of the company you are going to see. It is essential to conduct thorough research. Look out for all the relevant additional information including newsworthy items. Keep up to date with current market issues by reading publications such as the economic times and other business dailies. Prepare the questions you will ask during the interview. The employer will try to determine through questioning if you have the potentials necessary to do the job.

The interviewer could ask you a few questions about anything you have written in your CV. This means you have to know the details surrounding every responsibility, project, course intended - anything that you have put down on your CV.



Companies Profile Participating in Campus February-March 2019

Organisation	Short Profile of Organization
Accenture Solutions Pvt. Ltd.	Accenture solves our clients' toughest challenges by providing unmatched services in strategy, consulting, digital, technology and operations. We partner with more than three-quarters of the Fortune Global 500, driving innovation to improve the way the world works and lives. With expertise across more than 40 industries and all business functions, we deliver transformational outcomes for a demanding new digital world. We serve clients in more than 120 countries, across 40 industries. Off our top 100 clients, 98 have worked with us for more than a decade We have made 16 consecutive appearances in Fortune's 'Worlds most admired' companies list We have 6k patents and patent pending applications in 44 countries.
Ashok Leyland Ltd	Ashok Leyland, flagship of the Hinduja group, is the 2nd largest manufacturer of commercial vehicles in India, the 4th largest manufacturer of buses in the world, and the 10th largest manufacturers of trucks. A US \$ 4 billion (2017-18) company, and a footprint that extends across 50 countries, we are one of the most fully-integrated manufacturing companies this side of the globe. Pioneers in the Commercial Vehicle (CV) space, many product concepts have become industry benchmarks and norms. The Company's wide-spread customer base is served through an all-India sales and service network, supplemented by close to 3000 touch points.
Axis Bank Ltd.	Axis Bank is the third largest private sector bank in India. The Bank offers the entire spectrum of financial services to customer segments covering Large and Mid-Corporates, MSME, Agriculture and Retail Businesses. With its 3,882 domestic branches (including extension counters) and 12,660 ATMs across the country as on 30th September 2018, the network of Axis Bank spreads across 2,211 cities and towns, enabling the Bank to reach out to a large cross-section of customers with an array of products and services. The Bank also has ten overseas offices with branches at Singapore, Hong Kong, Dubai (at the DIFC), Shanghai and Colombo; representative offices at Dubai, Abu Dhabi, Dhaka and Sharjah and an overseas subsidiary at London, UK.



Organisation	Short Profile of Organization
<p>Bajaj Auto Limited</p>	<p>Bajaj Auto Limited is a flagship company of the Bajaj group. It is a 3.7 billion USD company with an operating EBITDA of 20%, making it the most profitable Automotive company. We are the world’s largest three-wheeler manufacturer and world’s third-largest motorcycle manufacturer. We are also India’s largest exporter of both motorcycles and three wheelers with exports surpassing 2 million vehicles in 2018. With 10 sharp brands and a global sales and distribution network, we have a presence in more than 75 countries. Apart from some of the iconic brands like Pulsar or Avenger, we also own international brands like KTM, Husqvarna and have collaboration with Triumph, the British Motorcycle company. We are the ‘The world’s favourite Indian’. Join us to have an exciting career in Finance.</p>
<p>Barclays Global Service Centre Private Limited</p>	<p>Barclays is a transatlantic consumer, corporate and investment bank offering products and services across personal, corporate and investment banking, credit cards and wealth management, with a strong presence in our two home markets of the UK and the US. Our goal is to become the bank of choice by providing superior services to customers and clients and supporting our stakeholders via a commercially successful business that generates long-term sustainable returns. Our two clearly defined divisions, Barclays UK and Barclays International, provide diversification by business line, geography and customer, enhancing financial resilience and helping to contribute to the delivery of consistent returns through the business cycle. We have a strong core business with exciting prospects, well positioned to deliver long-term value for our shareholders. Consistent with the objective of delivering long-term sustainable value for all our stakeholders, we have developed our Shared Growth Ambition – our approach to citizenship and the sustainability of the business model we operate. The aim is to make decisions and do business that provides our clients and customers, and the communities which we serve, with access to a prosperous future. The delivery of our strategy is underpinned by the energy, commitment and passion of our people, and we are clear on our common purpose: to help people achieve their ambitions, in the right way.</p>



Organisation	Short Profile of Organization
BSR & Co LLP	BSR & CO LLP An independent audit of financial statements is essential for the effective operation of business entities and the capital markets. We are committed to providing a constructive and challenging audit, one that is also independent and delivers the messages that matter to management and the audit committee. We add value beyond the financial statement through the insights we bring, based on our knowledge of a client’s business drivers and of individual sectors. Apart from financial statements audit (including IFRS and US GAAP reporting), we also provide other forms of assurance and attestation reporting. Our approach is based on robust audit methodologies, appropriate use of technology and a wide range of compliance tools underpinned by sound judgment and objectivity.
ETG Group	ETG is globally recognised as one of the fastest growing integrated agricultural supply chain groups. Our multinational operating entities are strategically located across 40 countries and are responsible <i>inter alia</i> for procurement, warehousing, processing and/or manufacturing of finished goods. We also specialise in transporting and distributing our products, driving brand growth.
Genpact India Pvt. Ltd.	We are a global professional services firm that makes business transformation real. We drive digital-led innovation and digitally-enabled intelligent operations for our clients, guided by our experience running thousands of processes for hundreds of Global Fortune 500 companies. From New York to New Delhi and more than 20 countries in between, Genpact has the end-to-end expertise to connect every dot, reimagine every process, and reinvent companies’ ways of working. Our focus is to make sure we have the right set of people delivering what we promise. People who think with design, dream in digital, and solve problems with data and analytics. People who obsess over operations, focus on the details, and lead change by being curious, incisive and courageous in everything they do—on a foundation of unyielding integrity. We are Genpact. Transformation happens here. Come, be a part of our exciting journey!
HCL Technologies Ltd.	Our services help create an advantage for our customers in the 21st Century environment Digital and Analytics IoTWoRKS DRYiCE Cloud Cyber Security.



Organisation	Short Profile of Organization
<p>Hetero Drugs Ltd.</p>	<p>Hetero is one of India’s leading generic pharmaceutical companies and the world’s largest producer of anti-retroviral drugs for the treatment of HIV/AIDS. Backed by over 25 years of expertise in the pharmaceutical industry, Hetero’s strategic business areas spread across APIs, Generics, Biosimilars, Custom Pharmaceutical services and Branded Generics. The company is globally recognised for its strengths in Research and Development, manufacturing and commercialization of a wide range of products. Hetero has 36 state-of-the-art manufacturing facilities strategically located worldwide, audited and approved by stringent regulatory authorities like US FDA, EU, TGA-Australia, MCC-South Africa and others. Our portfolio includes 300 plus products encompassing major therapeutic categories such as HIV/AIDS, Oncology, Cardiovascular, Neurology, Hepatitis, Nephrology, Urology, Diabetes, Ophthalmology, Hepatology and Immunology etc. Hetero has a strong global presence in over 126 countries and focuses on making affordable medicines accessible to patients worldwide.</p>
<p>Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited</p>	<p>HPCL, a Navratna PSU is an Energy Conglomerate specialising in Oil & Gas. During the year 2017-18, HPCL achieved the highest ever profit after tax of ₹ 6,357 crore because of our robust performance in all spheres including Retail, Direct Sales, Lubes, LPG, Aviation, OD&E, Pipelines, Gas & Renewables and other services. HPCL owns & operate 2 major refineries which have achieved the highest ever combined refining throughput of 18.3 MMT. HPCL also is the No.1 Lube marketer in the country.</p>
<p>Home First Finance</p>	<p>Home First is young housing finance company built on a single premise: we believe everyone should own their dream home. We blend technology and personification, so the loan process is easy and hassle-free. Simply put: our customers always come first.</p>



*“The journey of a thousand miles
begins with a single step”*

LAO TZU



Section II

Personality to Succeed

In this section...

1. Good Grooming
2. Communication Skills



***“Your appearance should say what you
desire others to know about you”***

***A wise old man once said, “eat what you
like, but wear what others like.”***



Good Grooming

The process of judging starts as soon as you enter the interview room. It is important that your first impression on the panellist is very good. You should keep a number of tips in your mind. Some of these should form part of your daily routine.

- Wear formal clothes.
- Use talcum powder or mild deodorants to avoid body odour.
- Avoid use of strong perfumes as many people have strong aversion and even allergic to them.
- Make sure that your hair is well shampooed. Avoid oily hair.
- Bring a professional looking folder to carry resume, mark sheets, certificates and testimonials with you.
- Keep your cell phone switched-off or in silent mode before entering the room. Keeping it even on vibrating mode may distract you.

STANDARDS FOR MEN

Hair

- Hair should be neatly combed. Nicely trimmed, not extending below the ears.
- Avoid using colours unless and until it is essential.

Face

- The face should be clean shaven and there should be no stubbles.
- If there are moustaches, they should be well trimmed, above the lip level and not drooping.
- Beards should be avoided except in cases of religious reasons.

Hands

- Avoid sweaty palms, wipe them before entering the interview room.
- Nails should be clean and well manicured.

Interview attire

The following are the dress requirements needed for formal interview attire, as well as suggestions on how to achieve an overall professional look:



- Your dress should be sober, clean and well ironed.
- Wear a pastel colour shirt which should be full sleeved with contrasting tie.
- Wear formal trousers. The best colours to go for are conservative ones like black or blue.
- The shirt pocket should not be loaded with stuff.
- Wear business suit or formal coat.
- Avoid jewellery.

Shoes

- Should be of black or dark brown colour and must be co-ordinated with the clothes worn.
- Should be in good condition and properly polished.
- Laces should be tied neatly at all the times. Avoid shoes without laces.
- The colour of the socks should match with the colour of the trouser.

STANDARDS FOR WOMEN

Hair

Long hair

- Should be left open only if they are of shoulder length. The following are to be avoided:
 - Elaborated hairstyles, knots or coils. Low loose knots tied at the nape of the neck.
 - Oily hair.

Short hair

- Should be cut in an elegant contemporary style which is manageable and looks neat.

Face

- Eyebrows should be neat and well-shaped, skin should be well-cared for facial hair should be bleached or removed regularly.



Make up

- Should be light and must look neat.

Hands

- Should always be clean and well manicured. ‘Mehndi’ designs should be avoided.
- Nails should be well shaped with a light to medium colour application of nail polish.
- Extremely long nails with very bright or dark shades of nail polish should be avoided.
- Nail polish should not be chipping off.

Shoes

- Low-heeled or high-heeled shoes or sandals are appropriate with most clothes.
- Shoes and sandals with back straps should be in good condition.

Jewellery

- Light authentic jewellery, e.g., a thin gold chain, a light gold bangle, small gold, pearl or diamond earrings add to style.
- Artificial or costume jewellery in oxidized silver or plastic should be strictly avoided at work.
- Bangles should not jangle.
- Avoid anklets.

Interview attire

- Women should wear a well tailored business suit in conservative colours such as black, dark blue or dark grey with a fine print.
- Scarf and shoes must be well coordinated with the business suit.
- Sarees must be well-ironed. If cotton, a little starch adds wonders. The falls must be well-stitched on, with no bits hanging apart.



Communication Skills

Communication is a two way process of exchanging messages in form of information, views or ideas. It involves transmitting and receiving verbal and non-verbal messages. Communication is considered effective if it achieves the desired response from the receiver.

Communication skills, both inter-personal and intra-personal, are essential to be successful in group discussion and interviews. This is because, though all chartered accountants, no doubt, are very capable and strong in the knowledge of the subject which they have studied the hard way. The presentation of their knowledge has to stand the test conducted.

It is therefore intended to design the various aspects of the winning communication, in order to enable the young chartered accountant to place him/her in a better position and in a satisfactory manner, when he/ she faces the interview panel.

Non-verbal communication

Are you aware that only a small percentage of the impression you make on other people stems from purely verbal communication, i.e. from the words you use ? What makes a much greater impact is the so-called non-verbal messages.

These include all forms of communication other than the actual words and their meanings, i.e.

- Voice pitch and emphasis.
- Pupil size.
- Speed of speech.
- Distances/territories.
- Breathing.
- Gestures/movements.
- Posture/stance.
- Clothing/dress.
- Footwear, jewellery and accessories.
- Facial expressions.
- Status symbols/other objects.



- Eye contact.
- Eye movement.

A mass of literature has appeared in recent years on this topic and there is a range of different groupings and names for the various elements of non-verbal communication, which we have detailed here. The term “body language” is often used to mean non-verbal communication.

The most significant features of non-verbal communication are body language (visual) and voice (sound attributes, not spoken words).

How do we communicate?

Purpose: To establish the significance of non-verbal communication.

What to do: Imagine you are meeting someone for the first time.

Ask yourself how much you communicate by:

- The actual words you say.
- The way you say those words, e.g., tone and speed.
- Your body language.

Put in basic terms, body language is the message you receive when you watch a silent film, or a television programme with the sound turned down.

Body language tells you more about what people really mean than all the words in any spoken language in the world. Anyone you communicate with—male or female, customer, colleague, family, friend, child, sales person, politician - all use non-verbal communication.

At any given moment, your brain can assume a certain attitude and communicate this to various parts of your body, which promptly responds with specific actions or expressions, i.e. Body language. Many of the gestures and signals sent out by the body are communicated to the surrounding world without us consciously realizing it.

Body language includes

Movements, posture, sitting position, use of the arms, facial expression, emotions, eye movements, handshake, way of walking, distance from others (territories), dress, etc. Even apparently very small, ordinary gestures are noticed.

It is one thing to be able to interpret other people’s body language but it is quite another to be able to master your own body language and realize its relevance to the message you are giving.



If you want some cast iron examples of the importance of body language, consider actors, teachers, instructors, salesmen (and service-givers with direct customer contact).

The words they use are often the same (or most), but whether they are good or bad in the role, succeed or not, depends entirely on their mastery of body language and the degree to which their words and body language convey the same message. When you have learned how to interpret body language you will have opened the door to a new world!

Words may lie but the body seldom does!

It requires training to interpret other people's body language, but it can be done. You can ascertain whether the people you are communicating with are lying, bored, impatient, sympathetic, defensive, agreeing or disagreeing. You can decide whether they are open, nervous, calculating, suspicious, angry, worried, insecure, etc.

The importance of this to people in a service situation is obvious. You can also learn to see hidden, social, emotional and other intentions in the gestures of someone you know or want to know.

Body language during an interview

During an interview, your body language is telling the interviewer many things.

He/she can tell if you are nervous or self confident and poised.

The language of nervousness

- Sitting tensively at the edge of a chair, ready to run
- Cracking one's knuckles.
- Anxious look on one's face.
- Not looking directly at the face and eyes of the person speaking to you. Instead, looking down or shifting eyes around the room.
- Feet, knees, hands, fingers tapping in an endless way.
- Playing with keys, mobile phone or tapping a pencil.
- Nervous laughter or constant fixed smile.
- Coughing, voice cracking while speaking.



The language of arrogance

- Sitting too relaxed in your chair.
- Lounging back with legs crossed widely at the knee.
- Head thrown back and looking and speaking down over the node.
- Talking while playing with keys or tapping a pencil.
- A patronizing and over-confident manner puts people off and makes one a most unacceptable candidate.

The language of confidence

- Sitting well back on the chair.
- Body still and upright but not rigid.
- Looking directly at anyone talking to you.
- Turn by turn creating eye contact with all the members of the board you speak to.
- Speaking naturally.
- Sometimes smiling when you speak (not giggling or simpering).
- Exuding pleasantness, confidence and poise.

How to Improve English

- Read good informative English books, professional journals, etc.
- Refer English dictionary on a regular basis, for meanings associated with new words and improvement of vocabulary.
- Try to communicate with friends and near and dear ones in English to improve fluency.



The Institute of Chartered Accountants of India

***“The more you are willing to
accept responsibility for your actions,
the more credibility you will have”***

BRIAN KOSLOW



Section III

How to succeed in a Group Discussion



***“Always bear in mind that your own
resolution to succeed is more
important than any one thing”***

Abraham Lincoln



How to Succeed in a Group Discussion

Group discussion is a forum for free exchange of information/views in order to achieve consensus. Group discussions are meant to judge your communication and interpersonal abilities. The observers will be looking for verbal and non-verbal skills, clarity of thought, leadership abilities and other inter-personal skills.

Background

It is increasingly used as a tool for screening the candidates. It has been included as a vital part of selection process by the employers because these days decision making in the organization is effected through meetings, brainstorming sessions and group discussions. Every employee must be an effective communicator to be able to participate in the group decision making process in an organization. With this premise, it is considered fit to test the candidates' skills in a group setting.

How can it help you on your job ?

Imagine yourself working in a corporate setting. You are required to prepare an investment plan to manage the organisation funds optimally to earn maximum money from the company finances. You do your analysis and plan a basket of investments. You are required to discuss the findings in your department with other team members.

In such a setting, you would realize that your skills to put forth your point in a group setting come to play. If you can manage your group, and have an effective discussion with all, your proposal can be accepted. On the other hand, if you feel bogged down or overpowered by group members, your proposal may be rejected because of your inability to discuss it in a group.

Objectives of group discussion

Basic objective

To assess the ability of candidates to participate and present their view point in a team environment.

Higher level objective

To assess the candidate's ability and skill to ensure participation of all and to generate a consensus.

Very often everyone in a group will say different things which may or may not be identical. Sometimes the candidates may make incoherent points which may have no



or remote relation with the topic assigned. First and foremost, the attention of the group should be brought back to the topic of discussion, and not waver ambiguously.

If members present divergent views, the different points should be discussed and a conclusion should be drawn. At the end of the discussion, the entire group must have arrived at some degree of common understanding and generated consensus i.e. Reached a decision/understanding acceptable to all.

If all members keep making points of their own without establishing any connectivity between the points floated, it would be more like a crowd or a cacophonous setting. A group leader is one who synergizes the energy of all by discussing each view point in the common forum and establishing common understanding on the issues discussed. Unless this activity is carried out, it would be more a motley crowd seated together and saying different things, than a group heading towards a fruitful discussion.

The objective is to assess if one is a good team player, has leadership potential, is facilitative by nature, empathizes with others, encourages others and at the same time displays good communication skills and stays focused on the subject.

Topic for discussion

A topic of common interest is floated by the interview board. A member of the board announces a topic and leaves the forum open for the members to participate in. The interview board usually does not introduce the topic or give any qualifying remarks.

The candidates should keep a paper and pencil handy to jot down their thoughts and keep their points ready before speaking in the group. It is usually a good practice as it helps to organize oneself and also to make a note of the point of view of others, which they may want to question.

The first milestone in a group discussion is understanding the objective and relevance of the topic in the context of the post being interviewed for, though there need not be any clear linkage. The importance of understanding the title of the topic can't be over emphasized. In case you are confused on the subject, wait for others to start and try to decipher the import of the topic.

However, if you feel that the title of the topic is nowhere close to your imagination, do not hesitate to put up the issue of clarifying the meaning of the topic. You may instead earn credit points for your candour. Take care not to ask the meaning of presumably well known topics that you may be unaware of as that would be tantamount to displaying your ignorance.

To facilitate the process, familiarize yourself with the topics that are very much in the news during the last one-month and have relevance to the interview. Other



topics, which may bring milestone type changes in business world e.g., ‘Sustaining Development in the Era of Financial Crisis’, should also be studied.

Who begins the discussion ?

One who initiates the discussion usually earns credit points to himself, a fact very well noted by the board. In a test setting, everyone’s eyes are keen on who begins the discussion. As soon as the topic is announced you must gather your thoughts and determine if you have matter worthy of an opening remark. If you have command over the topic, you may begin the discussion with an opening remark that will be registered.

Take care not to miss the bus, thinking that a point should be made only if it is extremely good. You can quickly chip in to make your point otherwise someone else will state that point. It is also important to remember that what you speak will automatically capture the attention of the rest of the members of the group. You would realize that after you have made your presence in the discussion felt, your nervousness/hesitation will wear off. If you are able to change the course of discussion and give it a new direction by factual data and logic, you may perhaps win a point.

Approaches

Two approaches may be followed to determine the order of member’s participation.

Unregulated: Any candidate can participate in any sequence. No rule or order is defined for participant to speak. It may be important to understand that in real life situations, nobody will necessarily give specific time to all to express themselves and thus this approach may actually be more realistic.

Regulated: The order in which members will participate is predetermined by the candidates themselves at the beginning of the discussion. All candidates are asked to speak in sequential order to present their ideas. After each one has spoken his/her point, the forum becomes open and unregulated by any order or sequence.

A variation of this method may also be followed where all the participants may be required to summarize the session in a determined sequence.

The opening remark and/or closing remark may be made by the group nominated leader or by any one at random chosen by the supervisor. It is at the discretion of the supervisor.

Example: At the end of the group discussion, the members of the board say “we would like each one of you to summarize the outcome of the discussion in 2 minutes”. Please remember clearly that the summary has to be of the discussion which actually took place. Some students make a mistake by incorporating the points which they wanted



to emphasise but they could not because of time constraints or loss of memory at the desired time. Here, they try to achieve two objectives:

- 1 Give everyone a chance to speak.
- 2 Find out how attentive a candidate is and how well he/she has grasped the gist of the discussion.

A time limit is predefined at the start of the discussion. A specific time will be given to the participants to go through the reading material given to them if the discussion is to be based on case situation. Usually 10 to 20 minutes are allotted for the discussion. The candidates discuss the topic for the specified time with no interference.

Group size: The size of the group may vary from 6 to 10, beyond which however such a group becomes unmanageable. Ideally a group should have 7 to 8 members.

Test of skills: Broadly speaking group discussions test two types of skills. They are managerial skills and leadership skills.

- **Managerial skills to be tested:** communication (clarity of thought and expression and appropriate language), catch presentation (forceful argument to the attention of others), interpersonal skill (ability to interact with others, place others, objectivity, listening to others), problem solving (analytical and logical approach, creativity and innovation).
- **Leadership skills to be tested:** team building (involve others), initiative and drive (provide direction), self confidence, ability to work under stress, vision and foresight.

Points to improve the performance in group discussion

Take Initiative

- Enter the discussion in a measured manner.
- Choose the correct point of entry.
- Present each view forcefully and convincingly.
- Conclude each argument at the right time.

Personal skills

- Be relaxed.
- Be pleasant and courteous to others.
- Be confident about what you want to say.



- Address each person by his/her name.

Thinking/reasoning

- Think in a logical and rational sequence.
- Show consistency of ideas: all points stated should have consistency of thought.
- Be quick in thinking and react to points made by others.

Display knowledge

- Have the facts right, before expressing them before the group.
- Try to relate disparate day-to-day events to the point being discussed.
If you are not able to understand the technical term/Abbreviations used by another member, it is in order to ask for clarifications (as long as that is not your own area of specialization)
- Display your grasp of knowledge on the subject.
- Quote examples of recent developments that have taken place in the USA and Europe or changes that are in the pipeline in those places and in India in the related field covered by the topic.

Participation

- Speak as often as possible.
- Participate in a sustained way: do not leave long gaps without speaking.
- Participation is not necessarily the duration and frequency of your speaking, but the number of value inputs you give to the discussion.
- Allow others to speak as well; be facilitative.
- Listen emphatically. Remember that a great leader is also a good listener.
- It is not necessary that your participation has to be by making a fresh point. At the same time, just agreeing to what someone else mentions is no real contribution. You can disagree with the views of others by giving logic as to why you disagree.
- Get in the midst of discussion only when the current speaker has completed a sentence and given a pause. This is to ensure that he/she is not unduly interrupted. Otherwise, he/she may put you down by saying, 'Let me finish'.

Value addition

- Each point you make should enhance the quality of the discussions.



- Make original points rather than expressing opinions about someone else's points.
- Decide what stand you would take about the topic and stick to it.
- Do not be repetitive.
- Do not digress from the topic into an unrelated field.

Communication skills

- Express your ideas clearly. Clarity of expression comes naturally to those who have clarity of thought. So think clearly before communicating to the group.
- Modulate your voice.
- Listen attentively to others point of view. Not only should you listen to others carefully, it is your duty to show it to others. For example you should not look around when others are making their points, though physically you are listening.

Group skills

- You should be able to gain attention of the group.
- You should be able to draw the non-participants into the discussion.
- You should be able to state clearly whenever the group agrees on any point, before passing on to the next.
- Generate a feeling to represent that you are a team player.
- Display your leadership skills.
- Towards the end, try to develop a team consensus on the subject and make concluding remarks.
- If you feel, right in the middle of the discussion, that things are not moving in the right direction, take the initiative to set things right.

Points to note

- In group discussions, it is important not to get agitated even if some one contradicts your argument in an unfair manner.
- There should not be any attempt to sneer at the observations of the team member's statement
- A quote from a learned authority on the topic of discussion always provides an edge over others.



- Statistics do add weight-age to one's observations but these should be quoted only when they are relevant and accurate.

Indicative topics for group discussion

1. Can women be good managers ?
2. Will India get a seat at the UN security council ?
3. Has WTO been hijacked by the developed countries ?
4. Nuclear power- a boon or a curse ?
5. Is administered price mechanism actually dismantled in the oil and gas sector ?
6. Should all the subsidies be removed ?
7. Should there be reservation in educational institutions ?
8. Can anybody predict rise / fall of stock market index predicted ?
9. Is futures market gambling or a risk management tool ?
10. Restoring the stakeholders confidential in financial statements.
11. How to deal with international terrorism ?
12. How friendly are we to our neighbouring countries ?
13. Corruption is the price we pay for democracy.
14. Foreign TV channels are destroying our culture.
15. How to deal with high oil prices ?
16. Beauty contests degrade womanhood.
17. Should there be private universities ?
19. Should the public sector be privatized ?
20. Is globalization really necessary ?
21. Value based politics is the need of the hour.
22. Religion should not be mixed with politics.
23. Virtual learning - a substitute for classroom learning ?
24. Impact of smart phones on young minds



25. Is RERA a Game Changer for Indian Real Estate Development?
26. Artificial Intelligence - Will man be ever replaced by machines?
27. How GST can change the business scenario of India?
28. Impact of Demonetization.
29. Startup India and its impact on startup culture in India.
30. Swachh Bharat Abhiyaan: Is it just a movement or is it the changing attitude of people?

“Education is both a tool of social justice as well as a fundamental driver of economic development”

Kevin Rudd

“Nothing great was ever achieved without enthusiasm”

Ralph Waldo Emerson



Section IV

Facing The Interview

In this section...

1. Preparing Yourself for an Interview
2. Common Interview Questions



Preparing Yourself for an Interview

Below are some of the basic requisites before job interviews:

- Find out about the organization
- Brush up the details you have mentioned in the resume
- General awareness
- Study thoroughly your favourite subjects
- Have structured answers

On the day of the interview

Be punctual

Leave early to arrive on time. Have ample margin for eventualities such as vehicle breakdowns, traffic snarls, getting lost etc. Reach the interview venue at least 10-15 minutes in advance so that you are well settled to face the interview before you set off, make sure you have:

- Directions to the location of the interview venue well in advance of the interview time.
- Important certificates to serve as documented proof for all the information given in the resume.
- Stationery, envelopes, stamps and stapler.
- A copy of the day's newspaper: you could read it on the way to relieve your tension. Also, you could be asked some questions from the same.
- Enough cash and loose change so that you do not waste time trying to get change for say ₹ 500 or ₹ 100 note to pay for transport.
- An umbrella, especially during the monsoon season else you could get yourself and your original certificates drenched.
- Carry notes on your objectives in life, your skill sets, your strengths and weaknesses.



Before the interview

Knock at the door gently before entering the interview room. On entering, smile at each of the interview panel members and greet the time of the day, softly. Wait standing straight, with arms resting easily and sit only after being asked to.

After being asked to sit, draw the chair gently and swiftly and sit setting into a convenient posture. Avoid making creaking noise by dragging the chair or by violently flopping into the chair. Sit comfortable, but erect.

Maintain eye contact with each of the interview panel members, but avoid looking defiantly. It is ok to bend forward but if there is a table in front, you should not put the elbows/hands on the table.

Remember, all your actions and body language are observed by the interviewer. It is essential that the first impression you make of yourself is a very good impression.

During the interview

- If a panel of members conducts the interview, it is advisable to look at all the persons while answering and not only at the person who has asked the question. If a member of the panel interrupts while answering a question of some other members, it is advisable to politely ask him to hold on till the current answer is completed.
- Maintain very comfortable poise throughout the interview by maintaining interest and eye contacts even if you feel that you may not be selected. Keep a smiling face and show high level of confidence while you speak. Maintain the difference between confidence and arrogance.
- If you have not heard a question properly or understood it clearly, you can request the interviewer to repeat the question rather than answer a question heard/understood wrongly.
- There is nothing wrong in admitting that you do not know the answer to a question rather than trying to confuse, bluff and give a long winding answer.
- Keep ready extra copies of your resume and testimonials-the same may be required during the interview. Unless specifically asked, do not volunteer to show your testimonials or achievement certificates.
- Do not look nervous or over confident. Do not show too much need or anxiety to get the job and at the same time do not give the impression that you are not interested in the job.
- Complete your sentences rather than leaving them incomplete and do not use only yes or no or shake your head by way of approval or disapproval.



- If for any reason, the interview is halted in between, do not start wandering around or start reading whatever is lying in front of you. Also do not show your displeasure if the interruption takes some more time you must trust the judgment of the employer about his priorities. Do not show that you are in a hurry to complete the interview-unless specifically asked to do so or you are really in a hurry to catch your train/flight.
- You should be able to describe your significant knowledge acquisitions during your articleship period.
- You should be convincingly able to describe what new improvements were brought about during the audit period as also how you dealt with any “conflict situation” which may have arisen.
- You should reasonably be up to date on the recent changes in the professional world, be it all the new accounting standards, amendment to laws, economic/financial developments, fiscal changes etc.
- On general topics, you should not worry about correct answers but should answer honestly what you feel. You should not be afraid of giving controversial answers as long as you have the logic to support them. Never give answers which you think the interviewer wants to hear.
- Any gaps in the career should be confidently presented, without feeling defensive, emphasizing how you utilized the period constructively. If you did not clear an exam in the first attempt, do not feel defensive or try to hide the fact.

Avoid the following during the interview

- Frequently shifting your positions in the chair.
- Blinking.
- Scratching.
- Stretching.
- Yawning/burping.
- Giggling.
- Cracking knuckles.
- Fiddling with a pen or mobile.
- Answering in tense undertones or in a shrill voice.



- Avoid asking pointed question on the salary. However on being asked for salary expectations you should give a broad range, commensurate with relative market worth *vis-à-vis* the industry you are desirous of joining.

At the end of interview

At the end of the interview, the interviewee is usually asked if he has any questions to the panel. Some of the questions to be asked are:

(Candidates are also advised to refer to the presentations of the companies. Information already available should not be asked.)

- Exact profile being looked for.
- More details about the organization.
- Location of posting.
- If there is a probation or if one would be confirmed immediately.
- If there is a formal induction programme planned.
- When and how would the result be conveyed ?
- Enquire about reimbursement of train or air fare if not already committed.

At the end of the interview if the panel has nothing more to ask, you should usually conclude by thanking the panel for giving opportunity for being interviewed.

You should shake hands only if offered by the panel members. You should wish the panel the time of the day with a smiling face and take their leave. Put back the chair in position, collect your things in a swift motion and softly walk out of the room. Avoid slamming the door.

Tips for an outstation interview

- Reserve confirmed tickets in advance for the travel.
- Decide on the travel date, time and mode, giving a clear margin for any delays etc.
- Reserve if possible in advance for a hotel stay room preferably near the interview location.
- Wear separate clothes during outstation travel and at the time of Interview.
- Locate the local overnight or one hour dry cleaner.
- Keep sufficient money with you for any prolonged stay for interview as sometimes companies conduct more than one round of interview and keep the other rounds on subsequent days.



What the Interviewer checks in an Interviewee?

1. Does the interviewee communicate in open, candid, clear, complete and consistent manner?
2. Whether the interviewee has developed and communicated a clear, simple and user focused vision?
3. Whether the interviewee has futuristic outlook, stretches horizons, challenges and visions?
4. Whether the interviewee can inspire and energize others & make them commit to a vision?
5. Whether the interviewee can update his vision to reflect constant and accelerating change impacting the business?
6. Does the interviewee inspire & demonstrate a passion for excellence in every aspect of work?
7. Is the interviewee quality conscious?
8. Whether the interviewee is willing to make commitments and assume responsibility for mistakes and shortcomings?
9. Does the interviewee practice ethical conduct?
10. Is there credibility between his/her actions/behaviour with words?
11. Whether the interviewee has the ability to demonstrate courage/confidence to stand for his/her beliefs and ideas?
12. Does the interviewee care for relationships while making difficult decisions?
13. Does the interviewee listen effectively and constantly probe for new ideas?
14. Does the interviewee use facts & rational arguments to persuade others?
15. Can the interviewee form teams across multiple functions and layers?
16. Does the interviewee encourage & promote shared ownership for team vision and goals?
17. Whether the interviewee has the potential to spot talent in other people; provide coaching and feedback to develop team members to their fullest potential?



18. Does the interviewee possess knowledge & intellect to handle the job?
21. Does the interviewee delegate tasks; empowers team to maximize effectiveness?
22. Can the interviewee fully utilize diversity of team members (cultural, race, gender) to achieve success?
23. Is the interviewee a good and a fast learner?
24. Can the interviewee make good decisions with limited data?
25. Can the interviewee simplify complex issues and initiate action?
26. Can the interviewee anticipate problems and initiate innovative ways to solve them?
27. Does the interviewee treat others with dignity, trust and respect?
28. Whether the interviewee possesses the entrepreneurial skills and has willingness to work like an entrepreneur.
29. Whether the interviewee has sufficient level of Intellectual Quotient (IQ) and Emotional Quotient (EQ) like pressure handling skills.
30. Whether the interviewee has the ability to act both as a good team leader as well as a good team member.



Common Interview Questions

Companies are looking forward to hire the right talent. It is important for them to know if a candidate will be a team player, a good leader and an enthusiast.

The answers given below are in the forms of hints just to provide general idea to the candidates about how to approach an interview. The candidates should give original answers based on their own experiences.

PERSONAL QUESTIONS

1. What are your strengths?

Describe your strengths that match the job profile being offered to you. Emphasize up on your practical strengths, experience and reliability in the tasks undertaken. Narrate a few incidents where you have demonstrated these qualities. Inform the panel that you have completed the tasks efficiently.

- Before facing an interview the candidates must be mentally prepared with a list of strengths they possess.
- A few traits that an employer would seek in their employees are loyalty, integrity, hardworking, positive attitude, good communication skills dedication, confidence, punctuality, determination, ability to prioritize etc.

2. What are your weaknesses?

Try to turn negatives into positives i.e., present a strength of yours disguised as a weakness. The interviewer is not interested to know your personal deficiencies; instead concentrate on professional traits that you are developing.

For example: I am too focused on work and need to develop some after office hours hobbies. Or I have to work on having more patience and giving myself a break because I always want everything to be done at once.

3. Why should we hire you?

Mention your skills and experience and elaborate that you are the best suitable candidate for the profile they are offering. Tell them how beneficial you are for the overall development of their company. Elaborate on your past experiences where you have proved yourself as an asset to the company.

- Try and uncover what the employer actually requires, this will help you understand what is he actually looking for and you can mould your answers accordingly.



4. What are your short term goals ?

Highlight what you want to achieve in the next three to five years in terms of responsibility, personal growth and professional acumen. Job seeker should demonstrate clear purpose, enthusiasm and commitment to own goals, plans ahead, do they see the company intervened with their short term goals.

- Never simply state your short term goal but move a step further by stating the steps you are taking to achieve them

For example: I want a good start in a company like yours and those responsibilities and roles which will use and improve my skills and capabilities. I want to work with a great energy and enthusiasm for the growth of both my career as well as the organization.

5. Tell me about yourself

A good answer to this question focuses on work-related skills and accomplishments. Tell the interviewer why you think your work-related skills and accomplishments would be an asset to the company. You could describe your education and work history (be brief) and then mention one or two personal character traits and tell the interviewer how the traits helped you accomplish a task at work.

Do not describe yourself with tired old clichés such as “I’m a team player,” “I have excellent communication skills,” unless you can prove it with an illustration. For example, one might say “I would describe myself as a self-starter. At XYZ Corporation, there was a problem with materials management so I created a new inventory system (give details) that reduced expenses by 30 per cent.”

6. According to you, what is your USP?

Talk about your skills and experience - why do they make you unique? This answer will make the interviewer assess your skills and traits: mention specific skills. “With a combination of financial acumen and the ability to develop relationships with clients, I am able to use my knowledge to provide information that is user friendly.

- One must try to avoid conventional answers such as: “I’ll give 200% to this position” or “I’m a workaholic.” Interviewers have heard such answers a number of times and these answers sound stereotypical and artificial.

7. Can you tell me about a problem you have dealt with?

Give an example of a practical problem that you faced by including the following points in your answer: You were calm and composed, you were clear headed, you looked at the problem from various angles and you kept your manager informed.



8. What is more important: speed or accuracy?

Both are important - you work with speed and accuracy. Mention that you manage your work load so that you can achieve both. Also inform the interviewer that apart from speed and accuracy, you firmly believe in associating quality with your work.

9. How do you update your knowledge?

Mention that there are various means with which you are constantly updating your knowledge, such as, reading professional magazines, attending courses and seminars, through interaction with your clients, through professional contacts.

10. What is your way of dealing with challenges?

State that challenge stimulates you and gets the best work out of you as you have the will to succeed when facing any challenge. You must mention a few examples of the challenges you have faced and tasted success.

11. Are you able to deal with criticism?

Show that you are able to take criticism. State that you are mature to handle constructive criticism as it would only help you to improve your performance. You must give an example of a situation where you learnt something useful.

12. How often are you able to meet the deadlines?

You can answer this question by saying that deadlines can be met if jobs and tasks are scheduled properly and you always make a schedule of the tasks to be performed. Say that you would never miss a deadline as it would result in a loss of reputation, loss of a client or even money for the organization. You may give an example where you were able to meet a tight deadline.

13. Are you a leader or a follower?

An organization would look for a person with leadership qualities; at the same time it would also look for someone who listens to its clients and be guided by their requirements. "I have leadership qualities- my colleagues would agree with my statement. At times, depending on the circumstances, it pays to be a follower too. One should be versatile."

14. Would you define yourself as ambitious?

Mention the positive qualities of being ambitious - focused, goal oriented, committed. Don't give the impression of being over competitive. "I have the drive and enthusiasm to achieve what the Company wants me to achieve through my commitment and dedication. I would overcome difficulties as I am very focused in doing what I am expected to do."



15. Do you ever get angry ?

Losing your temper would not get you anywhere - it's the ugly side of your nature. If you lost your temper with a client you would lose the client. "I rarely lose my temper but would not be able to tolerate injustice just like anyone else. At work, I can't remember when I actually lost my temper."

JOB RELATED QUESTIONS

16. Why do you want to join us?

Specify what excites you about the organization you want to join. Tell them why you wish to work in that sector and what appeals to you about the organization you want to join: brand, professionalism, reputation etc.

- For answering this question, it is advisable to browse through the organisation's website and gather relevant information regarding its working environment.

17. Why did you leave or are you leaving your job?

If you are not employed mention in positive terms the reason for leaving. If you are employed focus on what you want in your next job: I am looking for a company which is team focused.

- While answering this question, never say anything bad about your previous company, boss, or peers etc. The interviewer may perceive that you might end up saying negative about his company the next time you are looking for a job.

18. What are your salary expectations?

Salary scales differ in industrial sectors. Do some research on the industry you are joining and find out your individual worth before committing an answer, unless of course the employer tells you the range before the interview - then it's to your advantage!

19. What do you know about this organization?

Basic information on the organization, such as, management, products/services, location of unit(s), manpower, profit, corporate social responsibility (if applicable), any well acknowledged recent news item (if applicable), whether a listed company, market cap or any other relevant information about the organization must be on your finger tips.

20. Do you like your current job/profile?

Answer in an affirmative manner and show the relevance of your current assignment to the new job you are applying for ; state your specific role along with your duties and responsibilities in your current assignment, any particular achievements and



recognition in the organization where you are presently employed. You may also say: “The position you are offering will allow me to develop in a particular direction by utilizing my skills and aptitude.”

21. You have been in your present employment for a long time? Will you be able to adjust in your new job/organisation?

Inform the interviewer that you don't lack drive and initiative and you can take on any challenge as you have done in the previous organization; mention that you have a temperament to adjust in any situation and your inter-personal skills help you to get along with people.

22. What are the reasons for long gaps in your employment history?

If there's a gap in your resume, be ready to explain it. Reassure the interviewer that now you would like to settle down and move ahead with your career. Be honest with your answers because the employer would do an antecedent verification in any case.

23. Aren't you over qualified for this position?

Assure the interviewer that you would not have applied if you were not right for the job.

This question is also asked with the concern that you might leave your new job as soon as you get a better job opportunity. While answering this question, you must assure the interviewer that you are here to stick with the company for long.

24. Have you ever had a problem with your boss?

If you have had a problem, don't criticize the boss, just say that jobs get done with constructive criticism and guidance from the boss and you never really faced any problem with your superior.

25. Explain with an example your keenness to take initiative?

Mention that in the absence of any clear guidelines, and if it was urgent and you were not able to contact your boss, you would take a decision based on your experience in similar circumstance, keep a note of your actions and inform your boss as soon as possible. This question is important for the job where you would require to work independently most of the time. For such a job, you will need to find solutions to the problems on your own, and will have to learn how to be creative for getting the job done.

26. What are you looking for in a job?

You are eager to start your chosen career and want to apply the theoretical knowledge and skills you have acquired, into practice. You would like to learn new skills to make a valid contribution at the junior level.



OTHER QUESTIONS THAT MAY BE ASKED IN THE INTERVIEW ROUND

Answers to the below mentioned questions differ according to a candidate's own requirement. So, answers should be drafted accordingly.

1. How will you handle job stress?
2. How do you feel about working on weekends?
3. Are you willing to relocate or travel (if yes, then how much- 50%, 80% or 100%)?
4. May I contact your present employer for reference?
5. What's the most difficult part of being a (Job title)?
6. What are your professional goals?
7. What according to you is success?
8. Where do you see yourself 5 years down the line?
9. What do you consider as your greatest achievement?
10. What is your philosophy towards work and ethics?
11. Why did you choose this particular career?
12. What are your expectations from this job?
13. Would you agree to put interest of the organization ahead of your personal goals?
14. What are your extra-curricular activities?
15. What are the types of job you like to do and why?
16. What do you think KRAs (Key Result Areas) and ICAs (Individual contribution Areas) should be, if we select you, for the position?
17. What is your family background?
18. How does this assignment fit in your career plan?
19. How do you think your skills will be useful in discharge of your duties?
20. What is your total notice period? (If the candidate is already in some employment the numbers for the answer should be correct, as joining time is dependent on the same).

ARTICLESHIP TRAINING

1. Tell us about the work done by you in articleship training.
2. Where have you done your training from? What type of audits have you dealt with?
3. What were your roles and responsibilities in the firm?
4. Why have you changed the firm?
5. What are the major findings during articleship and how have you dealt with the issues?
6. What are the major contributions made by you in the process of audit work?



7. Any major point which you would like to highlight about your work experience during your training.
8. What role has your articleship played in your growth?

GENERAL TECHNICAL QUESTIONS (SUGGESTED)

1. What is XBRL?
2. Explain Investors Education & Protection Fund?
3. What is the importance of CSR in an organization?
4. What do you know about the recent Companies Bill?
5. What is the importance of Credit Rating in today's Economic scenario; Name a few credit rating agencies in India?
6. How will the FDI in Multi Brand retail impact Indian Counter Part?
7. What is the current GDP growth rate and current Inflation rate in India?
8. What do you understand by the term Fiscal Deficit?
9. What is the function of SEBI?
10. What is Finance Commission?
11. What is the ongoing repo rate issued by RBI?
12. What do you understand by CRR and what is the ongoing CRR?
13. What is RTI?
14. How is GDP and NDP calculated?
15. How is inflation calculated?
16. What are P-Notes and what has SEBI done to regulate P-Notes?
17. What does Brexit mean?
18. What are Green Bonds and Masala Bonds?
19. What is Zero Based Budgeting and its significance?
20. Why the term 'Financial Stability' is assuming significance?
21. What is Stagflation?
22. What does GST mean and could be its implications on Indian economy?
23. What's the rationale behind introducing CSR?
24. Describe briefly about Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code?
25. Key highlights of Real Estate (Regulation and Development) Act, 2016?
26. What is Digital Transformation & Innovation?
27. What is Bitcoin?



Section V

Preparing A Resume



Preparing a resume

Prospective employers look for the following personality characteristics

- Being pleasant.
- Determination.
- Energy.
- Team spirit.
- Enthusiasm.
- Drive.

Prospective employers look for the following employability skills

- Communication skills
- Maintaining personal rapport.
- Leadership qualities.
- The will to accept challenges.
- Adept in solving problems.
- Exploiting your inner potential.
- Ability to achieve targets.
- Maintaining excellent working relationships.
- Having good analytical abilities.
- A general awareness of the business environment and its impact on the organization.

The covering letter of a resume

A cover letter must always accompany the resume. In the opening paragraph adopt one of the following:

- If you have been referred to a prospective employer, mention the contact by name.
- If you are responding to a job advertisement, do mention where you have learned about the opening.



In the next paragraph

- If you are responding to a job opening, mention your qualifications; how your skills are transferable and relate to the position applied for.
- If enquiring about a job opening, mention how your skills can meet the Employer's expectations.

In the concluding paragraph

- Request for an appointment at a mutually convenient time.
- Mention that references can be made available on request.

Writing a resume

Resume is the first contact point of the candidates with the prospective employers. It therefore needs to be given at least the same level of importance as the interview itself. This is so because in most cases the questions would relate to or emerge from the resume sent by the candidate. Whatever is mentioned in the details of the job in the advertisement must be covered either in the resume or in the covering letter. It may thus make sense to consider the job requirements of each prospective employer and revise the resume to suit the requirements. Thus writing resume need not be and should not be the one that fits all kinds of jobs:

1. The length should not exceed two pages. In the first screening round, the Resume gets scrutinized in a few minutes. Therefore, a good presentation is a must. Remember that your resume is not your biography and hence only relevant and material information should be furnished.
2. Check for grammatical errors and mistakes. Ask someone to review the resume. Apart from using standard spell check features of office-suite function, one needs to go through each and every word of the resume to see its appropriateness and proper placement.
3. Emphasize your skills, accomplishments and experience. Wherever you can see the linkage of your skills and achievements with the job, you stand better chances of selection-give it a thought before you list down your skills, achievements and experience details.
4. Make an honest presentation even if you have been out of employment. Prospective employers verify antecedents.
5. Make a presentation in the skills oriented format if you are unemployed. For those in employment, the chronological format will be relevant.



6. Try and use key words and phrases as stated in the advertisement, which match the position applied for.
7. Don't respond to every advertisement that you see. If you are not qualified for the position, do not apply.
8. Do not attach testimonials. These must be carried to the interview.
9. Short sentences with bullets create a better impact. Avoid lengthy Paragraphs.
10. Follow the same style of numbers and bullets throughout the resume so that you are methodological in your approach to everything.
11. As it is said, in the resume talk about your career journey and not your carrier journey.

Always

1. Print your resume on standard letter size, white or ivory rag paper.
2. Have the resume professionally typed, but not typeset, with plenty of space between paragraphs, and allow for adequate margins.
3. Use conventional English. Stay away from a multi-syllable word when a one or two syllable word is clearer. Understand that resume is not a test of English language and thus using very flowery and ornamental language should be avoided.
4. Use short paragraphs-preferably not longer than five lines.
5. Make sure the resume and the cover letter are error-free, proofread.
6. Rewrite a resume for a specific company, it's extra work, but may well pay off.
7. Include your significant contributions at each one of your jobs.
8. Allow the most space to the jobs that are most relevant to the job you're applying for.
9. List your activity with professional, trade and civic associations-but only If they're appropriate.
10. Keep a permanent file of your achievements, no matter how inconsequential they may appear to be. This is the basis for a good resume, and it is also essential information to get a raise or promotion.
11. Give each of your reference a copy of your resume.
12. Re-read your resume before the interview. Chances are the interviewer did just that too.



Never

1. Give reasons for termination or leaving a job on the resume. In almost all cases, the reader can find negative connotations to even the best reason. You're far better off explaining it in person.
2. Take more than two lines to list hobbies, sports and social activities. When in doubt, leave them out.
3. List references on the resume.
4. Use exact dates. Months and years are sufficient.
5. Include the date your resume was prepared. If your search takes longer than a few months, the resume will appear outdated.
6. State your company's phone number.
7. Include your height, weight or remarks about your physical appearance or health.
8. State your objectives in your resume unless the resume is targeted to that job or occupation.
9. Use professional jargon unless you're sure the resume will be read by someone who understands the buzz-words.
10. Do not provide salary information on the resume. Save it for interview. If you are required to give that information, reveal it in the cover letter.
11. Do not exaggerate your skills beyond reasonableness.

After sending your resume, it will be a better idea to follow-up over phone regarding its receipt with relevant organization.

An example

This is (name of the candidate) calling. A few days ago, I had applied for the (position) in your organization (dept./division). I would like to ascertain whether you have received my resume and to reiterate my interest to the position.

