



INTERVIEW TIPS

BEFORE, DURING & AFTER THE INTERVIEW

An interview is your opportunity to showcase your abilities and experience. It is the time to prove to an employer that you capable, dependable, and the right person for the job. Sell yourself!

Before the Interview

- Find out if it is a regular or “working interview” and wear the appropriate attire.
- Fully research the position and the practice/organization/company.
- Practice answering general interview and behavioral-based questions. (See handout entitled “Behavioral-Based Interviews”. These are a common style of questions asked in interviews and they require a very specific style of response.)
- Study your resume and prepare a list of experiences that fit into different interview topics.
- Get a portfolio/padfolio.
- Make and take copies of your resume, cover letter, references, or letters of recommendation.
- Prepare questions to ask the interviewer.
- Arrive 10 minutes early.

During the Interview

- Make a good first impression – be pleasant, smile and give a firm handshake.
- Listen attentively, maintain eye contact, and avoid nervous mannerisms.
- Speak clearly and openly.
- Be positive, enthusiastic, and honest.
- Act polite and professional at all times and to all people.
- Take notes, if and when appropriate.
- Ask 2-3 thoughtful questions at the end of the interview.

After the Interview

- Hopefully the hiring timeline is explained so that you know when they will be back in contact with you. If not, you can politely ask or follow up in a week or so.
- Ask the interviewer for a business card.
- Thank them and show your enthusiasm for the position.
- Shake their hand.
- Send a thank you card (or email) within 24-48 hours.

Phone/Zoom Interview Tips

- Do the interview somewhere free of distractions.
- Test that you have good phone or internet connection (if Zoom, be sure the lighting is appropriate and that your background is professional).
- Have a copy of your resume/cover letter, paper for notes, and a few questions to ask.
- Make sure to come across as interested and enthusiastic.
- Avoid filler words – they stand out more in phone and Zoom interviews.
- Don’t get uncomfortable if there is a pause on the interviewer’s end of the phone or if they look down for a moment – they are most likely writing notes of your answers. Just wait patiently for the next question.



INTERVIEW TOPICS & QUESTIONS

Interview Topics

Be prepared to answer interview questions based on experiences gained in part-time jobs, volunteer opportunities, summer and 4th year externships, academic classes/projects/research, and club experiences that align with interview topics and the job description.

- Leadership
- Teamwork
- Communication
- Equity, Diversity, Inclusion
- Client Service
- Work Ethic
- A Difficult Supervisor/
Co-Worker/Client
- Problem Solving
- Failed Task
- Tough Decision

Common Interview Questions

1. Why did you decide to become a veterinarian?
2. What does excellent client service mean to you?
3. What motivates you?
4. How do you handle stress?
5. How do you feel about euthanasia?
6. How would you handle a situation where the client couldn't pay for the services needed?
7. What are your short and long-term goals?
8. If you can't figure out a diagnosis, what would you do?
9. What special skills would you bring to our practice?
10. What is your greatest strength and weakness?
11. If I were to ask one of your professors or a boss to describe you, what would they say?
12. How do you feel about working overtime?
13. What are your salary expectations?
14. What do you do in your free time?
15. Why do you want to work for us?
16. Why should we hire you?

Questions to ask an employer

- What do you like the best about your job/the practice?
- What does a typical day look like? Number of appointments, length, type, etc.?
- What does mentorship mean to you and how is it approached here?
- What is the most important expectation for this position?
- What is the practice's mission or core values?
- How do you approach clients who can't afford essential medical care?
- Are there opportunities for professional growth or continuing education?
- How does the practice care for its employees and foster their wellbeing?
- What challenges is the practice currently facing?
- Where would you like to see the practice grow and improve?
- What are the next steps in the hiring process?
- Will there be a working interview?

“Tell me about yourself” is a very common interview question that you should be ready to answer. Think about these items when formulating your “spiel”:

- Introduce yourself.
- Talk about your current student status, what field/species/industry you are interested in, and your passion for veterinary medicine.
- Briefly describe your work experience.
- Touch on your extracurricular activities (club leadership roles) and/or something you've accomplished or excel at that directly relates to the position.
- Mention why you are interested in the practice/position.

Keep it short and concise, but make it personable and memorable.