**Student Part-Time Job Interview Preparation**

Getting a **student part time job** requires preparation and showing your motivation and commitment to work, even if the position will be temporary.

**Studying for the Interview**

Prior to the interview, you should view the company website or do a search on a search engine about a company to find background information. If your friends or family members have worked for the company in the past, or in a similar position, ask them about the types of questions or work expectations you should prepare for.

If the company doesn’t have a website or only has a small site, such as a landscaping company that only posts a services list, or a family that is looking for childcare, you can learn about the requirements of a position by reviewing an occupational profile, such as those found on the Bureau of Labor Statistics website.

**Prepare for Basic Questions**

Some interviewers may ask only basic questions about schedule and availability and if you have any previous experience in this type of job. There are also many sources of basic interview questions on the Internet, such as this list of [Interview Questions to Expect and Prepare for](http://www.groovejob.com/resources/interview/questions/), or you can take a look at the sample questions available in an interview book, such as Boost Your Interview I.Q. [Ten Steps to Interview Success](http://www.groovejob.com/resources/interview/success/one) also has additional resources on interview preparation basics.

**Job Specific Questions**

Some interviewers may ask questions that are highly specific to a job. A person interviewing for a position as a nanny will have to talk about their experience with children, as well as explain what First Aid and child development courses they have taken. Other jobs may ask about equipment and tools. For example, an interviewer with a landscaping company may ask if you have performed any landscaping in the past, the types of tools that you have used and if you are able to drive a car, truck or a bobcat, your experience applying herbicides and pesticides, or if you have used a jackhammer.

You can also get unusual questions that are relevant to the workplace. For example, common questions for fieldworkers and treeplanters include asking if the candidate can drive an all terrain vehicle, or even if the candidate is afraid of wildlife, such as bears. If you have never encountered these situations or had experience with some tools, explain that you are eager to be trained and will follow safety protocol should any of these situations occur.

**What to Wear to the Interview**

Though most interview books will suggest you wear a suit, or even business casual, this may not be appropriate attire for an interview in landscaping, childcare or even retail sales. In this case, wear a version of the clothes that you plan to wear each day to work, but make sure they are brand new and clean. Don’t wear a T-shirt with a slogan, displaying offensive or sarcastic humor and especially not the uniform of a rival company, even if it is vintage. Pants don’t need to be pressed and you can’t really shine your steel toed boots, but they should be free of paint and stains and comply with safety standards.

**Getting to the Interview**

Get a map or directions to the interview so that you can show up on time to the interview. Punctuality is very important to employers, especially if they are arranging transportation to a work site, or if there is a safety meeting each day at the site, as can happen on some construction sites. If you have limited experience in these positions, punctuality is an asset.

**Bring a Copy of Your Schedule**

If the employer has offered to work around your schedule during the school year, bring a copy of your school schedule to the interview. Though you may be solidly booked with classes, some employers can be very understanding of these limits and will work around them. In other cases, an inflexible schedule may keep you out of the running for a position, so only offer the schedule if asked.

**Tips for an interview: before you meet the interviewer**

You may think that interview preparation involves only the interaction you will have with the interviewer, this is a mistake. Being ready for the interview involves more planning. There are several elements you will want to take into consideration before going into the interview itself. These elements can be filed into three main categories:

* Being prepared
* Time management
* Last minute issues

Being Prepared

Being ready for the interview requires being prepared, not only to talk with the interviewer but for the entire event from the time you get the interview appointment up until you leave the interview. Here are some general elements to take care of which will help with interview preparation.

* Get sleep - get enough sleep the night before; this ensures alertness, clear thinking and you will look and feel better
* Do research - know about the company and the job before you get to the interview; the interviewer will want to know if you can handle the environment
* Have answers ready - be ready for any possible questions about your work history or personal life involving work; you want to avoid the �'deer in the headlights'' look when asked a question
* Eat beforehand - have a light snack before getting to the interview; a growling stomach is a bad distraction
* Have identification - have your picture ID and Social Security card with you; you may need it for security reasons or you might need it for verification purposes

Time Management Tips

Time management is a key element for interview preparation. Being ready for an interview will take time, and you should take as much time as necessary.

* Arrive early - always arrive early; this ensures you are there on time, and also allows you to calm yourself and mentally prepare
* Check directions beforehand - as soon as you have the location of the interview, start planning the best route and the length of time it takes to get there; misunderstanding the directions or underestimating the time needed to arrive are two main excuses for applicants to arrive late and lose a chance at the job
* Don't rush - be calm, and take your time; this is not the day to appear hurried or rushed as you walk into the interview

Last Minute Issues

Some of the issues of interview preparation are handled at the last minute as you arrive at the location. While they are last minute issues, they are still an important part of being ready for an interview.

* Go alone - don't bring friends or your children with you to the interview
* Leave the cell phone off - once you arrive at the location, turn the cell phone off; don't even touch it until you leave the building after the interview
* No last minute alterations - don't walk into the building fixing your tie or adjusting your clothes, it makes you look rushed
* Be calm - from the moment you arrive until the moment you leave you should present yourself as a calm, confident, and professional person to everyone
* Be polite - be courteous, polite, and friendly to everyone in the building; be energetic and friendly when asking for the interviewer
* Be patient - once you have announced your arrival, find a seat and sit quietly while waiting for the interviewer

Being ready for an interview will give you a huge advantage over many other applicants who arrive ill prepared. Interview preparations should normally start the night beforehand to ensure success. Even though it is only a half hour meeting, being ready for an interview can lead to many days of paid work.

**Tips for an interview: during an interview**

**When You First Arrive**

When you first arrive at the interview there are three things you want to do:

* Find the person in charge of the room
* Using a friendly and polite manner, inform them that you are here for an interview
* Let the person know who you are supposed to meet (if you know this), or for what department

This person will most likely instruct you to a waiting area. Quietly wait there for the interviewer. A quick tip here is that you should be listening for, and understanding, the interviewers name if you do not already know it. This will help during the introductions.

**Meeting the Interviewer**

Interaction both before and during the interview, in a positive friendly manner with the interviewer will help establish a rapport which may help in the hiring decision later. There are a few simple tips which can help this matter:

* When you meet the interviewer do the following - stand, smile, extend your hand and call them by name if possible (if not, use Sir or Ma'am)
* Follow the interviewer from the waiting area to where the interview will take place; be careful to stay close but keep a polite distance
* Wait for the interviewer to motion for you to take a seat, and then do so quickly and quietly
* Keep yourself aware of your body language and non verbal communications

Interacting During the Interview

Once the interview begins, remember that listening to and understanding what the interviewer is discussing is critical. You need to be completely involved in this meeting. View the interview as a two-way conversation where both the interviewer and yourself are trying to learn as much about your fit into the company and the job as possible. Here are some tips to help guide you through any possible issues or problems to help with interacting during the interview:

* General questions - if you are asked a general question (example - your background), offer to explain a specific area which you can provide positive experiences
* Unexpected questions - do not panic, simply ask the interviewer to repeat the question or probe for information if you are unsure of what the interviewer is asking
* Follow up questions - this is the interviewers way of picking up a certain piece of information
* Unasked questions - if you notice the interviewer has possible unanswered questions or issues about a topic, offer to clarify the matter using a positive experience or behavior

If you take the time to listen and understand what the employer is looking for, you have various ways to sell yourself during the interview. Such selling methods might include:

* With each answer, provide an example of a positive action or behavior
* If a job related skill isn't being addressed by the interviewer, it is allowable to bring the skill into the conversation using a good transition.

Interacting at the interview involves both listening for and understanding what the interviewer wants for information. There may be certain pieces of information which will help you gain the edge in getting the job, but you must be aware of when to offer this information.