

# INTERVIEWING PACKET

BRING YOUR RESUME IN TO BE CRITIQUED  
MONDAY – THURSDAY 2-4 PM DURING THE ACADEMIC YEAR  
(CALL FOR SUMMER HOURS)



*World Class. Face to Face.*

## INTERVIEWING

No interview is ever a failure. Throughout your career, it is likely that you will **NOT** get most of the jobs for which you interview. Think about it: for any given job, there might be several hundred applicants, and only a few of those might be called in for an interview. And only *one* of those will get the job. Just by getting the interview you are improving your chances for future jobs. More importantly, you get experience interviewing. Like anything else, the more you interview, the better you get at it.

Good interviewing takes practice and practice is hard to come by. Preparation, however, is the perfect substitute. Learn the most you can about the job, its requirements, and the company and industry for which you are interviewing, paying particular attention to the organization for which you hope to work. To an interviewer, this shows initiative, leads to more insightful conversation during the interview, and distinguishes you from other candidates. From your perspective, thorough preparation lets you learn even more about the position and the organization and this knowledge enables you to make a more informed decision should you receive a job offer.

Just as important, preparation builds confidence which lets you relax during the interview. And that translates into success. Think about the exams you took in college. The ones that created the most anxiety were the ones for which you were the least prepared. On the other hand, the ones you knew cold going in caused the least amount of stress.

It's the same with interviews. Your confidence will show and you will give a better presentation of your qualifications. And if that presentation isn't good enough on the first interview, it is still knowledge gained for the second interview, or the third interview. Your familiarity with certain questions and situations will make your responses more polished the next time.

So, any interview, even if it does not lead to a job, is preparation for your next interview. And that could be the one which gets you your desired position.

## HOT TIPS FOR SUCCESSFUL INTERVIEWS

1. Learn as much as you can about the company beforehand—know its products and services, its profit margin, its management, its culture, its dress code, and anything else you can think of. Good sources are the Career Services Resource Room and web site, Holland Library or Neil Public Library, and the Internet.
2. Do practice interviews. Read through sample interviews on our web site or watch a video interview on the Discover software. Make an appointment with a career counselor for one-on-one coaching or participate in mock interviews with employers before the fall or spring Job Fairs. Make a videotape of yourself in a mock interview if you get the chance.
3. Think about how your experience in work, classes, and activities can relate to the job you're seeking.
4. Allow plenty of time to get to the interview and, if possible, visit the site in advance and time how long it takes to get there.
5. Plan your interview attire in advance and make sure your clothing is pressed, your shoes are shined, and your hair and nails are well groomed.
6. Bring extra copies of your resume and a list of references.
7. Speak slowly and clearly and don't be afraid to pause for a moment to collect your thoughts.
8. Be honest. Don't try to cover up mistakes. Instead, focus on how you learned from them.
9. Be assertive. Remember that the interview is a way for you to learn if the job is right for you.
10. Have several questions prepared to ask the interviewer.
11. Ask the interviewer for a business card and send a thank-you note or e-mail as soon as possible.

## QUESTIONS AN INTERVIEWER MIGHT ASK

### GENERAL

- Tell me about yourself.
- If you had your life to live over again, what would you do differently? Why?

### WORK RELATED

- Describe your ideal work environment.
- What kinds of rewards are most satisfying to you? How do these rewards affect the effort you put into your work?
- What did you enjoy most on your last job? Least?
- Describe the most difficult work-related situation you have ever faced. How did you react?
- What was your relationship with your supervisor?
- What qualities do you prefer in a boss?
- What relationship should exist between a supervisor and those reporting to him/her?
- Did you work alone or with other people in accomplishing the majority of your tasks?
- How important is communication and interaction with others on the job?
- Why did you leave your last job? Would they give you a good recommendation?
- Give an example of a time you took the initiative at work.
- Do you have a geographic preference? Are you willing to relocate?
- How do you feel about working overtime? Travel overnight?
- Are you willing to spend at least six months as a trainee?

### EDUCATION RELATED

- What was your most rewarding college experience?
- What is the highest level of education that you have completed?
- Why did you choose your college/university?
- Why did you select your field of study? Was that your original goal as a freshman?
- Which courses did you like most? Least? Why?
- What do you hope to do with your degree?
- What was your GPA? Could your GPA have been higher? What kept it from being higher?
- Do you think your grades are a good indicator of your college achievement?
- What is your greatest educational achievement?
- How do you think your education has prepared you for your desired career?
- If you had the chance to repeat your college career, what would you do differently? Why?
- What do you feel you will have to do to remain current in your field?
- Do you plan to continue your education?

### ACTIVITIES RELATED

- How do you like to spend your time outside of work and classes?
- What extra-curricular activities did you participate in?
- Why did you select those activities?
- What opportunities did you have for leadership?
- How did these activities affect your work? Your grades?
- What goals have you set for yourself outside of work?

## GOALS

- Where do you hope to be in your career in 1 year? In 5 years? In 10 years?
- Where do you hope to be in our organization in 1 year? In 5 years? In 10 years?
- What are your short and long-term career goals? When and why did you establish these goals? How are you planning to attain them?
- What kind of salary do you expect? In five years?
- What do you hope to accomplish in your lifetime?
- What do you hope to be known for after you die?

## PERSONAL QUALITIES

- How would you describe yourself? How would a close friend (professor, employer) describe you?
- Give 3 words that describe you best.
- What is your best asset? Worst liability? What is your greatest strength? Weakness?
- Give 3 reasons why you should be hired by our organization.
- What do you think would be your greatest contribution to our organization?
- How long will it take you to make a contribution to our organization?
- How can our organization help you overcome your worst trait?
- Do you enjoy working alone or with other people?
- What can you do for us that someone else cannot do?
- What two or three accomplishments have given you the most satisfaction? Why?
- Think of a crisis situation, during which things got out of control. Why did it happen? What role did you play?
- Are you creative?
- What is your typical role as a group member?

## SUCCESS/FAILURE

- What are your 3 greatest successes? Why?
- What are your 3 greatest failures? Why?
- What do you feel are the reasons for your successes? Your failures?
- What would you do differently to change the failures into successes?

## KNOWLEDGE OF THE ORGANIZATION

- Why did you seek a job with our organization?
- What do you know about our organization? The industry?
- What is your impression of our organization?
- Why do you want to work here?
- Why should we hire you?
- If you were hiring a person for this position, what qualities would you look for?
- What criteria are you using to evaluate the organization for which you hope to work? Does our organization match your criteria?

## TECHNICAL

- These vary from industry to industry.
- You may be asked to solve a problem.
- You may be given a situation and asked how you would respond.

## THE JOB INTERVIEW

Don't worry about being nervous during the interview-this is normal and will be expected. Just remember, the interviewer wants to hire you if you have the right qualifications and interest in the position. Many interviewers will begin the interview with some "small talk" to help you relax. This may seem irrelevant to the position, but you are still being evaluated. Take these opening moments to show a great attitude, e.g., pleasure speaking with the interviewer, interesting facts about the organization which you found during your research. You may want to ask some questions about the organization, its products/services to hear the interviewer talk, to get a sense of energy level and pacing.

The second phase of the interview consists of the interviewer asking you questions to try to determine your match to the specifications needed to do the work well. The most reliable way for an interviewer to project how you would perform in the future is to examine the past. Therefore, many employers prepare some behavior-based questions. Which ones are asked depends on the work you are interviewing for. Examples:

- Tell me about a time when you had to go beyond what is ordinarily expected of an employee in order to get a job done.
- Give me an example of an important goal you set and describe your success in reaching it.
- Discuss occupations when you adapted to a wide variety of people and situations.
- Describe a time when you had an angry customer on the telephone.

By analyzing the questions asked of you, you will be able to find out more particulars about the job for which you have applied. What emphasis does the interviewer seem to be placing on which skills, knowledge, personality traits and attitudes? That insight can help you focus your answers more easily to the employer's position.

Always relate your answers to your future responsibilities and the organization's policies. Give concrete examples from your past activities as illustrations of your qualifications. Never answer with a simple "yes" or "no". Substantiate your answers whenever possible.

Your points must be:

- **Clear** to enable the employer to understand what you are trying to say.
- **Relevant** to enable the employer to determine your strengths for the particular job.
- **Adequate** to enable the employer to have sufficient information to make a good decision.

## BEHAVIORAL INTERVIEWING

### WHAT IS BEHAVIORAL-BASED INTERVIEWING?

Behavioral-based interviewing is based on the premise that **past behavior**/performance **predicts future behavior**/performance. Past performance examples may come from work experience, activities, hobbies, volunteer work, family life, etc. At an interview, it is important to focus on your experiences, behaviors, and dimensions (which include knowledge, skills, and abilities), that are job related.

### THE STAR TECHNIQUE



Your answer to a behavior-based question must explain the **situation** you were in, the **task** (problem) for which you were responsible, the specific **action** you took, and the **results** of your actions. Your answer must contain all of these components to be a complete STAR.

**EXAMPLE 1:** Describe a recent work related problem and the actions you took to solve it.

**SITUATION:** Advertising revenue was falling off for the *Evergreen*, WSU's school newspaper, and large numbers of long-term advertisers were not renewing contracts.

**TASK:** My goal was to increase advertising revenues.

**ACTION:** I designed a new promotional packet to go with the rate sheet and compared the benefits of Evergreen circulation with other ad media in the area. I also set-up a special training session for the account executives with a professor who discussed competitive selling strategies.

**RESULT:** We signed contracts with fifteen former advertisers for daily ads and five for special supplements. We increased our new advertisers by twenty percent over the same period last year.

**EXAMPLE 2:** Tell me about a time when you had to exert leadership in a crisis situation.

**SITUATION:** Right before Thanksgiving break, most people had gone home for the weekend break. Our fraternity president and vice president had already left for home when we got a call that one of our brothers had been involved in a car accident.

**TASK:** My task was to provide support in this emergency situation.

**ACTION:** I volunteered to go to the hospital to be with my brother and then called his parents in Spokane. I also made arrangements for them to stay at the Hospital Hospitality House when they got to Pullman.

**RESULT:** They were pleased I had taken time from my own weekend to help them. Our chapter advisor congratulated me for keeping a cool head and handling the situation. I've since decided to run for chapter office.

## PREPARING FOR BEHAVIORAL-BASED INTERVIEWS

- Analyze the type of positions for which you are applying. What skills do employers require?
- Analyze your own background. What skills do you have (content, functional, and adaptive) that relate to your job objective?
- Identify examples from your past experience where you demonstrated those skills. Concentrate on developing complete STARS.
- Where possible, quantify your results.
- Be prepared to provide examples of when results didn't turn out as you planned. What did you do then?
- Before entering the interview room, identify 2 to 3 of your top selling points and determine how you will convey these points (with demonstrated STARS) during the interview.
- Keep a **personal achievement diary** while in college and once you're employed to help document demonstrated performance using the STAR technique.

**NOTE:** Candidates must be able to demonstrate to an employer that they have the skills necessary to do the job. Even if the employer is not conducting a behavioral-based interview, candidates can succeed in the interview by concentrating on relating "STARS" to the employer and evaluating their achievements in this fashion.

## CREATING YOUR PERSONAL ACHIEVEMENT DIARY

1. Begin by listing any work, hobby, sports, school, or volunteer activities that you've performed well, were satisfied by, or enjoyed. Write down everything that pops into your mind until you have a list of 20-30 or more accomplishments. As you recall each accomplishment, list a few words so you'll know which experience you're referring to.
2. Once your list is complete, review each accomplishment and visualize the events for at least a minute. Then take 10 of your top accomplishments and write about each one. Relive the experience and put your thoughts on paper—describe the challenges you faced, your analysis of the situation and the actions you took. Then explain the results, quantifying them whenever possible.
3. Identify between 4-6 skills that each accomplishment demonstrates (dedication, creativity, problem solving, team building, etc.). Whenever you want to "sell" one of your job skills, you'll be ready with examples to support your case.
4. Update your diary as you develop new skills and have new experiences while you're in college and once you're employed.

**PRACTICE BEHAVIORAL QUESTIONS**

1. What was the toughest decision you had to make at a previous job?
2. Tell me about the most difficult person you've had to communicate with.
3. Tell me about a group project that you were involved in. What was your role?
4. Tell me about a time when you had to persuade someone to your point of view.
5. Describe a recent work-related problem and the actions you took to solve it.
6. Tell me about a time that you had to overcome disappointment.
7. Tell me about a time when you demonstrated assertiveness.
8. What is the biggest challenge you've faced in college and how did you deal with it?
9. Tell me about a time when you had to resolve a conflict in a group situation.
10. Tell me about a time when you followed through on a commitment, despite difficulties.
11. What kind of pressure did you feel on your last job? How did you handle it?
12. Describe a situation where you had to do several tasks at the same time.
13. Describe a situation when you had to work with someone very different from you.
14. Can you describe a time when you disagreed with a co-worker or supervisor? How did you handle it?

**REMEMBER**

- Don't view any experience as insignificant—in an interview it's likely that hearing about one of those seemingly insignificant or minor experiences will satisfy interviewers more than a recounting of a top achievement.
- During the stress of an interview, you'll be hard-pressed to recall good examples—however, you'll have little trouble remembering them now when you aren't under stress.
- Rehearse how you'd describe key experiences to interviewers so you can recount them vividly and concisely. If you can create strong visual images in the interviewers' minds, you'll have a better chance of convincing them that you have the desired skills.
- When you relate a story to interviewers, describe features of your personality that helped you succeed, what exactly you accomplished, and how your work helped your employer or group.

## TELEPHONE INTERVIEWING

Telephone interviewing is becoming increasingly common in today's competitive job market. This method of interviewing can have advantages and disadvantages for both the job seeker and the employer. Employers like this method because it is a cost-effective and impartial way of interviewing employees. To give yourself an edge it is important to keep these tips in mind:

- Keep your resume and cover letter near the phone, so that an unexpected call from a potential employer will not leave you unprepared. Have a few well-formed questions prepared to ask. This expresses interest and intelligence to the interviewer.
- Expect to be asked when, why, and how questions regarding both your employment and educational history. These questions are commonly posed by employers to get a quick assessment of the interviewee.
- Wait until the interviewer has had a chance to set their agenda for the interview before you take control of the conversation. Typically, interviewers have information they want to impart and are more focused on talking than listening at the beginning.
- Have a brief, 45-60 second description of yourself ready to state to interviewers. You should include background, experience, and skills that validate your appropriateness for the job.
- Make sure the information you tell an interviewer does not conflict with your resume.
- If asked about your background, be upfront and do not express discomfort at the questions. Often this will be a red flag to employers as to a past problem.
- Ask for the interviewer's name so that you can send a thank you letter after the interview.

Remember that the interviewer will not be able to physically see you. Thus, body language can not be used to help you make a positive impression. This being the case, what you say and how you say it become much more important. You should strive to present a strong, confident image of yourself, as an interviewer will be more apt to make a positive evaluation of you. Talk about your experiences and what you have learned from them. One tip to remember is to use crisp and clear language to present fact-filled sentences. This will keep the interviewers attention as you continue the conversation. It is also important to let the interviewer know that you are focused on what he/she is saying by interjecting short phrases such as: "I agree" and "That's right". Sound sincere and do not come across as a "salesman" trying to pitch yourself to the interviewer.

At the conclusion of the interview, propose a face-to-face meeting at the interviewer's convenience in the near future. If the company is in another area you can ask if they will be in your area and available to meet. If the interviewer finishes with saying that you may not be a good match for the job, do not be afraid to show surprise and recount your related skills and background and offer to answer any further questions. Remember to send a thank you letter, restating your interest in the position and thanking them for their consideration.

## APPROPRIATE Pre-employment Questions

<b>ACCEPTABLE</b>	<b>SUBJECT</b>	<b>UNACCEPTABLE</b>
<p>“Have you worked for this company under a different name?”</p> <p>“Have you ever been convicted of a crime under another name?”</p>	<b>Name</b>	Former name of applicant whose name has been changed by court order or otherwise.
<p>Applicant’s place of residence.</p> <p>How long applicant has been resident of this state or city.</p>	<b>Address or Duration of Residence</b>	
	<b>Birthplace</b>	<p>Birthplace of applicant.</p> <p>Birthplace of applicant’s parents, spouse or other relatives.</p> <p>Requirements that applicant submit a birth certificate, naturalization or baptismal record.</p>
<p>“Can you, after employment, submit a work permit if under 18?”</p> <p>“Are you over 18 years of age?”</p> <p>“If hired, can you furnish proof of age?”</p> <p>/or/ Statement that hire is subject to verification that applicant’s age meets legal requirements.</p>	<b>Age</b>	Questions which tend to identify applicants 40 to 64 years of age.
	<b>Religion</b>	<p>Applicant’s religious denomination or affiliation, church, parish, pastor or religious holidays observed.</p> <p>“Do you attend religious services /or/ a house of worship?”</p> <p>Applicant may not be told “This is a Catholic/Protestant/Jewish/atheist organization.”</p>
Statement by employer of regular days, hours or shift to be worked	<b>Work Days and Shifts</b>	
	<b>Race or Color</b>	Complexion, color of skin or other questions directly or indirectly indicating race or color.
Statement that photograph may be required after employment.	<b>Photograph</b>	<p>Requirement that applicant affix a photograph to the application form.</p> <p>Request applicant, at his/her option, to submit photograph.</p> <p>Requirement of photograph after interview but before hiring.</p>
Statement by employer that if hired, applicant may be required to submit proof of authorization to work in the U.S.	<b>Citizenship</b>	<p>Whether applicant, parents or spouse are naturalized or native-born U.S. citizens.</p> <p>Date when applicant, parents or spouse acquired U.S. citizenship.</p> <p>Requirement that applicant produce naturalization papers or first papers.</p> <p>Whether applicant’s parents or spouse are citizens of the U.S.</p>

**APPROPRIATE Pre-employment Questions (Continued)**

<b>ACCEPTABLE</b>	<b>SUBJECT</b>	<b>UNACCEPTABLE</b>
Languages applicant reads, speaks or writes fluently.	<b>National Origin or Ancestry</b>	Applicant's nationality, lineage, ancestry, national origin, descent or parentage. Date of arrival in United States or port of entry; how long a resident. Nationality of applicant's parents or spouse; maiden name of applicant's wife or mother. Language commonly used by applicant, "What is your mother tongue?" How applicant acquired ability to read, write or speak a foreign language.
Applicant's academic, vocational or professional education; schools attended.	<b>Education</b>	Date last attended high school.
Applicant's work experience. Applicant's military experience in armed forces of United States, in a state militia (U.S.) or in a particular branch of U.S. armed forces.	<b>Experience</b>	Applicant's military experience (general). Type of military discharge.
"Have you ever been convicted of any crime?" If so, when, where, and disposition of case?	<b>Character</b>	"Have you ever been arrested?"
Names of applicant's relatives already employed by this company. Name and address of parent or guardian if applicant is a minor.	<b>Relatives</b>	Marital status or number of dependents. Name or address of relative, spouse or children of adult applicant. "With whom do you reside?" "Do you live with your parents?"
Name and address of person to be notified in case of accident or emergency.	<b>Notice in Case of Emergency</b>	Name and address of relative to be notified in case of accident or emergency.
Organizations, clubs, professional societies or other associations of which applicant is a member, excluding any names the character of which indicate the race, religious creed, color, national origin or ancestry of its members.	<b>Organizations</b>	List all organizations, clubs, societies and lodges to which you belong.
"By whom were you referred for a position here?"	<b>References</b>	Requirement of submission of a religious reference.
"Can you perform all of the duties outlined in the job description?" Statement by employer that all job offers are contingent on passing a physical examination.	<b>Physical Condition</b>	"Do you have any physical disabilities?" Questions on general medical condition. Inquiries as to receipt of workmen's compensation.

## YOUR TURN

You've sat through most of the interview and have answered all the recruiter's questions. You know you've made a good impression because you prepared for the interview and your answers were articulate and decisive. You've come across as a very bright, capable candidate when the recruiter asks something you didn't anticipate: "Do you have any questions?"

If you don't have any questions prepared and you try to cover your mistake by asking a spur-of-the-moment question, chances are you have damaged your chances for a successful interview. Some recruiters refuse to hire people who don't ask intelligent questions. Don't ask questions just for the sake of asking questions—make sure it is information that you need.

### Prepare Questions in Advance

You should have a list of questions prepared for this crucial part of the interview. Every question you ask should demonstrate your interest and confirm your knowledge of the organization.

You should read publications in the field. You can get information about new products or policies by surfing the employer's web site or by reading general magazines or trade publications. It is appropriate to address some of your questions to what you have read. Ask about new products, how research and development is structured at the company, management strategies at the company, how the company has changed, and potential product growth.

Some of the publications providing a wealth of information are *Fortune*, *Forbes*, *Business Week*, *The Wall Street Journal* and *The Wall Street Index*.

### Questions Not to Ask

Not only should you know what questions to ask during the interview, but it is important to know what questions not to ask. You don't want to alienate the recruiter by putting him or her on the defensive.

The following areas should generally be avoided:

1. Avoid asking questions that are answered in the company's annual report or employment brochure. Recruiters are familiar with their own information and will recognize when you haven't done your homework. If some information isn't clear to you, however, by all means ask for clarification.

2. Don't bring up salary or benefits in the initial interview. The recruiter may choose to bring up the information, but you should not initiate the topic.
3. Avoid asking any personal questions or questions that will put the recruiter on the defensive. This includes questions such as the interviewer's educational background, marital status, past work experience and so on.
4. Don't ask questions that have already been answered during the interview. If you have prepared a list of questions and some of them have been addressed during the interview, do not repeat them unless you need clarification.

### Questions You Should Ask

Now that you know what you shouldn't ask during the interview, determine what questions you should ask.

1. Ask specific questions about the position. You need to know what duties will be required to see if there is a fit between your interests and skills with the job you seek.
2. Try to find out as much as possible about qualities and skills the recruiter is looking for in job candidates. Once you determine this, you can then explain how your background and capabilities relate to those qualities.
3. Ask questions concerning advancement and promotion paths available to see if it fits your career goals. You may also want to ask about periodic performance evaluations.
4. Ask specific questions about the company training program if that information isn't covered in company literature.
5. Ask questions about location and travel required. If you have limitations, this is the time to find out what is expected.

## QUESTIONS YOU MAY ASK IN AN INTERVIEW

### Information About the Organization

- What makes your organization different from other?
- Where does this organization plan to be in 5 years? In 10 years? In 20 years?
- How does the organization plan to get there?
- What are the core values of this organization?

### Position and Infrastructure

- How does the job for which I am interviewing fit in with the mission of the organization?
- What would a typical day be like in the position for which I am interviewing?
- How does this position relate to others in this department?
- Which departments would I interact with most?

### Advancement Opportunities

- What is the organization's policy on promotions?
- How is the position for which I am applying evaluated? How often?
- How long should a person plan, on average, to be in a position before being eligible for promotion?
- What is the organization's policy on lateral transfers?

### Job Security

- How did the opening for which I am applying occur?
- Where is the person who held the position before the opening now?
- How secure is this position?

### Professional Development

- Is training provided for the position for which I am interviewing? How is it provided? How long is it provided?
- Are training opportunities available through the organization?
- What is the organization's policy on continuing education through colleges? Professional seminars?
- How does the organization handle days away from work to attend classes or seminars?
- Does the organization support membership and participation in professional organizations?

### Mobility

- What is the organization's policy on relocation?
- How often could a person be expected to move in this position?
- Does the organization cover relocation expenses?
- Does the organization assist with the relocation process (finding housing, job assistance for spouse, etc.)?

### Benefits (Best to ask after an offer is made)

- What type of benefits program does the organization offer – fixed or cafeteria style?
- Which of the following are available: medical, dental, vision, accidental death/dismemberment, company car or mileage allowance, clothing allowance, athletic/exercise facilities, bonuses, profit sharing, stock options, retirement plans?
- How much does the organization pay for?

### Compensation (Best to ask after an offer is made)

- What is the starting salary?
- What is the maximum salary, if any, for this position?
- How are raises awarded? According to tenure? According to merit? Cost of living?
- How often is a person eligible for a raise?

## SALARY NEGOTIATIONS

How to get from what they offer to what you want!

First of all, let's understand the process!

There are two different philosophies regarding salary negotiation and they just might make a difference to you.

- **“First Offer, Best Offer”**

A company that has this philosophy has a handle on the employment market and is familiar with what the average compensation is for the type of position they are offering. When an offer is made, they typically believe they are offering a competitive offer, which represents a fair wage and is the best offer they can offer at this time. In this philosophy, there is no conscious effort to extend an offer where negotiation is expected and have found it counterproductive to bring in an underpaid employee.

- **“Negotiation is OK and expected”**

This philosophy can be the attitude of the hiring personnel or a reflection of the company's culture. It could be that this is the last step in the interview process: negotiating your way into a decent offer, the final test of your aptitude for the position being offered.

So you ask now, “How will I know which philosophy my employer has?” Good question! You can respond to both in the same manner, and it is **how they answer** that will let you know which philosophy they are ascribing to.

When told of the salary offer, instead of responding with a quick OK, your response could be a thoughtful “Hmmm”. If your interviewer is of the 1<sup>st</sup> philosophy, he/she may explain how they arrived at the salary quoted and will be prepared to await your acceptance, or response.

If your interviewer is of the latter philosophy, they might counter with a question such as: What salary did you have in mind? This is often a cue to begin the salary negotiation process.

Sometimes entry-level applicants may think that salary negotiation is for the “big buck” positions; however, it's often easier to negotiate at the hourly-wage level than practically anywhere else. An extra \$1-3 per hour seldom exceeds a company's phone bill.

In addition, remember to consider the fringe benefit package, this can often account for much more than an increase in salary. Remember- “nothing ventured, nothing gained!”

Sources:

David G. Jensen, Search Masters International  
Jack Chapman, author of [Negotiating Your Salary: How to Make a \\$100 a Minute](#)