
Career Guidebook Series



Volume 3: Interviewing



**Career Services & Leadership Education
Division for Student Life
St. Lawrence University**

Interviewing

The interview is one of the most important components of your job search strategy. An effective resume and cover letter helped you secure an interview; now a successful interview can be instrumental in securing a position. It can be the strongest factor in the organization's decision to hire you. However, an ineffective interview can abruptly end an otherwise successful job search. With thoughtful preparation and practice you can learn the skills necessary to interview effectively, thus helping you to secure the position you want.

It is important to also keep in mind that interviewing involves a mutual exchange of information, rather than an inquisition or interrogation. An interview is an opportunity for candidates **and** employers to mutually evaluate the match between the candidate's qualifications and goals and the organization's needs. This is your best opportunity to evaluate the organization, and the position and can be informative and productive for both parties.

PLANNING FOR THE INTERVIEW

Often an individual approaches the interviewing process with apprehension and a degree of nervousness. This is normal given the emphasis that is placed on an interview in the job search process. It is important to remember, however, that without careful planning and preparation, you may become overwhelmed by the interview and fail to present clearly to the employer your qualifications as they relate to the position for which you are interviewing. Consider the following areas when preparing:

1. Know Yourself

It is difficult to articulate your skills, interests, and goals to an interviewer, especially if you have difficulty articulating them to yourself. Complete a thorough self-assessment, reviewing your skills/abilities, background, experience, education, training and career goals. You need to present to the employer confidence in yourself and your qualifications, as well as a sense of career direction.

Review your resume before the interview. The employer will likely use it as a guide and ask you questions directly from it. Be sure you know exactly what it says. If you have difficulty identifying your strengths in these areas, make an appointment to speak with a professional in Career Services and Leadership Education.

In addition, take time to respond to difficult and common interview questions (See Appendix I). It is common to think you can easily answer most interview questions, but until you attempt to put your thoughts into words, you will be unable to detect if your responses are clear, concise and effective. This is where practice becomes so important. Ask a friend or roommate to interview you. This will enable someone else to determine how clear and concise your responses are. Professionals in Career Services and Leadership Education will conduct mock interviews with you upon request, allowing you to encounter a "real" interview situation. They will also provide constructive feedback and suggest possible areas of improvement for you to consider. These mock interviews can be videotaped, allowing you to critique and evaluate your interview performance.

2. Know Your Field of Interest

Employers will be interested to discover *why* you selected a particular career field to pursue and what your related experience has been. You need to be prepared for these types of questions. Career research will help you. Explore resources in the Career Resource Library in Career Services and Leadership Education, as well as the ODY Library to find information about the field, industries and positions. This may include future projections, major competitors, industry trends, and characteristics of individuals in the fields and positions.

3. Know The Employer

Research the organization thoroughly to discover the company's products, services, location(s), previous and projected growth and future prospects. You may also uncover problems within the organization. Consider the following list of areas to research, as well as the following resources:

Areas to Research:

- Size and # of Employees
- Key Personnel
- Profit/Revenue/Sales
- Type of Organization
- Majors Considered
- Entry-level positions
- Career Paths
- Relationship w/Employees
- Career/Professional Development
- Products and/or Services
- Structures & Divisions
- Competitors within Industry
- Performance
- Past History or Growth
- Present Market
- Projections for Future
- Reputation/Integrity
- Training
- Affiliates & Subsidiaries

Resources to Consider:

- Company Literature
- The CSLE Career Resource Library
- Vault.com
- Lexis-Nexis
- Career Search
- WetFeet.com
- <http://home.sprintmail.com/~debflanagan/>
- <http://company.monster.com>
- Current Magazines such as Fortune and Business Week
- SLU Alumni or other contacts working with the organization
- Articles in major newspapers such as *The New York Times* & *The Wall Street Journal*

4. Know The Job You Applied For

Prior to the interview, have a clear description of the job and the required skills. You need to be able to articulate your understanding of the position and the demands. Review the job posting before your interview.

Next...

Now that you have carefully prepared for the interview by assessing yourself, understanding the field, researching the organization and clarifying the position, you need to focus on the interview itself. Careful research and planning for an interview is less effective without PRACTICE!! This was discussed earlier, but remember that a mock interview will allow you to practice articulating your skills and qualifications to an employer.

TYPES OF INTERVIEWS

The following types of interviews are best seen as “phases” of the overall process rather than separate interviews. Given cost, time restraints and staff factors, a phone interview and screening interview may be combined, or in a small organization, the president or manager may combine all phases of the interview from screening to selection into one interview.

Each interview you have will be different, however, information discussed earlier can be applied to each interview situation for planning and preparation. With each additional interview you have with a prospective employer, you need to take an extra step in self-assessment and consider new information that has been revealed about the organization and the position for which you are being considered. Throughout the interview process, remember to constantly evaluate your interests, needs and skills as related to the organization and the position.

- **Screening Interview:**
This is usually the first meeting you will have with a prospective employer. It is usually general in format and relatively short, lasting 20-30 minutes. On-campus interviews and recruiting fair interviews are examples. The purpose of this interview is to reduce the number of candidates to a manageable number. In doing so, this person selects individuals best qualified to meet their organization’s needs. She/he is also looking for reasons to eliminate people.
- **Follow-up or Second Interview:**
The purpose of this interview is to identify finalists for the position. The number of candidates has been reduced to a manageable number, however the final two or three candidates have not been selected. This interview is on-site at the employer’s location and often several people will interview the candidate. Candidates will receive additional information about the organization and the position. Conversely, the interviewers will ask more pin-pointed questions, possibly hypothetical in nature, to reveal certain skills and characteristics that you possess to determine an appropriate match with the organization’s needs.
- **Selection Interview:**
With the final candidate pool, the position’s supervisor or Corporate Manager for that branch will usually be the primary interviewer, however others may be involved as well. During this interview, you will want to have all your questions answered so that you can make a decision if you would like to accept the position if offered. If the employer initiates the discussion, salary, benefits, professional development and additional areas might be discussed at this time. The decision to offer the job to an individual is made at this stage after a review of the finalists’ interviews. If you are the first choice you may receive a response very quickly. However, if you are an acceptable, suitable candidate, but the second or third choice, you may receive a delayed response. The employer may wish to place you on “hold”, waiting for a response from other candidates.

INTERVIEW FORMATS

The phases of the interview process may take on different formats, rather than just an individual, face-to-face exchange of information. Note the following formats, with some additional suggestions provided for assistance.

- **Phone Interview:**
This could replace a screening interview or a follow-up/second interview. An employer will contact you to set-up the phone interview. At that time, ask the employer the number of individuals participating in the interview. This information will help you to prepare for the interview and anticipate the dynamics of speaking with one person or to numerous individuals over a speakerphone. Make arrangements to be alone in your room or apartment for the interview. Have readily available a copy of your resume and questions to ask the employer. Be careful not to rustle paper needlessly to convey to the employer that you are unprepared. One recommendation is to tape your resume and information you have about the position and the company to a wall near a mirror. Do the interview standing up so you are more energized. Evaluation for this type of interview is based on responses, tone of voice, enthusiasm, ease of conversation and adaptability to the circumstances.
- **Group Interview:**
This type of interview can be threatening given the numbers of individuals involved. You may be interviewed by a group of individuals, i.e. a search committee, where you will be required to respond to questions from each person. Maintain eye contact with each person in the room when answering questions. Try to draw each individual into the interview, remembering that each person's impression counts. Ask each person if she/he has a copy of your resume. If they do not, provide copies to everyone.

In addition to this type of group interview, an organization may decide to bring a group of candidates on-site to interview. You may be asked to complete a group task, respond to certain scenarios, or to meet informally. The employer is looking for your ability to work in a group situation, the leadership style you exhibit, your adaptability and flexibility, and your decision-making style.

- **Breakfast/Lunch/Dinner Interview:**
This type of interview can be very difficult. Normally, scheduled meals during an interview are for the candidate to relax and gather her/his thoughts for the remaining hours of the interview. Often times, the employer asks an individual(s) with the organization to join you for the meal and possibly introduce you to the surrounding community. Therefore, you are placed in another interview situation. It is best not to concentrate on the meal, but focus on the conversation and the questions asked. Remember your dining etiquette and, if at all possible, manage to eat some of your food!

Regardless of the type of interview, both the interviewer and the interviewee will have dual roles. Each person is acting as a screener and screenee. You will be presenting yourself and your qualifications, but you will also be evaluating the organization. You will need to decide if you would consider working there based on information and impressions acquired in the interview. Simultaneously, the interviewer is judging your potential as an employee, as well as presenting her/his organization in an informative and attractive manner. With careful preparation within the context of the type or phase of the interview process, you can interview confidently and effectively with each employer.

INTERVIEW TYPES

When preparing for an interview, interviewees emphasize their style, assertiveness, conciseness of answers, etc. Little, if any, emphasis is placed on the style and assertiveness of the interviewer. A structured interview where the interviewer takes the lead and asks probing questions is expected to be the norm. Preparing for this type of interview is slightly different from preparing for a more open-ended or free flowing interview.

You may want to consider the following styles of the interviewer when preparing for an interview. Alterations of your style and the method in which you answer questions may be necessary in order to effectively present yourself and your qualifications. During the first few minutes of the interview, pay close attention to the interviewer. She/he will probably take the lead and set the style for the interview.

- **Directive Interview:**
The interviewer has set the agenda for the interview. She/he will gather information, providing direction to you by the questions asked or answers she/he provides. You are expected to do most of the talking. You may feel as if questions are being “fired” at you constantly. You can ease the tension by pausing before answering and taking a few moments to compose yourself and your answers. This interview can allow for an equal exchange of information and questions, if you have prepared adequately and can articulate your answers and pose intelligent questions to the interviewer as well.
- **Stress Interview:**
A confrontational style is used through which the interviewer will attempt to unsettle you. You are purposely placed in a pressure situation to see how you respond. The interviewer may begin the interview with “I’d like to begin the interview by asking you what you would like to discuss during the next 30 minutes?” This is just one of many statements that an interviewer may use to put pressure on you to direct the interview. If this occurs, remember to remain calm and maintain your composure. Recognize this tactic and show the interviewer that you can respond calmly and effectively.
- **Nondirective Interview:**
Some interviewers take a fairly informal approach to interviewing and therefore, they fail to provide direction to you. A casually posed question within a casual atmosphere often promotes a casual response on your behalf. It is important not to let your guard down in this situation and become too relaxed. If this continues, you need to provide direction in the interview. In order to do so, be tactful and change the direction in a positive way. Your ultimate goal is to convey to the interviewer what she/he needs to know about you and your interest in working for the organization.

In addition to these styles, there may be other interview techniques that are used by an interviewer which are appropriate for the expectations of the position and the person being interviewed. Considering these issues when preparing for interviews can assist you in interviewing at your best.

TYPES OF INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

In addition to there being different types of interviews, the questions asked within an interview vary as well. Appendix I of this guidebook lists common interview questions, but there are some additional specific types of questions of which to be aware.

You might encounter **Behavior-Based** questions. These are questions that ask you to describe a specific time when you exhibited a certain behavior, or completed a certain task or accomplishment. They might often begin with “Describe a time when...” or “Give me an example of a...” or “Tell me about a time when...” or “What would you do if...” These questions are asked to provide the employer with concrete examples of what you do and how you respond in a variety of situations. Behavior-based questions are more specific and require more information than a question such as “What motivates you?” Below is a list of some behavior-based questions.

- **Behavior-Based Questions**

- Describe an unpopular decision you had to make but made anyway.
- Describe a situation where you heard of some new technology and implemented it.
- Describe a time when a project under your direction was late and how you dealt with the issue.
- Give me an example of a problem, issue, or concern that you handled in a unique and creative way.
- How do you instill ownership in people when new ways of doing things are introduced?
- Tell me about a project you are particularly proud of having been associated with and why.
- Tell me how you stay current in your field on new or evolving technologies or programs.
- If you observed someone displaying inappropriate work behavior, what would you do?
- If you heard it through the grapevine that someone didn’t care for you, what would you do, if anything?

Behavior-Based Interviewing: Selecting the Right Person for the Job

A second specific type of interview question is **Case** interview questions. Case interview questions are commonly used by consulting firms or other industries that are looking for individuals with skills in persuasion and logic. According to Marc P. Cosentino in his book *Case in Point: Complete Case Interview Preparation*, “in essence, a case interview is a role-playing exercise” (1999). The purpose of case questions is to observe how you solve problems, and handle pressure, to test your analytical and logical thinking abilities, to see if you are interested in problem solving, and to glimpse more of your personality.

Cosentino also gives 13 “Case Commandments” in his book. They include:

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1) Listen to the question | 8) Manage your time |
| 2) Take notes | 9) By the numbers |
| 3) Summarize the question | 10) Be coachable |
| 4) Verify the objective | 11) Be creative and brainstorm |
| 5) Ask clarifying questions | 12) Exude enthusiasm and a positive attitude |
| 6) Organize your answer | |
| 7) Hold that thought for “one alligator” | 13) Bring closure and summarize |

These might seem unclear or overwhelming, so please visit the CSLE Career Resource Library and have a look at the *Case In Point* book for more information.

- **Types of Case Interview Questions**

Brainteasers

- There are three bags of gold. One of the bags contains fake gold. All the bags and all the coins look exactly alike. There is the exact same number of coins in each bag. The real gold coins weigh one ounce each, the fake coins weigh 1.1 oz apiece. You have a penny scale and one penny, which means you can weigh something just once. (You load the scale, put the penny in, and the scale spits out a piece of paper with the weight.) How can you tell which bag has the fake gold?

Back of the Envelope

- How many gas stations are in the U.S.?
- How many DVD players were sold in the U.S. last year?
- How many pairs of boxers are sold in the U.S. each year?
- How much does a 747 weigh?

Business Case Questions – Number Cases

- The total widget market is \$170 million, and our sales are \$30 million. What percentage of the market share do we hold?
- You bought a stock for \$36 a share. Today it jumped 6%. How much is your stock worth?
- American Express is facing stiff competition from a host of new credit cards that have no annual fee and low interest rates. In response, American Express is considering dropping its \$50 annual fee. What are the economics of dropping the \$50 fee?

Business Case Questions – Business Strategy and Operations Cases

- GE has invented a new light bulb that never burns out. It could burn for more than 500 years and it would never blink. The director of marketing calls you into her office and asks, “How would you price this?” What do you tell her?
- DuPont has just invented a lightweight, super-absorbent, biodegradable material that would be perfect for disposable diapers. What do they do with it?

Cosentino, Marc P., 1999, *Case in point: Complete case interview preparation*. Ivy Productions, Inc.: Boston, MA.

For answers to these questions, and for additional tips on answering case interview questions, look in *Case in Point: Complete Case Interview Preparation* in the CSLE Career Resource Library. For more examples of case interview questions, use some of the website links listed on page 11 of this guidebook. One particular site with a great deal of information, including a selected list of companies that use case questions, books on case interviews, companies with information about case interview preparation, and additional websites with information on case interviews is:
http://www.quintcareers.com/case_interview_resources.html

GRADUATE AND PROFESSIONAL SCHOOL INTERVIEW PREPARATION

For more information on preparing for graduate and professional school interviews, please refer to Volume Five in the Career Guidebook Series: Graduate School, located in Career Services and Leadership Education. The CSLE Career Resource Library also has additional resources on preparing for graduate and professional school interviews. Some are listed on Page 11 of this guidebook.

STAGES OF THE INTERVIEW

Before you begin the interviewing process it is helpful to understand the stages of the process. There is a logical ordering of events in an interview and knowing the order in which things typically happen can help you to feel more confident. This is not to say that things will always happen in this order, but the following is the format of a standard interview.

1. Prior to the Interview

You will have gained an excellent understanding of yourself and your goals as well as your occupational field, your employer, and the specific job for which you are applying. The interviewer will have spent a few minutes reviewing your resume.

2. Breaking the Ice (2 minutes)

Always shake hands and introduce yourself. Relax! Most likely the opening of the interview will include small talk. Be friendly and responsive. Try to notice your surroundings and anything that might identify the interviewer as an individual. Feel free to initiate a discussion of some very general topic of conversation such as weather, travel etc, or comment on an object in the office. Be sure to ask how much time there will be for the interview. The interviewer will likely review your interviewing agenda with you.

3. General Information Sharing (10 minutes)

Your resume is an outline of your experiences. This part of the interview is your opportunity to fill in the gaps and provide details. You will be asked questions about your education and training, your work experience, and the skills that you have attained from work and interests. It is essential that you have a good idea of the things about yourself that you want to stress. Under no circumstance should you try to fool an interviewer with a stretched truth! You don't know how much they already know about you!!

4. Further Probing of Key Characteristics (10 minutes)

The job for which you are interviewing has certain characteristics and requirements. The interviewer is looking for a candidate who understands what these are and who can relate past experiences and skills to what will be required in the new position. Questions asked will be more specific than those in the "General Information Sharing". The interviewer will be trying to gain a clearer understanding of your style and your potential for blending with the company/organization. Expect questions that ask; how?, why?, what did you do?.

5. Solicit Questions (5 minutes)

Organizing your facts and experiences so as to have clear, concise answers at hand is a major part of interview preparation but it is not the only part. In addition to your "excellent answers" you must have some "excellent questions". It is important to LISTEN and formulate questions based on topics raised by the interviewer. For types of questions you should be prepared to ask, some sample questions have been included in the back of this handout (Appendix II). Questions will arise that you will need to ask in order to clarify your understanding of the job and the company/organization. If you have an urgent question earlier in the interview ask it, but it is generally a good idea to wait on your questions until you are invited to ask them. **Always have questions to ask.** A lack of questions infers that you are not interested enough or alert enough to be inquisitive. Do **not** ask a question concerning things that you could have learned had you done your homework. Do **not** ask

about salary in the initial interview. If the interviewer brings it up, however, then you are free to discuss it openly. If you are not invited to ask questions, politely ask if you may.

6. Tying it Together and Closing (3 minutes)

It is during these final few minutes that any loose ends are addressed and any other questions that either the interviewer or interviewee need answered in order to make a decision are asked. Be sure you find out what the timeline is for the employer and when you can expect to hear back from them.

7. Follow-up

Here is yet another opportunity to make a good impression. Write a thank you letter right after the interview. So many people forget this step that if you don't forget you'll stand out!! Respect the employer's given timeline, but if you are unsure of their timeline and if you haven't heard anything after one week, you might call to inquire as to the progress of the candidate search and ask about your current status as a candidate. If you don't get the job, ask for some feedback. Suggestions from past interviews can help you strengthen weak areas and polish up for future interviews.

Now that you are familiar with the stages of a typical interview and you have learned how important the impression you make is, it is necessary for you to **PRACTICE**. Rehearse answers to typical questions, role-play with friends, or participate in a mock interview with a professional in Career Services and Leadership Education. Your method is not as important as the fact that you take your interview preparation seriously. A list of sample questions is provided in the back of this handout (Appendix I).

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

The familiar saying, "You never get a second chance to make a first impression" couldn't be more applicable to the interviewing scene. Your interview image must be buffed and polished until you have mastered a flawless presentation of yourself. Your image, of course, begins well in advance of your personal interview. All correspondences, resumes, telephone conversations and informal visits should reflect the image you want to convey. This is not to suggest that you should not be yourself. Certainly everyone has a different style and portrays a unique image. Stressing the "flawless image" means simply organizing and preparing to the extent that you portray the most perfect you. Below are some suggestions and things that you should be on the look out for.

Appearance:

- Dress professionally, feel good about the way you look
 - Dress one step above how you would dress on the job
 - Err on the side of being overdressed not underdressed
 - Avoid soiled, wrinkled or worn clothing
- Use make-up moderately
- Make sure hair, mustaches, and beards are well trimmed
- Don't overdo use of jewelry
- Don't forget to shine shoes, clean fingernails, etc.
- Do not wear strong perfumes, colognes or aftershaves - avoid them altogether if possible

Attitude:

- Project confidence and enthusiasm

- Show sincerity, commitment
- Be optimistic

Behavior:

- Arrive early, but not too early. 5-10 minutes is a good range
- Carry yourself proudly, don't bring in too much 'baggage' (so you are free to shake hands)
- Use a firm handshake, but do not try to prove your strength by being too firm
- Maintain good eye contact
- Speak in a controlled voice at a reasonable volume
- Smile and be friendly to everybody
- **Do Not**
 - Smoke or chew gum
 - Fiddle or scratch
 - Laugh uncontrollably
 - Appear confused or use defeating expressions

LEGAL ISSUES AND PRE-EMPLOYMENT INQUIRIES

When conducting a job search it is important to recognize that Federal Legislation prohibits interviewers from using information gained through asking illegal questions to make hiring decisions. Examples include questions concerning age, national origin, race, gender, religion, citizenship and certain physical data. Employers cannot exclude individuals from employment consideration solely on the basis of any factors listed above. One exception to this is the Bona Fide Job Qualification clause. The burden falls on the employer to prove that one of the above considerations is critical for them to know before making a hiring decision.

Please refer to Appendix III for additional information of pre-employment inquiries developed by legal representatives from the College Placement Council. You will note that each inquiry area provides a proper and improper questioning format. Before any Interview, become familiar with these legal areas of inquiry.

- **What To Do If Asked An Illegal Question:**

It is your choice whether or not to answer an illegal question. Your response can range from

- 1) Answering the question directly (it is not illegal for you to answer),
- 2) Answering the perceived underlying question without answering the question directly (if asked "Are you married or single?" you might respond "if you are concerned about my willingness to travel, I can assure you that I am fully dedicated to my career and willing to fulfill all the expectations of this position)
- 3) Asking how the question is relevant to your qualifications for the position
- 4) Stating that you do not think the information is relevant to your qualifications for the position
- 5) State that the question is an illegal question and/or you would prefer not to answer
- 6) Terminate the interview if you are uncomfortable and illegal questions continue

Notice that the further you go, the more defensive you might make the employer.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR YOUR PREPARATION AND SUCCESS

The following books are **available in the CSLE Career Resource Library**.

- Sweaty Palms, The Neglected Art of Being Interviewed
- 101 Dynamite Questions to Ask at Your Job Interview, 2nd Edition
- Behavior-Based Interviewing: Selecting the Right Person for the Job
- Case in Point: Complete Case Interview Preparation
- The Art of SpeedReading People
- Lifescrpts: What to Say to Get What you Want in 101 of Life's Toughest Situations
- Business Etiquette: 101 Ways to Conduct Business with Charm and Savvy
- VGM's Complete Guide to Career Etiquette: From Job Search Through Career Advancement
- The Etiquette Advantage in Business: Personal Skills for Professional Success
- Peterson's Game Plan for Getting Into Law School (p. 83)
- Peterson's Game Plan for Getting Into Medical School (p. 83)
- Peterson's Game Plan for Getting Into Business School (p. 73)

The following books might also be helpful in preparing for an interview

- How to Turn an Interview Into a Job
- 101 Great Answers to the Toughest Interview Questions
- Six Steps to Successful Interviewing
- The Complete Job Search Handbook
- The Berkeley Guide to Employment for New College Graduates
- Interview for Success
- The Executive Interview
- Best Answers to the 201 Most Frequently Asked Interview Questions
- 201 Best Questions To Ask On Your Interview
- The Perfect Interview: How to Get the Job You Really Want
- The Interview Rehearsal Book: 7 Steps to Job-Winning Interviews Using Acting Skills You Never Knew You Had
- How to Prepare for an Interview and Obtain a Job As a Law Enforcement Officer
- The 250 Job Interview Questions You'll Most Likely Be Asked... And The Answers That Will Get You Hired! [ABRIDGED]
- Interview Strategies That Lead to Job Offers (Business Success Guide)
- The Unofficial Guide to Acing the Interview
- Landing the Job You Want: How to Have the Best Job Interview of Your Life

Websites with Interviewing information and tips:

- <http://www.job-interview.net/>
- http://www.quintcareers.com/job_interviews.html
- <http://careerplanning.about.com/cs/jobinterviews/>
- <http://www.fastcompany.com/online/01/jobint.html>
- <http://www.joblink-usa.com/interview.htm>
- <http://content.monster.com/jobinfo/interview/>
- <http://www.collegegrad.com/intv/index.shtml>

APPENDIX I

Questions Often Asked By the Interviewer

Before answering the following questions, it is important to remember that most interviewers will be looking for three things when you answer questions: 1) Your answer, 2) How well you can organize your thinking, 3) How well you express yourself.

Breaking the Ice

1. Pottery has always intrigued me. How did you get interested in it?
2. The campus looks very busy. How is your semester going?
3. I see you are involved in sports. How is your season going?
4. I have an extra hour and it's my first visit to the area. What should I see?

Personal Assessment

5. Tell me about yourself. (*very common*)
6. What are your greatest strengths and weaknesses?
7. What have you done that shows initiative and willingness to work?
8. How do you react to criticism?
9. How would your best friend describe you?
10. What motivates you to put forth your greatest effort?
11. What kind of people do you enjoy working with?
12. What types of people rub you the wrong way?
13. What frustrates you? (makes you angry?)
14. Are you a joiner or a loner? A leader or follower? A committee member or an executive?
15. How do you spend your spare time? What are your hobbies?

Education and Experience

16. Can you summarize your educational background for me?
17. Why did you decide to attend school at St. Lawrence?
18. Why did you major in Chinese Philosophy?
19. Tell me about your grades -- overall and grades in your major. Technical courses?
20. What courses did you like the most? The least? Why?
21. Do you feel you have done the best scholastic work you are capable of?
22. Describe for me the most rewarding accomplishment since you've started college.
23. Describe your study habits.
24. How did you finance your education?
25. Do you feel you received a good general education?
26. Why did you drop out of school for a year?
27. How do you spend college vacations?
28. What extra-curricular activities are you involved in? What have you gained from those experiences?
29. Do you have plans for furthering your education?
30. If you could start college over, what would you do differently?
31. Tell me about the most satisfying job you ever held. The least?
32. Have you had any work experience related to this position?
33. What kind of boss do you prefer? Tell me about the best boss. The worst.
34. What kind of work interests you the most?
35. What were you doing during the period of time not covered in your resume?
36. Have you had any supervisory experience?
37. What frustrates you on the job?
38. Can you get recommendations from previous employers? Professors?

Career Ambition and Plans

39. Why did you choose this career field?
40. What type of position are you looking for?
41. What are your long-range and short-range goals and objectives? When and why did you establish these goals? How are you preparing to achieve them?
42. What specific goals, other than those related to your occupation, have you established for yourself in the next five years?
43. What qualities does a successful (manager, teacher, counselor, etc.) possess?
44. What do you know about opportunities in your field?
45. What are the most important rewards you expect from your career?
46. What kind of challenge are you looking for?
47. What do you think determines a person's progress in a good company?
48. How do you determine or evaluate success?
49. What are your ideas on salary?
50. How much money do you hope to earn five years from now?
51. What personal characteristics are necessary for success in your field?

Company or Organization

52. Why do you want to work for this organization?
53. What do you know about our organization?
54. What section (service or product) are you most interested in?
55. Do you prefer large or small companies? Why?
56. What do you think it takes to be successful in a company such as ours?
57. In what ways do you think you can make a contribution to our company?
58. Have you ever been a member of a union? Worked with union members?
59. How long would you expect to work here?
60. Are you willing to work overtime?
61. Are you willing to go where the company sends you?
62. What type of work environment are you most comfortable with?
63. Why do you think you might like to live in the community in which our company is located?
64. Why should we hire you?

The Close

65. When could you start work?
66. If we invite you to our plant (main office) in Boston, Massachusetts, would you be able to come?
67. Is there anything else I should know about you?
68. Do you have any other questions?

Additional Questions for Teachers

1. What was your student teaching experience like?
2. What is the purpose or place of your subject in the school curriculum?
3. How do you as a young teacher gain the respect of students?
4. What problems did you have student teaching and how did you handle them?
5. How do you feel about (team-teaching, grades, report cards, non-graded-classes, etc.)?
6. How would you allow for individual differences in your teaching?
7. How would you handle (discipline, cheating, disruptive students, motivation)?
8. What is your own philosophy of education?

APPENDIX II

Questions Applicants Might Ask

NOTE: Research the position and organization. Avoid questions you could have easily answered through a bit of research. Some of these questions are sensitive and require the use of tact and discretion on the part of the applicant.

Job Description/History

1. Can you give me a detailed job description?
2. What specific responsibilities would I be expected to carry out? Are there particular requirements or quotas to be met?
3. Is there any flexibility in how this position is defined?
4. Is this a regular, long-standing position, or has it been newly created?
5. May I ask why the position is currently open?
6. What might a typical workday in this job be like?
7. What types of career paths do people typically follow when they leave this position?

Supervision

8. How closely would I be supervised?
9. Who would my immediate supervisor be?
10. With whom would I be working?
11. Is there a clear progression in the amount of responsibility I will be allowed?
12. To what extent will I be working independently or as a team member?

The Department

13. How large is the department?
14. Does the organization have any long-range plans for this department?
15. What new projects or ventures are contemplated in the near future?
16. Who makes the final hiring decision for this position?

Organization/Training

17. Is there a training program or orientation program for new employees?
18. I was reading about your training program in your brochure. Can you explain it in greater detail?
19. What is the best way for me to become familiar with your organization's policies?
20. I was reading about _____ in your organization's literature and was interested in learning more about it. What can you tell me?
21. What is your policy on continuing education? Are employees encouraged to take courses or graduate study?
22. Do employees participate in any professional associations or conferences?
23. What new products or services are planned or anticipated in the near future?
24. How would my performance as an employee be evaluated?

Criteria for Hiring

25. Ideally what kind of associate, trainee, etc. are you looking for?
26. Is there any area of my experience that you want to know more about?
27. Is there anything in my resume or background that you feel is problematic? If so I'd like to discuss it with you. (This shows self-confidence and forthrightness.)
28. When will I be notified of your decision?

APPENDIX III

Pre-Employment Inquiries

Inquiry Area	Illegal	Legal
National Origin	<p>Are you a U.S. citizen?</p> <p>Where were your parents born?</p> <p>What is your "native tongue"?</p> <p>Where were you born?</p>	<p>Are you lawfully employable full-time in the United States either by virtue of being a U.S. citizen or by having authorization to be employed from the Immigration and Naturalization Service and the Department of Labor?</p> <p>What languages do you read, speak, or write fluently? (if related to job performance)</p>
Age	<p>How old are you?</p> <p>What is your date of birth?</p>	<p>Are you over the age of 18?</p>
Marital and Family Status	<p>What is your marital status?</p> <p>How many children do you have?</p> <p>What childcare arrangements have you made?</p>	<p>Travel is an important part of the job for which you are interviewing. Would you be able and willing to travel as needed by the job?</p> <p>Would you be willing to relocate if necessary?</p>
Organizations	<p>List any clubs or social organizations to which you belong.</p>	<p>List any professional or trade groups or other organizations that you consider relevant to your ability to perform this job.</p>
Handicaps	<p>Do you have any handicaps or disabilities?</p> <p>Please complete the following medical history.</p> <p>Have you had any recent or past illnesses or operations? If yes, list and give dates.</p> <p>What was the date of your last physical exam?</p>	<p>Do you have any disabilities that would prevent you from performing the job?</p> <p>If yes, based on a description of the available position, which job duties would you be unable to perform because of your physical, mental, or medical disability? Please describe for purposes of assessing any accommodations that could be made.</p>

APPENDIX III (continued)

Pre-Employment Inquiries (continued)

Inquiry Area	Illegal	Legal
Handicaps (continued)	How is your family's health? General inquiries that would elicit information about handicaps or health conditions that do not relate to job performance.	Are there any jobs or types of jobs for which you should not be considered because of a handicap or health condition? Are you willing to undergo a pre-employment physical exam? Do you understand that any offer of employment is conditional based on the results of a pre-employment exam? The results of such exam will be kept strictly confidential, except that 1) medical/safety personnel may be informed if emergency medical treatment is required, and 2) supervisors and managers may be informed regarding any necessary accommodations that may be made to your job duties because of the results of the medical exam.
Arrest Record	Have you ever been arrested?	Have you been convicted of _____? (a crime that is reasonably related to the performance of the job in question)
Personal	What is your sex? What is your height and weight?	Are you able to lift a 50-pound weight and carry it 100 yards, as that will be part of the job for which you are interviewing?
Military	If you have been in the military, were you honorably discharged?	In what branch of the Armed Forces did you serve? What type of training or education did you receive in the military?