

Interviewing Workshop

INTERVIEWING LESSON PLANS

Note to the instructor: This is at least a two-part lesson plan – two hours for introduction and preparation followed some weeks later by mock interviews conducted by industry partners and other volunteers. We are focused primarily on interviewing for apprenticeship programs, which is the first hurdle most participants will face, but participants should also be prepared for interviews with contractors either while seeking sponsorship for a program that requires an intent to hire letter or seeking employment as a first year apprentice in a program that allows you to find your own work. It is also possible to have a long career in the trades without ever interviewing for a job. Still, defining and communicating her qualifications is a useful exercise for aspiring tradeswomen.

I. Presentation

A. What to expect from an apprenticeship program interview.

- Many programs still use interviewing to select candidates – can be worth as much as 50% of an applicant's ranking
- Apprenticeship program interviews usually conducted by pairs of interviewers or, sometimes, a panel.
- Interviews are very short – maybe 10 to 15 minutes.

B. What are they looking for? (involve students in answering this question)

- Emphasize that programs are investing thousands of dollars in free or paid training for apprentices and the return on that investment is a skilled journey-level worker.
- Use, but don't pass out, the attached hand-out "Interviewing Tips for Apprenticeship Programs" to fill out your list. Examples: Serious, confident, reliable, prompt etc.

C. What can you do to demonstrate that you have the qualities they are looking for?

Use the hand-out to help involve student in discussing:

- Appearance (clothing, jewelry etc.)
- Body Language (hand-shake, eye contact etc.)
- Preparedness
- Etc.

D. Introduce Job readiness Kit – Pass out hand-out and set a deadline for completing the kits – typically the class before mock interview.

(See attached hand-out)

E. Preparing effective interview questions

- Hand out "Six Toughest Interview Questions" sheet and briefly outline what constitutes a good answer – with particular emphasis on providing concrete examples.
- Engage the class in brainstorming around specific questions.
- Have students work in pairs to answer one or two questions and have volunteers present to the group. Help group identify what was effective and why.
- Introduce illegal questions and brainstorm polite responses.
- The importance of preparing a question for the interviewers and what questions are appropriate.

- Hand-out the “Interviewing Tips” sheet, ask students to create answers to questions as homework.

Materials: “Interviewing Tips for Apprenticeship Programs”
Job Readiness Kit list
Interview questions

II. Mock Interviews

Recruit enough volunteers so that each participant can have at least two interviews. If you have enough volunteers, it makes sense to have them interview in pairs or groups as apprenticeship programs do. You can also do one-on-one interviews for the first round and then pair them up for the second round.

- A. Provide volunteers with an orientation to the event, their role, and the rating sheet – this is described on the attached instruction form.
- B. While students are waiting for the event to begin or for their turn, have them practice with each other in small groups, with members of the group taking turns interviewing with the “panel”. Interviews should be short and feedback immediate so participants can better prepare for the interviewers.
- C. Conduct interviews – with individual feedback after the first interview only – collect rating sheets.
- D. Bring volunteers and participants back to the classroom and have volunteers talk generally about what they did well and how they can improve.
- E. Provide students with copies of their rating sheets at the next class.

Materials: Mock interview instructions
Mock interview questions
Mock interview rate sheet



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