

Interview Packet



*Employment Resource Center
West 207*

425.739.8113

job.placement@lwtc.edu

5 Steps to the Interview Process

1. Introductions – small talk

- a. Name, and firm handshake.
- b. Weather, did you have any trouble finding us, did you bring your resume, etc.
(Be positive with your answer to set an upbeat tone for the interview, even if the weather was bad, or the drive to the interview was a hassle)
- c. Would you like a glass of water.....?
- d. Meant to help you and the interviewer feel more comfortable.
- e. Gives you a chance to relax, look around, take a deep breath.

2. Open ended, general questions

- a. Tell me about yourself, why are you interested in this position?
- b. Your opportunity to start with a bang! **Talk about the 5 best qualities that make you the best person for this job.** Make an awesome first impression.

3. Specific Questions

- a. **Listen CAREFULLY to the questions and answer what is being asked**
- b. About your education, work experience, strengths, weaknesses, etc.
- c. Behavioral interview questions: give specific examples of your past experience. Plan to have 5 examples that you can use with different questions.
- d. Allows you to give specific information about why they should hire you.
- e. Formula for answering questions: **QUALIFICATION + EXAMPLE**
 1. “I have excellent customer services skills and have won 2 awards for providing the best customer service.”
 2. “I always want to provide the best customer service possible and in my last job I was able to restructure the reception area to make it more open and friendly for our customers.”
 3. **Avoid laundry lists:** good customer service, organized, hard worker, etc.
 4. **Be positive.** Avoid negative statements about previous jobs or former bosses, co-workers etc.

4. Questions for the Interviewer and summary of your best qualities

- a. Your opportunity to find out if this is a good company/position for you
- b. Your opportunity to show them that you have done your homework and researched the company
- c. Your opportunity to show that you are interested in them. Your questions should be about them and NOT about you.
- d. **DO NOT ask about salary (\$), benefits, vacation time, making more \$, etc.**
- e. Your opportunity to summarize your BEST qualities and talk about your qualifications that were not mentioned in the interview.

5. Closing

- a. Know the next step; when can you expect to hear from them, what is the next step in the selection process.
- b. Thank you (use their name), shake hands. Get a business card so you can easily send a thank you.



**LAKE WASHINGTON
TECHNICAL COLLEGE**

Employment Resource Center
(425) 739-8111 www.lwtc.ctc.edu/erc

Helpful Hints on Dress

You don't have to spend tons of money on a wardrobe when you're looking for employment. One stylish outfit with matching accessories is fine. Be careful not to under or over-dress. Much of it depends on the company and the position for which you're applying. Choose something that looks good, makes you feel professional, and is comfortable. *Being properly attired builds confidence!*

- A. Examine your interview clothes several days before the interview. Plan ahead in case you need to go shopping because your outfit no longer works (it no longer fits, or is too worn).
- B. Get your "interview clothes" ready the night before you go job hunting or to an interview. Shine shoes, iron clothing, and do a try-on in front of the mirror.
- C. Be NEAT and CLEAN from your hair to your shoes.
- D. If your interview is at a company site and you are unsure what to wear, visit the company or one similar to it (ie: Visiting Office Max if you are planning to interview at Office Depot). Note what employees are wearing. This will give you some ideas on what to wear.
- E. Use little or no perfume, cologne or after-shave lotion.
- F. Be conservative with jewelry. For men, some interviewers/employers develop a negative impression of you instantly if you wear a bracelet or neck chain.
- G. Dress conservatively, paying attention to color and style. Blues, grays, black, and neutrals are the best bets.
- H. Always dress "one step" better than the daily wear of regular employees in a given workplace. Another way to look at this is that, for an interview, you need to dress more like the supervisor/manager than an employee. Remember, you are dressing to impress. Only after you get the job, can you dress to fit in.

	Appropriate	Not Appropriate
Shoes	Polishable closed toe. Solid, versatile color.	Tennis, athletic, canvas boat or deck shoes, sandals, moccasins, etc.
Hosiery	Stockings, hose or socks should be worn at all times.	Net, glitter, seamed stockings, flashy tights, or bare legs.
Slacks	Dress style to the ankle. Solid color.	Denim in any color, spandex, stretch, stirrup, sweats, clingy cotton knit, cropped or shorts.
Skirts/Dresses	Fashionable, professional. To the knee or longer.	Denim, clingy cotton, stretch knit, mini skirts, floor length or halter dresses.
Shirts/Blouses	Dress shirt with sleeve. White, ivory, cream, beige, gray, and versatile colors.	T-shirt, sweatshirt, halter-tops, tank tops, crop-tops or anything with a logo.



**LAKE WASHINGTON
TECHNICAL COLLEGE**

Employment Resource Center

(425) 739-8113

www.lwtc.ctc.edu/erc

Anticipating Interview Questions

Looking for key phrases in the job announcement can help you anticipate interview questions...

Job Title: **Customer Service Representative**

Employer: **ABC Company**

Location: **Seattle, WA**

Job Type: **Full Time**

JOB DESCRIPTION

Headquartered in Sodo area of Seattle, ABC Company designs and markets **upscale** sportswear and outerwear. The Company is committed to achieving success in a way that respects people, communities and the environment. ABC Company sells its products primarily through golf pro shops and resorts, corporate accounts and specialist retail accounts.

Our Customer Service Representatives communicate with our customer base and Sales Reps by phone, email and fax, and are committed to providing **"World class"** customer service at all times. Responsibilities include:

- Providing consistently creative and **proactive problem solving**
- **Entering sales orders**
- **Maintaining customer accounts** for timely order delivery
- **Partnering with sales** to support corporate sales goals
- Providing feedback to management on ways to improve customer service and sales

A career opportunity is available for energetic candidates who have the following:

- Excellent **accuracy and attention to detail**
- Excellent **organizational skills**
- Ability to multi-task and prioritize assignments daily
- Strong communication skills (verbal, written, and listening)

- Demonstrated **computer proficiency**
- **Two-year college degree preferred**, or applicable experience
- **Two+ years Customer Service experience** desired in a phone, or face-to-face retail environment

We offer a competitive compensation and benefits package including dental, vision, tuition assistance, 401K with match and paid time off and employee discount on our products.

ABC Company is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

To Apply: Visit our careers site at www.abcco.com

Key Words: customer service rep, Customer Service Representative, Customer Service Account Executive, Account Executive, CSR, AE, customer service AE

Interview Questions

What experience do you have serving an "upscale" clientele?

What characterizes this type of business?

What does "World Class" customer service mean to you?

Give me an example of a time when you were able to creatively solve a problem on the job?

Give me an example of your past work which required a high degree of accuracy?

What are some things you typically do to organize your work?

Tell me about your computer skills?

Tell me about your previous Customer Service experience?

Interview Questions

Tell me about your experience with sales order entry/customer accounts?

Give me an example of a time you had to deal with a difficult Sales Rep.?

What is your educational background?

Interview Questions – Types of Questions and how to deal with them

<u>Type of Question:</u>	<u>Interview Question? / Example:</u>	<u>Purpose of the Question</u>	<u>How to deal with the question</u>
Screening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you have the ability to work in the United States? • Are you available to work 3rd Shift? • Do you have a 2-year college degree? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To eliminate candidates that don't meet the minimum qualifications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anticipate questions by studying the job announcement • Be as flexible as possible with your requirements • Explain how your past education or work experience meets the employer's requirements
Qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you have 2-years Customer Service experience? • Tell me about your Sales order-entry experience? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To assess work experience relative to job requirements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study the job announcement • Explain how your past work experience meets the employer's requirements
Work History	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell me about your work history? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To see if past work experiences are similar to the open position 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know your work history: Start with most recent employer and work backward in time. • Review the following for the employer: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Job Title ○ Employer ○ Dates ○ Duties and accomplishments ○ Reason for leaving • Anticipate rough spots (reason for leaving...) and have an explanation • Talk the most about past jobs and duties that seem like the open position. Talk less about positions that aren't related to the job.
Behavioral Questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell me about a time when you had to _____ in your past work? • Give an example of how you _____ in a past job? <u>Examples:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Multi-task ○ Organizational Skills ○ Demonstrate teamwork 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To determine if the candidate has, during past employment, demonstrated the skills necessary to be successful in the job 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study the job announcement to determine the personal characteristics/skills they are seeking • Respond in STARS format: S – Situation T – Task A – Action R – Result S – Show how this helps the employer

Type of Question:	Interview Question? / Example:	Purpose of the Question	How to deal with the question
Personal Characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How would your friends describe you? • Give an example of a time you were on an employee team, what role did you play? • If you could choose between working alone or with others, which would you choose? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To determine if a candidate has the personal characteristics to be successful in the job: <p>Sample characteristics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outgoing personality • Demonstrates Initiative 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study the job description for personal characteristics that the employer lists • Respond in STARS format if the question is phrased as a behavioral question.
Job/Company Match	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did you enjoy most about your past work, and what did you enjoy the least? • Why are you interested in working here? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ensure that the candidate has realistic expectations of the position and company 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sure your answers take into account the type of work you are applying for • Check your assumptions about the company/job before being too opinionated
Negative Questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the worst mistake you ever made? • What was the worst boss you ever had? • What is your worst characteristic? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To entice the candidate into revealing negative information about themselves and their past work history 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't pick the Worst. Pick an example but not the worst - perhaps from early in your career • Emphasize how you recovered from the situation, what you learned as a result, and how this learning will be an asset to the current employer.
Pay Questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are your salary expectations? • How much did you earn in your previous position? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The company will be concerned if the candidate earned more than the company is offering for the open position. They are concerned that the candidate will leave their position as soon as they can find a better paying opportunity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid the question – “I’m flexible about salary requirements and [...emphasize your skills here...] • Give a range of allowable salary based on your research “These kinds of jobs generally pay in the range of \$12-\$15/hr and I am within that range” • Turn the question around: “What is the Company’s pay range for the position?” “What are you paying for the job?” • If you want to prevent yourself from being screened out, and are willing to accept a cut in pay to take the rate the company is offering, tell them why you think the job is a match for you: “I may have been earning more at my previous employer, but this position offers opportunity for ...”

NON-VERBAL MESSAGES

- What you don't say -

Eye Contact:

Looking a person in the eye indicates confidence, openness and honesty. Make brief eye contact with the interviewer. Keep your head up and make occasional eye contact throughout the interview.

Voice:

Your voice should be clear and loud enough to hear across a room. Practice speaking clearly, pronouncing words correctly and using proper grammar. Breathing deeply can add a stable quality to your voice.

Facial Expressions:

A slight smile and open eyes convey the impression of intelligence, alertness and friendliness. Practice the look in front of the mirror. Use your face to emphasize your positive qualities.

Posture:

Walk tall, sit forward in your chair, hold your head up, keep your back and shoulders straight. Be aware of how you are sitting and standing, without being rigid.

Mannerisms:

Be aware of nervous behavior you may fall into. Avoid tapping your fingers, playing with your hair, wriggling your feet, wringing your hands, etc. Use your hands to emphasize what you are saying, but don't be too wild with your gestures.

Attitude:

Your body language "speaks loudly", telling the world how you feel. Watch people. See if you can tell who is angry, sad, happy, etc. just by watching them. Think about what attitude you want to convey and practice using your body language to give this message.

The handshake:

When you walk into an interview, the first thing an interviewer takes note of is your appearance. The second is your handshake. A proper handshake is firm but not hard. Use the full hand to grasp the full hand of the other person, not just your fingertips. The handshake should last approximately two seconds. Make eye contact and smile while shaking hands.



**LAKE WASHINGTON
TECHNICAL COLLEGE**

**Employment Resource Center
(425) 739-8113**

www.lwtc.ctc.edu/erc

Sample Interview Questions

SCREENING QUESTIONS

- Are you available to work nights and weekends?
- This job requires the ability to lift 50 lbs. Are you able to do this?
- This job requires 2 years Customer Service experience. Please explain how you meet this requirement?

WARM-UP QUESTIONS

- Tell me about yourself?
- How did you hear about this opening?

WORK HISTORY

- Tell me about your work history?
- Why do you believe you are qualified for this position?

BEHAVIORAL QUESTIONS

- Tell me about a time when you had to deal with a difficult co-worker?
- Tell me about process improvements that were implemented in your office, what was your role?
- Give me an example of a time when you were faced with a stressful situation that demonstrated your coping skills?
- Tell me about a time when you had to go above and beyond the call of duty to get a job done?

PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS

- Everyone has strengths & weaknesses as workers. What are your strong points for this job?
- What areas would you say are areas needing improvement?
- Do you prefer working alone or in groups?
- What are some things you would like to avoid in a job? Why?

JOB/COMPANY MATCH

- In your previous job what kind of pressures did you encounter? How did you handle this?
- What are some things you particularly liked/disliked about your last job?
- What kind of job do you see yourself holding five years from now?

NEGATIVE QUESTIONING

- Tell me about the worst customer you have ever encountered?
- What was the worst job you ever had?

CLOSING QUESTIONS

- Why should I hire you?
- What questions do you have for me about the job or the company?

Questions to Ask the Employer

At some point in the interview, typically after the employer asks the candidate the interview questions, the interviewer invites the job seeker to ask questions about the job and the company.

The best strategy, especially early in the interview process, is to ask questions about the position you are interviewing for – defer controversial questions, or questions about pay and benefits until after the offer of employment has been made (but before you accept the offer!).

- What are the major responsibilities of the position?
- Is there a job description I could see?
- What results are expected in this position?
- What qualities characterize a successful person in this type of position?
- What challenges face a person in this position?
- What are the goals for the department?
- What is the mission of the Department? Division? Company? What challenges do they face?
- Who are the key (internal/external) customers of this position? What expectations do they have?
- What is your philosophy regarding employee development?
- What kind of support and tools are provided in this role?
- How is a person in this type of person evaluated?
- How would you describe your management style?
- How did you get started with the company, and what has your career experience?
- How would you describe your company's culture?
- What is the company doing to remain competitive?



**LAKE WASHINGTON
TECHNICAL COLLEGE**

**Employment Resource Center
(425) 739-8113**

www.lwtc.ctc.edu/erc