INTERVIEW FITNESS TRAINING

A Workout With Carole Martin

The Interview Coach

Exercises, tools, stories, and more

Prepare to be a stronger contender in the job market!
INTERVIEW FITNESS TRAINING

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THE INTERVIEW COACH
INTRODUCTION

As with any workout/fitness training, you must make a commitment in order to improve your skills. The exercises in this book will be more effective if you are willing to put in time and energy and take an active part in the process - to build up your interview muscles.

The interview is a type of performance, or presentation. You will need to do some preparation and have a rehearsal. You will need to put effort into your exercises to become a stronger presenter. The goal is to be prepared and natural.

This workbook will help you

• focus on your strengths and what you have to offer a company.
• prepare your success stories to answer those difficult behavioral questions “Tell me about a time….”
• script your answers to difficult questions.
• have a stronger impact on others.

give you

• more power in the interview process.
• more confidence and a feeling of being prepared.
• methods to answer questions effectively.
• the mind-set to be more selective and in control.
• skills to negotiate a better offer.
• permission to not get an offer after every interview.

If, after doing the exercises, you would like to practice with a professional, I would welcome the opportunity to work with you. If you have any questions regarding the exercises or book content you can contact me by email at Carole@InterviewCoach.com or call me toll-free at 1-877-933-6208.

Now, let the workout begin!
TESTIMONIALS

What People Are Saying

“Carole Martin’s positive approach makes the interview process seem like fun. She has a special gift for making each reader feel worthwhile. Her book is utterly professional and very helpful.”

Jennifer Robin, Image Consultant - Author of Clothe Your Spirit

“Hi Coach,

The company I interviewed with two weeks ago called me back for a second interview last week, and I just got offered the job!

Thanks so much for all your help and wonderful book. I’ve learned a lot from that book, and I think it helped me get this job. Two of my friends are looking for a job, and like me they’ve been staying in the same job for too long, so they have no interviewing skills. I recommended your book to them, and they say they just love it!

I will start my new job next Monday. Thanks again for everything. You are great!”

Jim Satcher - who hadn’t interviewed in 10 years.

“I know we haven’t and may never meet in person..... but, we have met. I have found you to be most helpful in one of the most challenging times in my life. I was very fearful for my career and my ability to get out of my current situation and into a professional work environment. Like any good abuse victim, I internalized the abuse to some degree and struggled with believing in myself. I was at a true loss at having a good sense of how to address the problems with prospective employers. Talking and working with you has been a tremendous help in this and look at the success it has resulted in. I hope we don't lose contact. I will always be grateful for having ‘met you.’”

From Louise Borgmann - regarding phone coaching during a difficult job transition.
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 Boxing Gloves = Interview Exercise
INTERVIEW ANXIETY
EVERYBODY GETS NERVOUS

It’s OK To Be Nervous

It would be nice if your heart didn’t palpitate, and your hands didn’t sweat, and your mouth didn’t go dry, but most people, even executives, experience one or more of these symptoms when they interview. But here’s the good news: it’s OK to be nervous. Let me repeat that. It’s OK to be nervous, and it is essential for you to accept the way you feel.

It is very unrealistic to tell yourself you should be different from the way you really are. It just makes you feel worse about yourself. By shifting your thinking to self-acceptance, you feel more in control and more confident almost immediately.

What’s the worst thing that can happen?

For many people the worst thing that can happen is “rejection” - not getting an offer. It is a common fear. Who wants to be rejected? It’s much more desirable to be the “rejecter.” To say, “No thank you. I don’t think I’ll take your job offer.” Did you ever think that maybe that job wasn’t right for you? That maybe you weren’t being objective about the process - you just wanted an offer - to be accepted? Try to look at the process from another perspective - as a learning experience.

Face the Fear

What is making you feel nervous? What is it you fear? If one of our greatest fears is rejection, and one of our greatest needs is acceptance, going through the interview process is like walking on hot coals.

According to author, Susan Jeffers, Phd. (Feel the Fear and Do It Anyway),

“The only way to get rid of the fear of doing something is to go out... and do it.”

“The only way to feel better about myself is to go out... and do it.”

Some things are out of your control - don’t take them personally.

An Interviewer’s Story

Conducting interviews for an accountant position, and working with the accounting manager, I found a woman I thought was a wonderful match for the position. I sent her forward to meet the manager.

The manager contacted me later that day. I inquired about the candidate. She replied, “I liked her.” She then said, “But I’m not going to hire her!” I was taken back, “Why not?” I asked.

“Because she looks exactly like my aunt. And I hate my aunt. And I could not come in here every day and look at her face!”

That candidate was rejected, not because of anything she did or didn’t do, but because of a strange circumstance.
WHAT PAST INTERVIEW EXPERIENCES CAN YOU LEARN FROM?

Facing the Fear

“Last time I wasn’t prepared, and I just tried to wing it. This time I’m going to get my act together and prepare and practice.”

“I was caught off-guard when I was asked what I was looking for in the way of a salary. This time I’ve done my research and homework, and I’m going to be prepared.”

Releasing Anxiety - Name Those Fears

Spend some time thinking about, and identifying, your anxiety. Write down your issues, or answer the questions below. Write anything else that makes you nervous. By looking at what is making you feel anxious, you can begin to deal with the “monster” and begin to practice accepting your feelings or changing your thinking.

What do you fear most about the interview?

What’s the worst thing that can happen?

What questions do you fear?

What are your biggest stumbling blocks? Difficult questions?

Have you had past successes with interviews? What went right?

What didn’t go so well?

What do you want the interviewer to know about you? Your strengths?

What do you want to soften or avoid?

Are you concerned only about the end result of the interview or are you checking out the company as well?
RELSAXATION TIPS

Breathing

Relaxation needs to be practiced long before you enter the interview. Try this easy breathing technique to relax.

Breathe in through your nose - filling your stomach with air - hold for a few seconds and then exhale through your mouth - making a swooshing sound. Repeat again and again, until it becomes a natural response to release tension.

Practice this any time you want to let go and relax or are feeling tense. You could even do it in a quiet manner while waiting for your interviewer.

Yoga, meditation and relaxation therapy are other great ways to learn how to relax and gain control.

Firm Handshake

It is important that your grip demonstrate confidence. A firm handshake, not a bone crushing grip, will indicate self-assurance. Reach your hand out palm sideways and grip the hand. Web to web. Try it, you will see that your hand closes over the palm of the hand. When you squeeze the fingers it can hurt, especially if you are wearing rings.

Damp Hands

The interview almost always begins with a handshake. "Hello, I am Susan Cook," says the interviewer, and extends her hand. It is now your turn to extend your hand in return. But your palm is damp.

Should you:
1. Quickly wipe your hand on the side of your pants or skirt?
2. Stick out your damp hand?
3. Keep your hand to yourself?

None of the above is very desirable. Try this tip:

Arrive at the interview 10-15 minutes early (always a good idea - NEVER LATE!) Go to the rest room and run cold water on the insides of your wrists for a few minutes and breathe - relax. In the case of cold hands, try running hot water to warm your hands. The insides of your wrists are very temperature sensitive. This remedy can last up to half an hour. Try it and see if it works for you.

Our greatest fear is that we will not be able to cope.
It’s OK not to get an offer.

An E-mail Story

Email from James who had just received a job rejection:
In my last interview I talked to several of the people who would have reported to me. At the end of the day, my boss-to-be told me that some of these people had expressed certain reservations about my professional qualifications. Thus, I was not offered the job.

I was to lead the people who had these reservations. In my opinion, their reservations were exactly why they needed in a leader. That aside, what do you think about the decision to hire or not to hire being made by the staff instead of the management?

Reply to James:
Consensus decisions are not uncommon, but it is not usually the staff members who control the decision. You have to look at this situation objectively and ask yourself if you would want to work for a company where your staff had more power than you did? My suggestion is to move on and concentrate on the type of company you would really like to work for.

Weeks later another e-mail from James:
Remember me? I’m the guy who was rejected by potential staff members. Well, I had to tell you my great news. I just got a wonderful job with a company I have admired for years, and at a higher salary than that other job paid. Boy, am I glad I got rejected or I never would have found my dream job! Thanks for the advice.
THE INTERVIEW AS A TWO-WAY PROCESS

A Conversation

Begin to think of the interview as a conversation - a conversation with a purpose. The conversation should be two-way and interactive.

Instead of focusing on the end result, you need to learn to listen.

The more you listen, the more discerning you will become about asking your own questions and judging the answers against your needs. When all you can think of is whether or not this interview will end in a job offer, you miss out on an opportunity to explore. If you begin to think of the interview process as a conversation, and listen, you will discover some interesting things about the interviewer and the company.

You are interviewing them as much as they are interviewing you!

“I always thought of myself as a goalie at a hockey game when I interviewed. My job was to return those pucks - to be like the defense.” Jim - Public Defender.

Wrong, Jim!

Your job is to listen and ask questions - send some of those pucks their way. Find out if this is a good place for you.

It is important for you to prepare questions to ask them.

see page 28
INTERVIEWING WITH A CONSULTANT MIND-SET

Tell Me About Your Problem

Interviewing with a “consultant” mind-set often helps. Take the time to analyze what the company is seeking - not just what is written in the ad or job description, but what it would take to get the job done, and done well!

Consultants listen and analyze the problem. They think of possible solutions to the problem.

Listening is the key here. Most people like to talk and don’t really listen well. Listen to what the interviewer(s) talk about - what is asked and what comments are made. Does the conversation revolve around the employees, the employees’ work, the customer? This should give you clues as to what is the most important product and the company’s values. What are the issues/problems? Do they have a mission statement? Is the statement relevant? Do you hear evidence of the mission being supported by the work?

Some interviewers will tell you more than others. Sometimes you have to read between the lines - not everything will be said. Use your intuition!

Let the interviewer know you have been listening and ask questions to clarify the situation.

The Equation:

Employer - has a problem - work to get done, issues to be dealt with, problems to solve.

You - may be the answer to the problem - you have the skills, background, experience, and attitude.

Challenge - to convince the employer that you can bring added value to the equation, to help with the problem.

Solution - A win/win for everyone.

Sell yourself as the solution to the problem.

True Story

The applicant was interviewed for 90 minutes by two interviewers. At the end of the interview, the interviewers asked if she had any questions. “Yes,” she replied. “On a scale of one to 10, where does morale stand in this company?”

The interviewers looked at one another and replied, “A seven.”

“So, there are some issues?” she asked.

“Yes,” replied the interviewers.

“From the questions you asked me, it sounds like you two are very overwhelmed, and need someone to come in and hit the ground running, right?” she asked.

“Yes,” they replied.

“I can tell you that I have been there and done that, and there wasn't anything you said today that I haven't experienced before. I think I can make a difference from the beginning if you hire me,” she said.

She got the job! She had listened to the problem, and let the interviewers know that she understood the problem and was ready to be the solution. It was a win/win situation for everyone.
THE PRODUCT - YOU
MARKETING THE PRODUCT - YOU

What Do You Have to Offer?

Most people say they really feel uncomfortable bragging about themselves. That figures, because we have been told since we were children “don’t brag.” But the job interview is not the place to become modest about your achievements. It is, in fact, the place to talk about them with pride.

Myth - “The Best Qualified Candidate Always Gets The Job!”

You have to create the perception that you are the best candidate. Saying “The best qualified candidate always gets the job,” is like saying “The best product always captures the market.” This is not always the case. Not only must the product be the best, it must be perceived to be the best. Perception is the key. If you are best qualified, but not perceived to be best, you may lose your opportunity. Let the interviewer know you are the best qualified! If you can talk about your skills in a convincing manner, you are the one most likely to get the job.

A change of focus will help a lot in this area. Begin to think of yourself as a PRODUCT! When you are considering buying a product you want to know what it has to offer. What do you have to offer?

No two people are exactly alike, even twins - we are all UNIQUE! What makes you unique? In the case of job interview preparation, knowledge, skills, and personal traits are what make you unique. Identifying these factors is essential in order for you to sell your product (YOU).

One way to think about your skills is to divide them into three categories:

1. Knowledge-based Skills – Many employers hire based on knowledge-based skills alone. In fact, there are some employers who are willing to hire sight-unseen over the phone. “If you have the right background - we’ll hire you.” BEWARE! There is more to the job than the duties. Culture, personality fit, chemistry - all are a part of your job satisfaction in a company.

2. Transferable or Portable Skills – Identifying transferable skills is especially important for anyone who is transferring to another field or type of organization. Think about what you have to offer in the way of transferable skills - organizational skills, management/business skills, research or teaching skills, analytical or problem solving skills. Chances are that you are taking for granted some of the skills that make you unique.

3. Personal Skills or Traits – These are skills that cannot be taught by an employer. These are inherent traits and habits developed and learned over time. Because of the ever-changing world we live in, flexibility and adaptability are becoming among the most desirable personal traits.

Once you identify your skills and your strengths, you can begin to build your resume and interviewing preparation around these skills to market and sell yourself. By listing your skills you will also be preparing for your “Tell Me About Yourself” statement on page 21.

Although your resume is certainly impressive, I'm concerned we may not have a good fit here.
WHAT MAKES YOU UNIQUE?

Think about and write down the skills you have used in past jobs. (Only the ones you want to use in your next job). Name at least seven to ten in each category. What do you have to offer? From your last job? From your previous jobs? From your education? From your volunteer work? From your life experiences?


List your Transferable or Portable Skills – skills which will work in different industries and jobs. (Communication, Planning, Time Management, Problem Solving, Customer Service, Teaching, Coaching, Creative, Researching, Selling, Follow-through, Resourcefulness, Attention to detail, Skilled with numbers, Innovation)

Think about your Personal Traits – the qualities which make you who you are. (Flexible, Friendly, Dependable, Good Attitude, Reliable, Calm, High Energy, Patient, Self-starter, Organized, Easy to Get Along With, Quick Learner, People Skills, Goal Directed)
MOTIVATION

What are you looking for?

It is important that you think about when you have been most satisfied with your career. Also think about when you have been least satisfied? Was your last job satisfying? What would you have liked more of? Less of? Take the time to give this exercise some thought. It could make a difference in knowing what you want in a job. How can you find the right job, if you don’t know what you are looking for? Hopefully, we learn from our past experiences - positive and negative.

Q. When have you been most satisfied with your career? Why?

A. “That would have to be my last job where I…”
   “The reason I was satisfied is because I was doing…”

WHAT MOTIVATES YOU?

Think about the various jobs you’ve held – which were the best remembered? Which were those you would just as soon forget? If you can’t think of jobs, think about projects. If you are a new grad think of classes you’ve taken which have been of particular interest.

1. When have you been most productive, happy, content with your work?

   Why?

   How can you look for this in your next job? What questions can you ask to try to discern whether this is the place for you?

2. When have you been least satisfied? Miserable? Unhappy? Hated going to work?

   Why?

   What questions could you ask in the interview to try to find out more about the culture and the work environment at the company you are interviewing with? How can you avoid getting into a similar situation again?
FIT? THEIR NEEDS - YOUR QUALITIES

Take a job description (a classified ad or job posting will work as well). Looking at the job description, compare the company's needs with your experience and qualities. How do you stack up? Where are your shortcomings? Can you show how you learn quickly or bring added value to the company from the start? Write some ideas in the following columns:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What They Looking For?</th>
<th>What I Have to Offer?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Do you have other qualities that will replace those required - years of experience vs. education? Do you fit at least 80% of the requirements?
BEHAVIORAL INTERVIEWING - PAST BEHAVIOR, FUTURE SUCCESS

You Say You’re Good - Prove It!

Skilled interviewers use behavioral interviewing techniques to screen out candidates. But what does that mean?

In order to find experienced people, employers are asking interview questions based on past behavior as an indicator of future success. In other words, if you can demonstrate through examples, especially recent examples, that you’ve had success in certain areas at a previous time, you will be looked upon as a possible candidate for success in a future position.

Past behavior is an indicator of future success - if you did it before you can do it again - good or bad.

The questions asked in behavioral interviewing are different from traditional interview questions. A traditional question might begin with a statement like, “What would you do if...” You can use your imagination with that type of question and spin a tale.

Not so with behavior-based interviewing. An example of a behavioral question would be, “Tell me about a time when...”, or “Can you give me an example ...”. The interviewer is looking for specific examples of how you handled situations.

Your tendency when asked a question like this might be to say, “I do that every day - it’s what I do.” But the interviewer using behavioral interviewing is looking for specific examples of how you performed. The interviewer might say, “Can you give me an example of a time when you handled a dissatisfied customer?” It is now time for you to tell your success story. Your stories should include the situation, what you did, the action you took, and the result or outcome.

Employers are looking for employees who have experience and skills. They are listening for examples of past successes and how you handled failures. Your examples will demonstrate your experience with people, your flexibility, and your willingness to grow with the job.

If the interviewer does not use this interviewing technique, you can still tell your stories, when appropriate. As an example you could say, “I’d like to tell you about my customer service experience, which I think would be important in this job.”

By preparing for the interview with an exercise recalling your past stories, you will be able to think of examples ahead of time and not be caught off-guard. There is nothing worse than going home after an interview thinking of all the things you could have said. Your stories don’t necessarily have to be about paid work. Examples of volunteering, community work, or your education can also be effective. Try to make the examples specific to the type of position you are applying for, and be sure the stories are true stories. This is no time for fairy tales.

You say you’re a hard worker.
Prove it.
Give me an example.
YOUR SUCCESS STORIES

Telling the Whole Story

Writing your success stories is the most important step toward interview preparation. The first step of this process is to determine which factors are crucial to the position for which you are applying. Look at a job description or a classified ad, such as the one below, and determine what it would take to get the job done.

What crucial factors would you be looking for if you were recruiting for this job? What skills and traits would it take for success in this position?

You might consider - COMMUNICATION SKILLS, TELEPHONE AND PEOPLE SKILLS, FLEXIBILITY, RELIABILITY, JUDGMENT, COMPUTER ABILITY, GOOD ATTITUDE.

The next step is to write experience stories around these factors. One of the easiest ways to prepare and remember stories is to use an acronym - SPARE. It's a lot like writing a story with a beginning, a middle, and an end.

Situación, or Problem - what is the basis of the story? State the situation or problem at the beginning of your story. It should be brief and concise. What was the situation?

Action - what you did - your actions - (beware of the pronoun we - it can take away from your part of the action). This part of the story should include some movement and detail.

Results - what was the outcome or ending to the story? (The end is an important part of the story, which a lot of people neglect to add.) The story does not always have to end in a success. Overcoming adversity and beginning again is also a trait employers are looking for in a candidate.

Enthusiasm - tell the story in an interesting way, adding details that bring color and interest to the story as though you were telling it to someone at a party (in professional language).

Using a Success Story

An interviewer looking for a Customer Service Representative might ask a question like, “Describe a situation when you had to handle an angry customer and make a quick decision about the action taken.”

This would be your chance to tell one of your prepared success stories.

Situation or Problem

“I can remember a woman who called and was yelling about a malfunction of a machine that had cost her an order.”

Action

“First I listened very carefully; then I calmed her down by asking her to explain the details of the situation. I then repeated the problem back to her and confirmed that I understood the problem. I assured her I would call her back that day. I did some research on the problem and the dates and discussed the situation with my supervisor. I recommended that we adjust the customer’s bill based on my findings, and my supervisor agreed.”

Result

“I called her back that day, as promised, and she was very satisfied with the adjustment. She even wrote a note to my supervisor telling him about my excellent and professional customer service.”

Enthusiasm

“I really liked solving her problem. I felt like I had done something worthwhile when she thanked me and apologized for chewing me out.”

Which traits can you pick up from the story?

• good customer service
• communications skills
• follow-through
• initiative
• research skills
• problem solving
WRITING YOUR OWN SUCCESS STORIES - SPARE

Look at the job description or classified ad for the position you are seeking and select the important factors - what it would take to get the job done. Using the SPARE format, write at least five stories about your successes. Focus on the factors they are seeking and show them you have what it takes because you have done it before. Use additional pieces of paper if necessary.

STORY #1
Situation or Problem

Action

Result

Enthusiasm

STORY #2
Situation or Problem

Action

Result

Enthusiasm

STORY #3
Situation or Problem

Action

Result

Enthusiasm

These stories are interchangeable and can be used to answer more than one direct question.
THE PREPARATION
“TELL ME ABOUT YOURSELF”

Where Do I Begin? Where Should I Focus?

The #1 question asked in most interviews is “TELL ME ABOUT YOURSELF” - or some form of that question - “How would you describe yourself?” or “Tell me about yourself and your background and how it relates to this position.”

Beginning - tell about your years of work experience - your most recent work, skills, and achievements - some of your knowledge-based skills and how you used them.

Transition - emphasize your transferable skills, your strengths. What do you have to offer? What can you bring to this position? What are your accomplishments?

Current Situation - describe what you're looking for now. What type of work have you enjoyed? What qualities have motivated you before and are you hoping to find again?

EXAMPLE #1:

Beginning:
For the past six years I have been in the electronics industry working on computer systems. Two years ago I was promoted to lead technician and currently supervise four testers and technicians.

Transition:
My strength is problem solving. I take an analytical view of what is happening and work through the process by trying various solutions. I work well independently or as a member of a team. I have worked in fast-paced environments most of my life, and am very goal-oriented and deadline-driven.

Current Situation:
I am looking for a position as a lead or coach where I can effectively work with a team to bring in results that contribute to the bigger picture or bottom line.

EXAMPLE #2:

Beginning:
I am a person who enjoys problem solving. For the past six years I have been working on projects and problems involving software design. In my last position I was able to solve a design problem that had been around for more than a year. As a result, the company was able to sell a product that had been delayed for a key account of over $2 million.

Transition:
I enjoy thinking “outside of the box” and coming up with new ways to look at old problems - either on my own or as a team member. Customer service and follow-through are skills I pride myself on. I have made some long-lasting relationships with customers by building rapport through trust. I pride myself on making people feel like they are special no matter what size the account.

Current Situation:
It is important to me to do work that makes a difference - no matter what my role. I am looking for new challenges in the software industry. I’d like to find a place where I can bring what I have learned and apply it to new situations.

This is your personal statement that you will use over and over while in search of a job.
YOUR PERSONAL STATEMENT

Prepare a brief, but concise, statement that would take two minutes or less to say as a response to the "Tell me about yourself" question. This is the oral version of a summary you might use on a resume.

Beginning - (experience - overall/recent)

Transition - (earlier - transferable experience)

Current Situation - (present - looking for now)

IMPORTANT:
Practice this introduction - become smooth, not stilted or rehearsed. Use a tape recorder or a coach.
PREPARE FOR SALARY QUESTIONS

Know the Market - Know Your Worth

“Could you tell me what salary you are looking for?”

“What are you currently making?”

“Your salary need is clearly out of our range. Are you still interested in pursuing the position?”

“Would you be willing to consider a cut in pay?”

Questions concerning compensation can be asked as early as a phone screening. A part of your preparation should include some work on how to answer the questions regarding salary before the interview even begins.

The rule here is, “Delay the subject of salary as long as possible.” If you name a number this early in the process you will set the line for future negotiations.

Tell your interviewer that you feel it is premature to discuss the subject of money until you have more information about the position and the responsibilities involved. Ask him or her, “Could you tell me the range budgeted for this position?”

Research

It is important that you do your homework before you go into the interview. YOU MUST KNOW YOUR WORTH.

• What is the going rate for the position?

• Compare like positions, years of experience, responsibilities, region.

• Check out Web sites, associations, colleagues.

Think about buying a major purchase, like a car. What research process would you go through? Blue book? Check the classifieds to find out the going rate for the model and year? Check with mechanics? Read Consumers Report?

The same process applies to researching the job and salary. Take some time before you go out to buy.

Web sites with salary information:

http://www.salary.com
http://www.jobstar.org (California)
http://www.salaryexpert.com
(see addition sites Page 43)

Know Your Bottom Line

What is the lowest salary you are willing to accept (no matter how terrific the job!)? Do some calculations. Figure out what you want, and what you need to maintain your current lifestyle, or to improve your current lifestyle. Know when you have to say “No, I can’t accept the offer at that salary.” See exercise “Figuring Your Bottom Line” on the next page.

In the words of Kenny Rogers, “Know when to walk away, and know when to run.”

Don't be caught off-guard!

An Interviewer’s Story

A client of mine was interviewing for a position in the high tech industry. When he was interviewed by the CEO, he was asked “What do you want in the way of salary?” His interviewer told him it was not his policy to play games about salary.

The man answered, “Somewhere between $50,000 and $60,000.”

He called me to say he had received an offer from the company for $60,000.00. “Good for you!” I exclaimed. He said, “No, I did some research and found out with my credentials and experience I am worth $70,000.”

“So why did you say $50 to 60 thousand?” I asked.

“Because they caught me off-guard,” came his reply.
**FIGURING YOUR BOTTOM LINE**
What Do You Need to Keep Up Your Current Lifestyle?
To Improve Your Lifestyle?

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<tr>
<th>NEED</th>
<th>WANT</th>
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<td><strong>Fixed Monthly Expenses</strong></td>
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<td>Rent/Mortgage Expense</td>
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<td>Utilities (Gas, Electric, Water)</td>
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<td>Telephone</td>
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<td>Insurance (Medical, Life, Home, Auto)</td>
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<td><strong>Variable Fixed Expenses</strong></td>
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<td>Savings/Investments</td>
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<td>Other</td>
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**WHAT YOU NEED/WANT TO EARN?**

$__________ | $__________
HOW TO DEAL WITH DIFFICULT QUESTIONS

The Most Dreaded Question of All

There is a formula for difficult questions called the Sandwich Technique.

(+) Begin with a positive statement
(-) Slip in the negative (or weakness)
(+ ) End with a positive statement

Q: WHAT ARE YOUR GREATEST STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES?
A: (+) My strengths are my energy and enthusiasm.
    I have a proven track record for working
    above and beyond what is asked of me.
(-) My weakness is that I get impatient when
    I don’t get the data I need to do my job
    because someone else didn’t meet a deadline.
(+ ) I continue to work on stronger communication
    skills so that I can deal with and understand
    people who don’t have the same work ethic.

This answer works because we can all work on our
communication skills, particularly when it comes to
being understanding of someone who is not pulling
his/her weight. This is not the time to reveal a time
management or planning problem. Think of some-
thing you would like to improve about yourself. Be
careful of something like a work-aholic or a perfec-
tionist – and always have a story ready (SPARE - page
17) to back up your statements.

Dear Interview Coach

An Email was received that read:
Dear Interview Coach,
I don’t know what to say when asked, “What
are your weaknesses?” I don’t have any weak-
nesses.

the reply:
Dear God,
(We all have weaknesses)

ANSWER WITH A SANDWICH

What is your greatest strength/weakness? Practice writing out your answer - be sure to sandwich
the negative with an emphasis on the positive.

(+)

(-)

(+ )
ANSWERS TO STANDARD QUESTIONS

Inevitably, there are some standard questions that come up in almost every interview. Think about how you would answer these questions and practice your answers. Even if you aren't asked these specific questions, it will be good practice for you to think about this information. You may be able to use the information to answer another question. Use the page numbers provided to research your answers.

“Tell me about yourself.” (page 20)

“Why did you leave (are you leaving) your last company?” (page 24)

“What is your salary expectation?” (pages 22 and 23)

“When have you been most satisfied in your career?” (page 14)

“When have you been most dissatisfied in your career?” (page 14)

“What is your greatest strength?” (page 13)

“What is your greatest weakness?” (page 24)

“What experience do you have that qualifies you for this position?” (page 21)

“What attracted you to this position and/or company?” (pages 14 and 15)

“When have you been most motivated?” (page 14)

“Tell me about a time when you had a disagreement/confrontation with a boss/coworker.” (pages 17 and 18)

“Tell me about the most difficult assignment you've ever had.” (pages 17 and 18)

“Why should we hire you?” (pages 13 and 21)

“Why do you want to work for this company?” (page 10)

“Tell me about a time when you had to adapt to a change quickly.” (pages 17 and 18)

“Can you give me an example of working in a fast-paced environment.” (pages 17 and 18)

“On your resume you say you are a 'hard worker'. Can you give me an example of hard work?” (pages 17 and 18)

“Do you have any questions?” (page 28)
FREQUENT INTERVIEW CONCERNS
WHAT IS AN ILLEGAL QUESTION?

How old are you?
Do you have kids?
Do you own your home?
How is your health?
Are you a U.S. citizen?
Have you ever been arrested?

Legal or illegal? That is the question. Almost any “legal” information about you is “illegal” for someone to ask in an interview - age, marital status, country of origin, religion, sexual preference, health status, or criminal background.

OK, they’re illegal, but what do you do when you are asked an illegal question in an interview?

Here are some options for you to consider using when asked an illegal or inappropriate questions:

• You can answer the question and move on. Begin to listen for other unprofessional questions - do you see a pattern? Start to consider if this is the place for you.
• Don’t answer the question as asked. State that it is an illegal question and that you’re not sure how it relates to the job. You might be perceived as a “trouble maker” or “one of those self-righteous people” - and you may not be asked back. Do you want to be asked back?
• Think about the reason behind the question. What are they concerned about? What is the interviewer attempting to discover? State that you are not sure how that relates to the job, but that you can assure them that it is not an issue.

Some Examples:

Q: How much longer do you intend to work?  
(Concern - are you going to retire soon or get pregnant?)

A: I really like my work and I am very committed to my career. I intend to work to my fullest capacity as long as the job is challenging and rewarding.

Q: What is your marital status?  
(Concern - are you a stable person? Or - are you able to put in extra hours on projects? Or - are your family obligations going to take up too much time?)

A: That’s an interesting question. I’m not sure how that relates to this job, but I can assure you my work comes as a high priority in my life no matter what is happening in my personal life.

Q: This job can be strenuous at times. Do you think you could perform the duties required at your age?  
(Concern - are you tired or burned out? Will you be able to handle multiple tasks and pressure?)

A: I can assure you I am in fine physical condition and have proved myself in my previous jobs. I am often admired for my extraordinary energy.

QUESTIONS OF A SEEMING ILLEGAL NATURE - ASKED IN A LEGAL CONTEXT

These questions may be legal and appropriate as asked.

Have you ever been convicted of a crime? This question may be legal if it relates to the fitness to perform the job being sought, e.g., a bank being concerned if you had previous convictions as a bank robber or embezzler.

Can you show proof of your eligibility to work in the U.S.? This question regards a government regulation. An “I-9” form must be filled out in the first days of employment by all new employees. You must present documents proving work eligibility - Social Security card, passport, driver’s license, etc..

Are you able to perform the essential functions of this job with or without reasonable accommodation? This question should be accompanied by a job description to show the applicant - describing essential functions of the job.

It would seem in today’s world of rules and legislation that illegal questions would not be a problem. Unfortunately, this is not the case. There are still interviewers who are asking inappropriate questions that are not work-related.

Think about how you would handle an illegal or “gray area” question. Do some preparation beforehand. It could spare you embarrassing moments if you are asked an uncomfortable question and don’t have an answer.
“DO YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS?”

Very often at the conclusion of the interview the interviewer will ask, “Do you have any questions?” The majority of candidates answer this question with a “No.” Wrong answer! Don’t you want to know something about this company - the interviewer - the opportunity?

The best questions come as a result of the questions “they” asked you. Listen carefully during the interview, and pick up clues about the company and position from the interviewer.

As an example - If one of the questions was about working in a “fast-paced environment,” you may want to ask, “What makes this environment hectic? - Quantity or quality?” Find out what the issues are. Is this place inefficient or demanding?

- What are this organization’s challenges, problems, opportunities?
- What do you see as future challenges in this industry?
- What changes do you predict for this company in the near future?
- Does this position have a job description? May I have a copy?
- What is morale like on a scale of 1 to 10?
- Why is this position open - new or someone left? If they left - why?
- What are the key skills/qualities necessary to succeed in this job? (opportunity for you to let them know you have those skills/qualities)
- What is your management style? (If being interviewed by future supervisor)
- How would you describe the company culture?
- If I asked an employee, “What is the best thing about working for this company, what would he or she say?”
- What types of information/communication systems are in place?
- What would be a typical career path for a person in this position?
- How do you evaluate excellence? How often?
- What type of training programs do you offer new employees?
- What is the next step in the hiring decision?
- How soon would you want the person to start?

Think about what’s important to you in a job. Advancement, challenge, fun, life balance? Remember, you are interviewing them as much as they are interviewing you.

The key is the FIT!

Read Between the Lines

Rose was interviewing for a position as a recruiter when she came across this unusual situation.

The interview had been progressing smoothly until the department head asked if she had any questions. "Yes, I do," she said. "As a potential recruiter I was wondering how I could convince people they would want to work for this company?" The interviewer gave her a rather bland answer, which bothered Rose. She was going to have to sell people on this company if she were to succeed in this role. The interview went on to other subjects, and time passed quickly. At the end of the interview Rose was asked if she had all of her questions answered. "No, not really," she said. "I still have a question as to why someone would want to work for this company." The department head was hesitant, then replied, "Let’s postpone that discussion for another time."

Rose left the interview somewhat dissatisfied, and assumed that she had pushed too far with her questions. The next day she received a call from the Human Resources manager with some surprising news. The decision for the position would have to be postponed as the department head who had interviewed her yesterday, resigned from the company that morning!

It became clear to Rose why this man had not wanted to sell her on the company.

Sometimes you have to read between the lines. Turn up your intuition!
PREPARE A QUESTION LIST

Would you go on a first date without asking any questions? Begin to think of the interview process as the start of a relationship. Prepare five to ten questions to ask during the interview.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

10.
HOW DO I DRESS FOR THE INTERVIEW?

What image do you want to create? Image is not about being "pretty" or having expensive clothing, or even a perfect body. Image is about feeling good about who you are. If you know you look good, and are expressing yourself positively, that thought will boost your confidence and in turn affect the way others react to you. The reverse is equally true. If you feel shabby and ill-at-ease, others will react negatively to you.

Depending on the job and the industry for which you are interviewing, you should dress according to the image that you want to project and what is appropriate. Some candidates are choosing to dress down to project a friendly, more youthful appearance. Each company has its own culture, and what is casual for one company might be unacceptable for another.

**Professional** ranges from a suit (with tie for men) to a jacket and slacks (no tie). Women can wear slacks/pants suit or skirt as appropriate to the position.

**Working casual** no jeans or t-shirts - usually khakis and a collared shirt, jacket or sweater.

**Casual** any type of attire as long as it is tasteful - no gross or slogan t-shirts.

**Really casual** anything goes - no rules as to attire - including the wearing of shoes (the dot-com attitude).

If it is possible, go the day before to the place where you will be interviewing and stand outside at lunch time or after work and watch what the employees leaving the building are wearing. Choose slightly more formal than what you see. After all, you are not one of them yet, and everyone will be aware you are dressing for the interview.

---

**An Interviewer’s Story**

When I walked into the lobby, I was struck by the starkness of the woman I was about to interview. She was wearing a black suit and stiff white blouse. She had very pale, almost white skin and a lot of bushy, black hair.

She appeared stiff, and not the personality type suited for the particular position for which she was applying.

During the interview I asked her, “If I were to ask your co-workers to describe three positive qualities about you, what would they say?” She lit up for the first time during the interview and said, “They’d say I was the life of the office; that I had a great sense of humor; and how much they enjoyed being with me.” I sat there with my mouth open. This woman had clearly misrepresented herself by what she had chosen to wear to the interview. She was trying to look very professional, but she went a bit too far. I had made the wrong judgment based on the image she portrayed.

**Dress to reflect who you are. Don't try to be someone else in an interview.**
WHAT IMAGE DO I WANT TO REFLECT?
What impression do you want to leave?

Go through magazines or catalogs and look for pictures of people who appear to look successful to you. What are they wearing? Do you want to project that look?

Make a collage of the pictures of professional people you chose - see if a certain look or pattern begins to develop. Is that your desired look?
THE RULES OF
SALARY NEGOTIATION
THE RULES

WARNING: Take time to consider your options before you begin to negotiate. Salary negotiation can be difficult at best. Once you begin to negotiate an offer you must be willing to hang in there if your terms are not accepted. The way the negotiation unfolds may set the tone for your future employment with the company.

To say money is a touchy subject is an understatement. Most people dread the subject, particularly in a job interview. By doing some preparation, some basic research, and following a few rules, you will feel better about dealing with the subject.

Rule #1 – He who mentions a dollar figure first, loses.
Wait until the subject is approached and then answer that you are open on salary and are looking for an opportunity, or that you would like to postpone that discussion until later in the process. This is a good time to ask what salary range is budgeted for the position. If you are asked what your former salary was, you might state that you would like to hear more about the responsibilities of the job before you compare salaries, or that there were circumstances in your other job that kept your salary below market value. If you are asked what salary you are looking for, (depending on where you are in the interviewing process), state that you think it is too early to discuss salary and you would like to hear more about the job before you discuss the particulars of money.

Rule #2 – Never try to negotiate until you have an offer.
You are in a far stronger position to negotiate after you have the offer. Your chances of getting a higher salary improve if the interviewer is convinced you are the right person for the job. This falls somewhere between “They want you” (they’re ready to make an offer) and “They got you!” (you’ve signed on the dotted line, and it is too late to go back and start over).

Rule #3 – Do not accept on the spot offers.
Some employers make on-the-spot offers. It is always a good idea to take time to think the offer over. Once you have accepted, it is too late to negotiate any terms of the agreement. If pressed for a decision, tell the employer that you have a personal policy of taking 24 hours to think over major decisions.

Rule #4 – Always get the offer in writing.
Too many people have been burned after negotiating a sweet deal, only to find that when management changes there is no record of the negotiation. Get it in writing! If you negotiate a change, make sure you get a new offer letter or an addendum memo.

Rule #5 – Keep it friendly.
The tone of the negotiation should never be confrontational. You should be aiming for a win/win situation.

Rule #6 – Consider your position before making deals.
If you cannot settle on a salary, perhaps an early performance review/salary increase can be negotiated. Sometimes you can negotiate on vacation or benefits. The answer is always "NO," unless you ask the question.

Rule #7 – Focus on the base.
It is in your best interest to negotiate the base salary first. Your future raises will be affected by this sum, not to mention Social Security, unemployment, life insurance, etc. The employer’s hands are sometimes tied due to internal salary equity. You may be asking for more than some of the current employees are making. Sometimes you will be offered a hiring bonus. Beware, they are usually taxed at a higher rate.

TIP:
SILENCE. It is a powerful tool if used at the right time. Most of us are uncomfortable with silence. If you are offered a dollar amount repeat the amount and then be quiet. Reflect for a moment. Count to five or ten. See what happens!

“Silence is true wisdom’s best reply.”
Euripides
AFTER THE INTERVIEW
HOW DID YOU DO?

ASSESSING THE INTERVIEW

As soon as possible after the interview, you should sit down and write, or use a tape recorder, to get your thoughts out. Just let them flow - dump it all out. This exercise is for your eyes or ears only!

What is your gut reaction to the process you just went through?

How do you rate your performance?

What do you think the interviewer(s) thought of you?

What reservations did you hear from the interviewer(s) - spoken or not spoken?

Do you want to work for this company? Why?

What reservations do you have about working there?

Did you address these reservations to your satisfaction?

What looks exciting?

What could you have done differently to be more effective?

What do you still have to find out about the company/job/compensation/benefits?

Let it all go, and then walk away from it. Put the writing away, or turn off the tape recorder, and forget about the whole thing. Hours later, or the next day, pick it up again and read or listen to what you had to say. Are you still feeling the same way? (See exercise Page 36)

IMPORTANT:

After you complete this exercise, it is the time to write your follow up letter(s) in accordance with your feelings and reactions. See “Follow Up Letters” page 37.
After the Interview

FIT? YOUR NEEDS - THEIR SITUATION AND CULTURE
Complete this exercise after the interview. This part of the equation should be about your values. What’s important to you in the job? Does this job fulfill your needs? Is this the right job for you?

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<th>What I Want and Need</th>
<th>What They Have to Offer</th>
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Doing the exercise is only part of the process. You will now have to step back and do some serious thinking and evaluating.

- Do you want to work for this company?
- Are you picking up vibes that things are not quite right?
- Will you have job satisfaction there?
- Is there a career path?
- Will you have to compromise some of your needs/values?
- Will you fit into the corporate culture?
- Is this the place/job for you?
FOLLOW-UP LETTERS

Can Be the Make or Break Point

The “Thank you for the interview” letter is a good way to put yourself in front of the interviewer(s) one more time. Sometimes the follow up letter can be the tie-breaker between you and another candidate. The follow-up can create goodwill that sets the tone for your future interactions with your potential employer.

You should send the letter within 24 hours of the interview while the experience is still fresh in your mind as well as in the interviewer’s.

Make sure the letter is a professional letter that reminds them of the qualities you can bring to the company - your added value. A handwritten letter or note is also acceptable. However, save the printed greeting card for a more appropriate occasion.

Each interviewer has his or her own agenda. This is an opportunity for you to address whatever concern you picked up during the interview - overcome the objection.

Example:

If you were asked: “I see you don’t have direct experience in this field,” let them know about your transferable skills, and how they apply to this job: “I pride myself on the fact that I can adapt and learn quickly. For instance, I transitioned into the sales department at my last company with very little hands-on experience, yet I was able to make my quotas in record time, and even became sales person of the month in the first quarter.”

Conclude with your interest in working for the company - ask for the job - and use enthusiasm!

This is also a time to let the interviewer(s) know that you are excited and enthusiastic about the opportunity, and why. What were the things you liked about the company? The culture? The product, service, research, cutting-edge technology? The mission of the company? Why would you want to work for this company?

This is not a time to talk about the benefits - salary or perks that will benefit you. This is the time to define what you like about this particular company and position.

The follow up letter is one more opportunity to put yourself in front of your interviewer(s) - remind them of what you can bring to the company.
FOLLOW-UP FORMAT EXAMPLE

Dear Interviewer,  (A separate letter should be sent to each interviewer - addressing concerns.)

Your reaction to the interview. (“I left the interview with a million ideas going through my head regarding your company and the challenges of the job.” Or, “I came away from the interview feeling confident that I was the solution to your problem.”)

Why you want this job. (“After talking to you and the other team members, I was impressed with the company’s view of future technology.” Or, “I have set my sites on working for a company that has the type of culture and mission such as yours - in particular your attitude toward the employees working as a cross-trained team.”)

What you would bring to the company. (Restate your qualifications - “The added value(s) I would bring to this position would be my ability to solve problems using my past experience and analytical skills, particularly working within tight deadlines.” Or, “I have several reasons to believe I am the solution to your problem...” List the skills and experiences you have that will bring a solution to the job’s problems or challenges.)

Ask for the “sale.” (Do you want the job? Let the interviewer know, “I am really excited about the prospect of joining your team and want to be considered as an interested candidate. I know that I would be an excellent fit for the job based on my past experience and what I can bring to the job, and my future goals.”)

Sign-off. (“I look forward to talking with you further regarding this opportunity.” Or, “Thanks again for the interview, I felt very comfortable talking with you and I was impressed with your handling of the interview process.”)

To Email or Not to Email

What about sending the “Thank you” by e-mail?

This is a somewhat controversial issue.

It is ok to send a thank you by e-mail - not politically incorrect. But usually a hard copy sent by regular mail would be the best choice, mainly because the interviewer(s) will have something in hand and tangible to remind them of you and your qualifications.

However, if you get the sense that speed is of importance, then an e-mail would be the fastest way to communicate. One of the problems with e-mail is that it is overused in companies and may not get read, or if read, not remembered - unless the reader takes the time to print it out.

You will have to use your judgment based on the situation.

A Virus Story

Email from someone who sent follow up emails.

“Upon completion of a recent interview I hurried home and sent out thank you letters to each of the interviewers via email. It has come to my attention, 3 days later, that the letters I attached contained a virus. I am not sure if I should resend a clean copy of the letter and run the risk of closer scrutiny or not send anymore and risk appearing sloppy. Can you provide any guidance in this matter?”

BEWARE OF VIRUSES
THEY CAN STRIKE ANYWHERE AT ANY TIME!
WHAT'S NEXT?

The Most Difficult Part - Waiting

Often at the end of the interview, the interviewer will tell you what the next step is in the decision process. If that does not happen, you may ask, “Could you tell me what the next step is?” You may get a clue as to whether you will be included in the next round. Or, can you expect an offer in the near future?

Don’t be surprised if you don’t hear back within the time promised.

What if they said they’d call and they haven’t? Regardless of what is said, things don’t always work out as promised. This is one of the most difficult times in the whole process - the waiting. Be patient, there could be a hundred reasons why it is taking so long.

If one or two days have gone by beyond the time you were told you could expect a call, it would be acceptable to call to find out the status and if you are still in the running for the position. Again, don’t be surprised if you leave a message and don’t get a return call - this seems to be the norm. If you don’t hear back - move on. For whatever reason, you may no longer be under consideration, it is best to go forward and not look back. Every once in a while you might receive a call well after the expected time; at that point it will depend on your status and what has happened in the meantime whether you say, “No thank you,” or move forward. Timing is unpredictable in such dealings. Don't take it personally.

Some applicants have called the company after a rejection and asked for feedback on the interview and qualifications - why they didn't get the job. Most of the time you won't get a true response because of a fear of legal ramifications. The answer most commonly received is, “We found someone who had direct experience.” But, every once in a while someone will take the time to tell you what was missing, or what you could have done differently. It is worth a phone call if you would like some feedback.

If, for some reason, you decide to decline the offer made, follow through with a professional call to say the offer didn't work for you at this time. You never know when another opportunity may come up at the same company - you don't want to burn any bridges.

On The Spot Offer

What if they make me an offer and want an immediate decision?

Some employers make on-the-spot offers. It is always a good idea to take time to think the offer over. Once you have accepted, it is too late to negotiate any terms of the agreement. If pressed for a decision, tell the employer that you have a personal policy of taking 24 hours to think over major decisions.
CONCLUSION
PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE!

Keep Up the Good Work!

As after any workout you may feel overwhelmed (sore muscles) - don’t despair, it will get easier after the groundwork is done. It is very important that you continue to work out. Practice, practice, practice, and become stronger, smoother, and more comfortable.

The goal is not to become over-rehearsed and stiff, but to be prepared and natural. Can you imagine an actor going into a performance without a rehearsal? This is your time to prepare and rehearse.

It is important that you continue to work on your communication skills. If you feel you need one-on-one help, consider working with a professional*, or work with a friend or relative who will give you positive and constructive feedback. It is also important that you practice the right way. If you keep practicing, but are repeating mistakes, you will not improve. Think about a tennis or golf swing - it takes a pro to show you the right way.

Maybe you won’t get a job offer every time, but preparation will greatly improve your chances and your confidence. Treat each interview as a new learning experience. You may even begin to enjoy the process - some people do!

* Get Instant Feedback from a Professional

To schedule your personal consultation, visit my website at www.InterviewCoach.com. Whether in-person or phone coaching, after one or more practice sessions with The Interview Coach, your results will improve significantly!

What People are Saying

“For the first six months of my job search I received only slight interest from perspective new employers. Then all of a sudden in April 2001, I received three requests for interviews all occurring in one week. Oddly enough when I received my wish for an interview I panicked. I found you through the internet and immediately called. You never pressured me into spending any money or buying your book like some high pressure sales person. You gave me valuable feedback through mock interviews and suggestions on how to evaluate my strengths and weaknesses.”

“After going on the three interviews, I received two offers. By completing the exercises in your book, I was able to make the best career decision for my needs. There was an initial offer of $58,000 but your coaching taught me how to successfully negotiate an additional $7,000, and a performance review after months 6 and 12, which will further increase my salary.

There is no way the dollars invested in your program can thank you enough for all the assistance you gave me. Most important to me is that you were extremely patient and professional. Knowing you better now, I realize just how busy your schedule is, but you never rushed me through this process. I would strongly encourage anyone interested in presenting themselves at their best to a potential employer and negotiating the best compensation package, to invest in your program. You have made a friend for life.”

A Success Story - Robert Green, “New” General Manager

FORMULA FOR A STELLAR INTERVIEW

1. Prepare
   - your information statement
   - your stories (5 or 6)
   - your questions to ask
   - your salary negotiation answers

2. Research
   - your salary needs
   - your worth in your market
   - your bottom line

3. Practice
   - with a friend
   - with a professional*
ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Carole Martin, M.A.

Carole Martin, Monster.com's Interview Coach, has 15 years of human resources management experience in several industries, including biotechnology, software, engineering, aerospace, publishing, sales and high tech. She is an acknowledged expert in behavioral interviewing techniques and has made interviewing her specialty. Martin has created the Virtual Interviews currently on her own Web site as well as on Monster.com.

She holds a master's degree in career development from John F. Kennedy University in Walnut Creek, California, where she is now an adjunct faculty member teaching interviewing skills to counselors.

Martin has interviewed thousands of candidates at all levels in the corporate environment, and has many interesting stories and tips to pass along. She teaches her tips and techniques to job seekers and employers through one-on-one sessions, phone coaching and group workshops. Thanks to the Internet, she now coaches people worldwide. Martin speaks at conferences, business meetings and classes about interviewing and salary negotiations for interviewers and interviewees. She has published many articles on Web sites and has been quoted in numerous publications, including the LA Times and the New York Times.

As an outplacement consultant for Spherion (formerly Interim Career Consulting), Martin has coached hundreds of individuals through transition and job search in industries ranging from high tech to manufacturing.

Martin also works as a staffing consultant for businesses in the San Francisco Bay Area, teaching and assisting interviewers with techniques to find the right fit for their jobs.

She is a firm believer -- and living proof -- that it is never too late to improve your life. She obtained her BA at 40 and then her master's degree.

Contact her at Carole@InterviewCoach.com
OTHER SOURCES

BOOKS

What Color is Your Parachute? Richard Nelson Bolles
One of the best books published on exercises to discover your strengths and weaknesses.

Job Interviews for Dummies, Joyce Lain Kennedy.
A fun, simple book full of practical advice.

Feel the Fear and Do It Anyway, Susan Jeffers, Ph.D.
For anyone who is feeling powerless and dealing with anxiety.

Interview Strategies That Lead to Job Offers, Marilyn Pincus.
A small book packed with a lot of useful information.

The Unofficial Guide to Acing the Interview, Michelle Tullier.
Interviewing techniques covering a broad range of topics.

How to Win Friends and Influence People, Dale Carnegie
A book that has transcended the decades and whose principles are still current.

SALARY RESEARCH WEBSITES

www.salary.com
Of the salary-type sites I’ve seen, this is the most straightforward. You can select the job title by geographic region, even down to the zip code if you want, and immediately get a salary range in graph form. There are also good job descriptions.

http://stats.bis.gov/oco/ocos002.htm
For administrative and office salaries information.

www.yahoo.com/Computers_and_Internet/Employment/Salary_Information
For computers and Internet salary info.

www.cob.ohio-state.edu/~fin/jobs/mco/salary.htm
Consultant Salaries.

http://fairway.ecn.purdue.edu/ESCAPE/stats/salaries.html
For engineers.

www.psrinc.com/salary.htm
For MIS Professionals

http://www.wageweb.com

http://www.jobsmart.org
For salary info across multiple fields and geographic locations.

http://www.salaryexpert.com
A quote from “the Boss”

When I walk on stage, I’ve got to feel like it’s the most important thing in the world. Also I’ve got to feel like, well, it’s only rock and roll.

Bruce Springsteen

When you walk into that interview, feel like it's the most important thing in the world. But then think to yourself, it's only an interview!