

# Action Verbs

## Management Skills

Administered  
Analyzed  
Assigned  
Chaired  
Consolidated  
Contracted  
Coordinated  
Delegated  
Developed  
Directed  
Evaluated  
Executed  
Organized  
Oversaw  
Planned  
Prioritized  
Produced  
Recommended  
Reorganized  
Reviewed  
Scheduled  
Supervised

## Communication Skills

Addressed  
Arbitrated  
Arranged  
Authored  
Co-authored  
Collaborated  
Corresponded  
Developed  
Directed  
Drafted  
Enlisted  
Formulated  
Influenced  
Interpreted  
Lectured  
Mediated  
Moderated  
Negotiated  
Persuaded  
Promoted  
Proposed  
Publicized

Reconciled  
Recruited  
Spoke  
Translated  
Wrote

## Research Skills

Clarified  
Collected  
Critiqued  
Diagnosed  
Evaluated  
Examined  
Extracted  
Identified  
Inspected  
Inspired  
Interpreted  
Interviewed  
Investigated  
Organized  
Reviewed  
Summarized  
Surveyed  
Systemized

## Technical Skills

Assembled  
Built  
Calculated  
Computed  
Designed  
Devised  
Engineered  
Fabricated  
Maintained  
Operated  
Pinpointed  
Programmed  
Remodeled  
Repaired  
Solved

## Teaching Skills

Adapted  
Advised  
Clarified  
Coached  
Communicated

Conducted  
Coordinated  
Developed  
Enabled  
Encouraged  
Evaluated  
Explained  
Facilitated  
Guided  
Informed  
Instructed  
Lectured  
Persuaded  
Set goals  
Stimulated  
Taught  
Trained

## Financial Skills

Administered  
Allocated  
Analyzed  
Appraised  
Audited  
Balanced  
Budgeted  
Calculated  
Computed  
Developed  
Managed  
Planned  
Projected  
Researched

## Creative Skills

Acted  
Conceptualized  
Created  
Customized  
Designed  
Developed  
Directed  
Established  
Fashioned  
Illustrated  
Instituted  
Integrated  
Performed  
Planned

Proved  
Revised  
Revitalized  
Set up  
Shaped  
Streamlined  
Structured  
Tabulated  
Validated

## Helping Skills

Assessed  
Assisted  
Clarified  
Coached  
Counseled  
Demonstrated  
Diagnosed  
Educated  
Facilitated  
Familiarized  
Guided  
Inspired  
Motivated  
Participated  
Provided  
Referred  
Rehabilitated  
Reinforced  
Represented  
Supported  
Taught  
Trained  
Verified

## Clerical or Detail Skills

Approved  
Arranged  
Catalogued  
Classified  
Collected  
Compiled  
Dispatched  
Executed  
Filed  
Generated  
Implemented  
Inspected

Monitored  
Operated  
Ordered  
Organized  
Prepared  
Processed  
Purchased  
Recorded  
Retrieved  
Screened  
Specified  
Systematized

## Stronger Verbs for Accomplishments

Accelerated  
Achieved  
Attained  
Completed  
Conceived  
Convinced  
Discovered  
Doubled  
Effected  
Eliminated  
Expanded  
Expedited  
Founded  
Improved  
Increased  
Initiated  
Innovated  
Introduced  
Invented  
Launched  
Mastered  
Originated  
Overcame  
Overhauled  
Pioneered  
Reduced  
Resolved  
Revitalized  
Spearheaded  
Strengthened  
Transformed  
Upgraded

From *To Boldly Go: Practical Career Advice for Scientists*, by Peter S. Fiske

# Sample Interview Questions

## Personal Assessment

- Tell me about yourself.
- What are your greatest strengths and weaknesses?
- Give me an example of when you showed initiative.
- Describe your ideal job.
- Define success. Define failure.
- What can you offer us?
- What motivates you to put forth your greatest effort?
- Tell me about a leadership role you have had. What makes a good leader?
- Where do you want to be in 5 years? Ten years?

## Education and Experience

- Describe your most rewarding accomplishment since you've started college
- Tell me about the most satisfying job you ever held. The least?
- What kind of boss do you prefer?
- What frustrates you on the job?
- How would a former supervisor describe your work?

## Career Ambition and Plans

- What are your long-range and short-range goals and objectives?
- What qualities does a successful manager possess?
- What qualities does a successful team player possess?
- What kind of challenge are you looking for?
- What do you think determines a person's progress in a good company?
- What are your ideas on salary?
- What personal characteristics are necessary for success in your field?
- Do you prefer to work on your own or under a supervisor?

## Behavioral Questions

- Tell me about a time when you had to deal with someone whose personality was different from yours.
- Give me a time where you had to carry out a directive with which you did not agree.
- Describe a time when you saw a problem and took action to correct it rather than waiting for someone else to do so.
- Tell me about your most successful presentation and what made it so.
- Tell me about a meeting where you provided technical expertise. How did you ensure that everyone understood?
- Tell me about a time when there was a conflict in a job/lab/class project. How did you handle it?
- Describe a time when you took a risk. What were the biggest challenges/problems you encountered in college? How did you handle them?
- Talk about a time when you had trouble getting along with a professor/team member/supervisor?
- How are you conducting your job search and how will you go about making your decision?
- Describe a situation in which you used persuasion to successfully convince someone to see things your way.
- By providing examples, convince me that you can adapt to a wide variety of people, situations and environments.
- Give me an example of a time in which you had to be relatively quick in coming to a decision.

## Company or Organization

- Why do you want to work for this organization?
- What do you know about our organization?
- What section (service or product) are you most interested in?
- How do you feel about working in a structured environment? A non-structured environment?
- What do you think it takes to be successful in a company such as ours?
- In what ways do you think you can contribute to our company?
- How long would you expect to work here?
- Are you willing to work overtime?
- Are you willing to go where the company sends you?
- What type of environment are you most comfortable with?
- Why do you think you might like to live in the community in which our company is located?
- Why should I hire you?
- What makes you the best person for this job?

## The Close

- When could you start work?
- Is there anything else I should know about you?
- Do you have any other questions?

# Job Interviews: Predicting and Clarifying

## 1. Predicting Strategies

**A.** With a partner, quickly read through the interview questions in the career handbook. Which words and phrases are repeated often? Write them on a separate piece of paper. These words and phrases are what you can expect, so you can focus on the words that are different when you are interviewed.

**B.** Review the job advertisement you brought. Circle the most important qualifications and give a copy to your partner. What questions from the career handbook are you most likely to be asked?

## 2. Clarifying Strategies

If you can, try to repeat what you **did** understand. In English, new information is stressed, so the speaker will stress the information you did **not** say.

**Example: (bold= stressed)**

*Interviewer:* Tell me about a time when you surpassed your **job requirements**.

*You:* I'm sorry. When I did **what** to my job requirements?

*Interviewer:* When you **surpassed** your job requirements.

## Clarification Expressions

### Complete Confusion

- I'm sorry. I didn't get that. Do you mind speaking a little more slowly?
- I'm not sure what you mean. Could you say that another way?

### Partial Confusion

- X? I'm not sure what that is.
- Do you mean A or B?
- I didn't catch all of that. You asked me to tell you about a time that I...?
- Excuse me. I got the part about X, but I missed the first part/last part/part about Y.
- Do you mean when I was at company X?
- "When I had to deal with someone whose personality...?"

### Checking Comprehension

- If I understand you correctly, you'd like me to talk about/give an example of...
- Okay. So you mean that...

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## Activity

**Student 1:** Choose questions you think are most appropriate for your partner's job. Hold the career handbook or the page of questions in front of your face. Making **NO** effort to be clear (in fact, you may speak too quickly or softly or mumble) ask your partner one of the sample questions. You may invent questions, but they should follow the pattern of the ones in the book.

**Student 2:** Use the clarification strategies to make sure you understand the question. Answer it briefly.

Do this twice, and then change roles.