



# Tackling Tough Interview Questions

## Virtual 50+ Employment Expo

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# Good News About Job Interviews

## Interviews are 2-Way

*“It’s important to remember that the interview is a **two-way process** and is your opportunity to find out whether you feel the role and the company **are right for you.**”*

*It also gives you the chance to impress by displaying your knowledge about the organization and asking intelligent questions...”*

<https://www.personalcareermanagement.com/blog/job-interviews-its-a-two-way-street/> (Retrieved 5/29/2024)

## More Good News...

**There are Positive Stereotypes about 50+ not just negative ones...**

- ▶▶ Trustworthy
- ▶▶ Stable
- ▶▶ Mature
- ▶▶ Good Judgment
- ▶▶ WISE!



# Keys to Interview Success

**Plan, Prepare, and Present (Yourself)**

**Answer Questions**

**Finish and Follow Up**

## Plan: Do Your Research

### Organization, Industry, and People who work there

- ▶▶ News Media and Trade Press
- ▶▶ Social: LinkedIn, Glassdoor.com, etc.
- ▶▶ O\*Net [www.onetonline.org](http://www.onetonline.org)
- ▶▶ Professional Contacts

*What are the motivators and pain points?*



## Plan: Assemble Information About You

**Create list of when and how you:**

- ▶ Used skills and experience employer is seeking
- ▶ Went above and beyond to achieve goal
- ▶ Led successful team
- ▶ Accomplished something others could not
- ▶ And more...



## Prepare: Responses to Common Questions

- ▶▶ Anticipate interview questions
  - Tell me about yourself
  - Strengths and Weaknesses
  - Why did you leave your last job?
  - Salary
- ▶▶ Prepare responses (in writing)

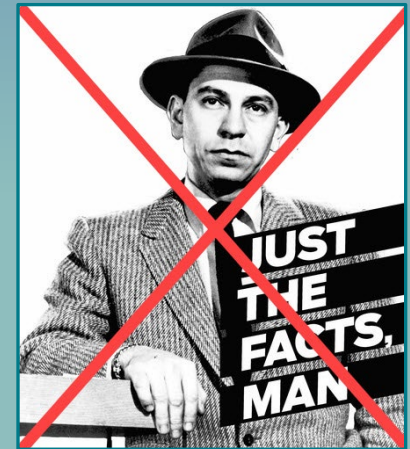
*For inspiration, use Generative AI (Chat GPT and others) or search the Internet for possible questions.*

## Prepare: Stories Are Powerful!

*Stories are remembered up to 22 times more than facts alone!*

### Create stories about:

- ▶▶ Accomplishments and Success Stories
- ▶▶ Strengths and Weaknesses
- ▶▶ Led Team, Increased Sales, Improved Productivity
- ▶▶ And more



<https://womensleadership.stanford.edu/resources/voice-influence/harnessing-power-stories> (Retrieved 5.28.2024)



## Present (Yourself)

- ▶▶ Be Active & Engaged
- ▶▶ Avoid “Old Fashioned” words & phrases --

*I HATE Zoom!*

*Carbon Copy*

*Rolodex*

*Yellow Pages*

*Back in the day...*



# Respond to Questions

- ▶▶ Listen carefully
- ▶▶ Consider “intent” of question -- respond to intent
  - Do you have children?
  - Are you married?
  - Why do you want to work here?
- ▶▶ Tailor responses to job
  - Where do you want to be in 5,10, 15 years?
  - Why do you want to work here?

## “No, but...”

If you do not quite have what they are looking for, but...

- ▶▶ You *will* have it soon
- ▶▶ You have *some*, but not all
- ▶▶ You have done something *similar* that prepared you

## Tell me about yourself

You will NEED a response to this question!

- ▶▶ Create (and practice!) short response, including
  - How you got into the field
  - Experience, skills, training, certifications, etc.
  - *Relevant* accomplishments
  - Finish by connecting to job you are interviewing for
  - Depending on situation - 30 seconds to two minutes

## Tell me about yourself

*"I've been an account manager for over a decade. I've primarily been working with tech companies to build strong client relationships and deliver tailored service solutions. My experience includes navigating complex contract negotiations and consistently achieving above-target retention rates.*

*At my current job, I've led our team to a 20% increase in client retention by implementing strategic communication plans and personalized account reviews. I also spearheaded our quarterly client feedback sessions, which were crucial in adapting our services to better meet client needs.*

*I'm good at building relationships, and I love making sure client satisfaction rates stay high. So, when I saw your ad, I wanted to apply immediately. I'm really impressed by your company's commitment to innovation.*

*I'm pretty excited about the opportunity to put my strategic thinking to good use and use my client management skills to help your team."*

Retrieved 6.2.24 <https://novoresume.com/career-blog/tell-me-about-yourself>

## Strengths & Weaknesses

- ▶▶ Think Ahead
- ▶▶ Prepare Stories
- ▶▶ Discuss “takeaways” and what you learned
- ▶▶ Use STAR approach
  - Situation
  - Task
  - Action
  - Result

# STAR Approach

## Talk about each part

- ▶▶ Situation – what happened or context
- ▶▶ Task – what you needed to do or challenge
- ▶▶ Action – what you did
- ▶▶ *Results – What was the outcome or result*

Mention lessons learned or key takeaways

## Why did you leave your last job?

### Easy answers:

You got a better job, laid off, company downsized, went to school or training.

### If departure was difficult:

- Prepare a brief response and practice until you can say it without flinching.
- Do not say anything negative about organization or boss.



# Salary

**If you don't negotiate, you may be leaving \$\$\$\$ on the table.**

- ▶▶ Research: Salary.com, Monster.com. LinkedIn, Salary expert.com, and more
- ▶▶ Decide salary and benefits you want
- ▶▶ Try to delay salary discussion
- ▶▶ Ask about salary ranges or bands
- ▶▶ Consider non-financial compensation
  - Schedule and Paid Time Off
  - Hybrid or Remote work
  - Early performance review

# Salary Research

**Physical Therapy Aide** in Chevy Chase, Maryland

Salary Benefits Job Description Compare Jobs Similar Jobs Job Openings Resume C

What should I Pay? **Employers** [Price a Job >](#)

How to get Pay right? **Employers** [Get Survey >](#)

Paid Hourly [View as graph](#)

Physical Therapy Aide Salaries by Percentile

PERCENTILE	HOURLY PAY RATE	LOCATION	LAST UPDATED
10th Percentile Physical Therapy Aide Salary	\$15	Chevy Chase,MD	May 25, 2023
25th Percentile Physical Therapy Aide Salary	\$17	Chevy Chase,MD	May 25, 2023
50th Percentile Physical Therapy Aide Salary	\$19	Chevy Chase,MD	May 25, 2023
75th Percentile Physical Therapy Aide Salary	\$21	Chevy Chase,MD	May 25, 2023
90th Percentile Physical Therapy Aide Salary	\$23	Chevy Chase,MD	May 25, 2023

**Employers:** [Find Surveys For This Job](#)

Retrieved: Salary.com 6.13.24

# Finish Strong and Follow Up

## Before You Say Goodbye

- ▶▶ Ask questions about the job
- ▶▶ Inquire about next steps in hiring process.
- ▶▶ Check in with interviewer –  
Is there anything else you would like to know?
- ▶▶ Plan for follow up

## Follow Up

Send thank you message!!!!

Try to stay in touch with interviewer

## Questions & Contact

I will answer as many questions as I can now and in chat.

**Later:**

Send questions by e-mail to [aporitzky@gmail.com](mailto:aporitzky@gmail.com)



# Resources

## Some of my favorites

- ▶ Book: *Sweaty Palms, The Neglected Art of Being Interviewed* by Anthony Medley, Warner Business Books, 2005
- ▶ Articles:
  - <https://novoresume.com/career-blog/tell-me-about-yourself>
  - <https://www.personalcareermanagement.com/blog/job-interviews-its-a-two-way-street/>
  - <https://www.ncoa.org/article/9-high-impact-interviewing-tips-for-older-job-seekers>