



## DOMINICAN CAREER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

# COACHING TIPS

## INTERVIEWS

### PHONE INTERVIEWS

#### What is it?

It means that your resume has succeeded in getting past the first round of reviews! The reviewer typically has searched for you on Google and LinkedIn and is interested in talking to you to assess whether to bring you in for a face-to-face set of interviews. At this stage, the interviewer is typically assessing communication skills, energy level, and resume facts.

#### Some basic tips:

- Allow yourself time to prepare. If the request is for a same-day call, tell the recruiter you have prior commitments and schedule for the next day.
  - Find out the name and role of the person you will be talking to. Look them up on LinkedIn for background information and interests that you might be able to use to “connect” with him/her.
- Prepare by researching the company’s website and anticipating the questions they might ask. For each anticipated question, create a “3 bullet” response so you will be crisp and concise in your response.
- Since it is a phone interview, lay out on a table in front of you the anticipated questions, the job description, and your resume for easy viewing and reference.

#### Executives/Experts in Residence

Career mentoring and advising tailored to your career path is available. Visit Handshake to schedule an appointment.



# DOMINICAN UNIVERSITY

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- Have your interviewer's LinkedIn in profile open on your laptop with their picture so you are talking to a "face."
- Stand up when you are talking. It will help generate more energy in your voice than sitting.

## Examples of phone interview questions:

1. Could you tell me about yourself and your situation?
2. How familiar are you with our company and what we do?
3. Why are you interested in this position?
4. What specific skills related to this position do you have that differentiate you?
5. Do you have any questions?

Always answer yes to this question. Some possible questions to ask include:

- What are the expectations and success metrics of this position?
- Could you describe a typical day?
- Could you describe the culture and values of the company?
- What is the strategy to build brand recognition?
- Why did you join this company?
- What are the opportunities for growth and advancement?
- What is the turnover rate for the company? Department? Executive ranks?
- What are the next steps? What is the decision timeframe?
  - Do you have any questions that I can help clarify about my skills and desires to join your company?

## ON-SITE INTERVIEWS (BEHAVIOR-BASED INTERVIEWS)

### What is it?

The good news is you made to the next step: a face-to-face, in-person interview. Be prepared, be confident and convince the interviewer why you are a terrific candidate for the job!

Behavior-based interviewing is one of the most commonly used interview techniques. It is based on the idea that your past performance is the best predictor of your future performance. In other words, how well you behaved or performed in past activities will help the interviewer decide how well you might do in their position.

When you're asked behavior-based interview questions, you're asked to describe situations in which you've displayed the skills, abilities, and personal traits being sought for the position you're applying for<sup>1</sup>.

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Stories that follow the STAR model incorporate these elements<sup>1</sup>.

<b>SITUATION</b>	<b>TASK</b>
Briefly set up the situation by describing the context of your example (who, what, where, when, how).	Explain the task you had to complete or the problem you had to solve.
<b>ACTION</b>	<b>RESULT</b>
Describe the actions you took to complete the task or solve the problem.	Close by explaining the result of your efforts. Quantify that outcome if possible.  Examples: how much you helped raise fundraising, how many kids you tutored, how many people you trained, etc.

## 2 Top 10 Behavioral Interview Questions and How to Respond

1. Tell me about how you worked effectively under pressure.
2. How do you handle a challenge? Give an example.
3. Have you ever made a mistake? How did you handle it?
4. Give an example of a goal you set and tell me how you achieved it.
5. Describe a decision you made that wasn't popular and how you handled implementing it.
6. Give an example of how you set goals and achieve them.
7. Give an example of how you worked on team.
8. What do you do if you disagree with someone at work?
9. Share an example of how you were able to motivate employees or co-workers.
10. Have you handled a difficult situation? How?

In response, you'll describe a relevant experience you had in a job, internship, class project, volunteer activity, team, or similar.

To answer these questions successfully, you'll need to:

- Be very familiar with the job/internship description and the skills and qualities being sought for it.
- Anticipate the questions or topics you'll be asked about.
- PRACTICE aloud how you'll answer these questions, or what examples you'll give. Be sure your examples illustrate the skills being sought for the position.
- Use examples that are as recent as possible.
- Avoid using examples from your personal life (like relationships, friends, family).
- Vary your examples—don't just talk about one project or one area of your life.

<sup>1</sup>Alison Doyle, "Sample Behavioral Job Interview Questions and Tips for Answering," The Balance Careers, May 13, 2019, , accessed July 17, 2019, <https://www.thebalancecareers.com/behavioral-job-interview-questions-2059620>.

<sup>2</sup>Alison Doyle, "Top 10 Behavioral Interview Questions and Sample Answers," The Balance Careers, May 31, 2019, , accessed July 17, 2019, <https://www.thebalancecareers.com/top-behavioral-interview-questions-2059618>.

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## WORDS TO AVOID

Lately, recruiters have become sensitive to the overuse of some generic terms during an interview. Their interpretation of what you are saying may not coincide with your intention. Here are some words to avoid and rethink.

### AVOID: “PERFECTIONIST”

#### Another word for “procrastinator”

These people often put off work because they are daunted by the expectations. They begin to write a report and can't get past the first sentence because they are paralyzed by the belief that their first draft must be flawless. Psychiatrist Dr. Elana Miller, MD, says that perfectionists are often sensitive to criticism and need clearer guidelines so that they don't waste time on things that are not important.

**What the candidate should say instead: “detail-oriented”**

### AVOID: “PEOPLE PERSON”

#### Another word for “I don't understand what this job entails”

This is an especially common word used in interviews for positions in sales, human resources, recruiting, and customer support. “People-person” is a phrase with no meaning and is usually said by someone who doesn't understand the demands of the job. You want the candidate to describe him or herself in a way that shows they understand the specific competencies of the job.

**What the candidate should say instead: “collaborative,” “customer-focused,” “client-facing”**

### AVOID: “INTELLIGENT”

#### Another word for “I don't have to try”

Adults who outright declare themselves as intelligent often take pride in mastering tasks quickly and ranking well among peers. These mentalities can follow us to the workplace, and those employees who assert that their intelligence is their greatest strength may display high competitive nature between coworkers, avoidance of unfamiliar tasks, and poor reactions to failure.

**What the candidate should say instead: “analytical,” “big-picture thinker,” “fast learner”**

### AVOID: “MULTI-TASKER”

#### Another word for “unfocused”

According to current neuroscience research, our brains cannot focus on multiple tasks at the same time, but switch between tasks quickly, giving us the illusion of multitasking. Meaning, people cannot listen in a meeting and write an email at the same time—they are doing each of these tasks for a few seconds at a time while constantly switching their attention back and forth. While this sounds impressive, serious productivity is lost in both activities. Candidates may boast that they can move quickly between tasks, but this lack of focus is less efficient, increases mistakes, and can be ultimately exhausting. These candidates may have an inhibiting sense of urgency which will lead to them to work hard, but not work smart.

**What the candidate should say instead: “organized,” “can work under competing deadlines”**

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## BODY LANGUAGE

When meeting face-to-face, what you say with your body language is often as important as to what you are verbally saying to the other person. Often, it is an unconscious habit or posture. Be aware of them.

### Body Language to Avoid<sup>4</sup>

- Exaggerated gestures
- Crossed arms
- Turning yourself away from others
- Slouching
- Avoiding eye contact
- Watching the clock
- Fidgeting
- Scowling
- Weak handshake
- Getting too close

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## ASSESSMENT TESTS (EQ)

Assessment tests are typically done for management positions. Be conscious of your EQ, which stands for “Emotional Quotient.” It is the capability of individuals to recognize their own emotions, those of others, discern between different feelings and label them appropriately, use emotional information to guide thinking and behavior, and manage and/or adjust emotions to adapt to environments.<sup>5</sup>

For example, signs of low EQ include:

- You get easily stressed
- You have difficulty asserting yourself
- You make assumptions quickly and defend them vehemently
- You hold grudges
- You don't let go of mistakes
- You feel misunderstood and are easily offended
- You blame other people for how they make you feel
- You don't know your triggers



<sup>4</sup>Travis Bradberry, “13 Body Language Blunders That Make You Look Bad,” HuffPost, March 05, 2017, , accessed July 17, 2019, [https://www.huffpost.com/entry/13-body-language-blunders-that-make-you-look-bad\\_b\\_58b88c2fe4b02eac8876cc70](https://www.huffpost.com/entry/13-body-language-blunders-that-make-you-look-bad_b_58b88c2fe4b02eac8876cc70).

<sup>5</sup>Travis Bradberry, “Eleven Signs That You Lack Emotional Intelligence,” The Globe and Mail, April 15, 2017, , accessed July 17, 2019, <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/report-on-business/small-business/sb-managing/11-signs-that-you-lack-emotional-intelligence/article34073414/>.