



School of Education

Office of Career Connections

Interview Information Packet

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For an appointment with a Job Search Advisor, call (812) 856-8500
edcareers.indiana.edu

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Interview Checklist

Dressing for the Interview

Style of dress is a subjective area where you will have to make some decisions. While there are some generally accepted guidelines, and it will be wise to seek advice from others, you will ultimately need to select an outfit that you are comfortable in, that you look good in, and that is appropriate for the corporation to which you are applying. Below are some suggestions.

- Dress professionally and conservatively.
- Women should consider a pant or skirt suit, or a professional dress. Men should consider a conservative suit, shirt and tie. Dark suit colors (black or navy) are always appropriate. Alternative dress should include professional blazers, blouses/button up shirt, and dress pants.
- Jewelry should be simple and tasteful.
- Hair should be neatly cut and groomed.
- Avoid perfume or cologne (some people are very sensitive to scent).
- Overall grooming should be clean and neat, with special attention to breath, fingernails and other areas of personal hygiene.

Before the Interview

- Write down the time and place of the interview and the name of the interviewer/s.
- Review your resume and portfolio (be prepared to answer questions about any topics in them).
- Research the organization (search for information online, check out applicable websites, pinpoint the location).
- Use GPS system and preview the route, check out parking, entrances and check-in points.
- Prepare questions for the interviewer.
- Practice answering sample interview questions with a friend or family member (see Interview Questions to Answer and Ask).
- Prepare a special interview folder to take along. Include extra copies of your resume and references page, paper and a pen for writing notes, business cards, etc.
- Get plenty of sleep and eat an adequate breakfast
- Take your time getting ready, and save time to relax before the interview
- Leave early and arrive at least 10 minutes before the interview time
- Bring only the interview folder and your portfolio and a professional handbag/briefcase
- Be friendly to the secretary and staff members and anyone else you meet on site

During the Interview

- Give a firm handshake and smile! Communicate your interest and enthusiasm to the interviewer.
- Be sincere and direct. Act naturally. Be yourself.
- Be aware of your non-verbal behavior, maintain good eye contact and posture, and speak clearly.
- Stay positive, don't dwell on negative experiences when answering questions
- Answer specific questions specifically – don't make the interviewer assume your competence through vague responses to specific questions.
- Use real experiences as examples for interview questions
- Don't ask about pay, benefits or vacation time. Make sure to research this information on the district's website beforehand.
- Offer information which will promote confidence in your ability to handle the job.
- Continue to tell yourself that you are doing well. They may like you more than you think.
- Watch for signs that the interview is ending. Finish any responses or questions which you feel are necessary, but don't continue talking out of nervousness. Feel free to follow a response with a polite "Does that answer your question?"
- At the close, make sure you are aware of the next steps in the selection process, including when you can expect to hear a decision.
- If you are interested in the job, reiterate this fact and thank the interviewer for her time and consideration.
- Always leave a good impression, even if you don't think you'll be offered the job. A good reputation can open doors that you don't know exist.

After the Interview

- Write a simple thank you note to each interviewer and mail or email within 24 hours of the interview. Call the school secretary if you need to confirm the address, or the correct spelling of names
- Follow up with ONE phone call if appropriate
- Think carefully if you have more than one offer. Your decision will impact your life dramatically for the next year or more.

After Accepting a Position

- Fulfill your contract; it is a formal agreement
- Be deliberate about getting to know the staff in your building. They have a wealth of knowledge and can make your first year much easier
- Notify Career Connections (812-856-8506 or edcareer@indiana.edu) when you accept a job

Interview Questions to Answer

Below are some questions typically asked during an interview. You should expect to answer at least one question from each of the categories. Practice answering some of these questions with a career services counselor, in front of the mirror or with a friend.

Training/Experience/Mission

1. Tell us about yourself.
2. What circumstances led you to enter the field of education?
3. What experiences have you had related to teaching?
4. What qualities do you have that make you an effective teacher?
5. What grade levels or subjects do you prefer to teach?
6. Do you have experience with (special education, multicultural . . .) students?
7. Why do you want to teach in our school/school district?
8. What do you hope to be doing in 5 years? What are your career goals?
9. What three words would your students use to describe you as a teacher?

Teaching Effectiveness

10. How do you meet the range of skills and needs commonly present in a classroom?
11. How would you differentiate a superior teacher from a mediocre teacher?
12. How do you know students are learning what you are teaching?
13. What kinds of techniques do you use to stimulate active participation in the classroom?
14. If some of your students always finish their assignments early, how would you deal with the free time that they have?

Teacher Presentation

15. What types of resource materials do you like to use?
16. What materials have you used that you find most effective for the slow learners? The quick learners?

Classroom Management

17. What are some characteristics of a well-managed classroom?
18. What discipline methods work best for you?
19. What are some examples of rules you would have in your classroom?
20. Describe one of your most difficult discipline situations and how you handled it.
21. What would you do, or how would you treat a student who refused to do the work you assigned?
22. How do you engage a parent in the education of his or her child?

Measurement and Evaluation

23. What grading system would you use?
24. Under what conditions, if any, would most of your pupils receive D's and F's?

Staff and Interpersonal Skills

25. What would you do if an angry parent accused you of "messing up" his child?
26. What do you see yourself doing to contribute to healthy staff relationships at the school?
27. What do you believe the role of the principal is?
28. You know that a staff member has been talking behind your back about what he or she sees as your ineffective teaching methods. What would you do?

Closing Questions

29. What additional talents and skills do you have?
30. What extracurricular activities can you supervise?
31. Do you have any questions for us?

Interview Questions to Ask

Below are some examples of the types of questions to ask during your interview.

1. Tell me about the students who attend this school.
2. How many classes would I be expected to teach?
3. What types of school activities promote parent-teacher-student interaction?
4. Do teachers participate in curriculum review and change?
5. How does this district promote staff development activities and conferences? What types of programs have the teachers attended in the last year?
6. How does the teaching staff feel about new teachers?
7. What discipline procedures does the district use?
8. Do parents support the school? How does the community promote this school?
9. Do your schools use teacher aids or parent volunteers?
10. To what extent do staff members work collaboratively to solve problems and respond to the needs of students?
11. Does the administration encourage field trips for students?
12. What technology resources will be available to me in the classroom?

To schedule a mock interview with a Job Search Advisor, call 856-8500 between 8 am and 5 pm.

What are Employers Seeking/Not Seeking?

Employers want to see:

- Content knowledge
- Classroom management skills
- Passion and enthusiasm
- Knowledge of standards
- Ability to use technology
- Willingness to learn and grow
- Excellent communication skills
- Ability to work in a team
- Positive attitude
- Confidence and professionalism
- Ability to differentiate instruction
- Creativity in lesson development
- Knowledge of special education
- Ability to use variety of assessments
- Willingness to get involved

Employers do NOT want to see:

- Facial piercings
- Inappropriate language, dress
- Lack of eye contact
- Sharing too much personal info
- Negativity about past experiences
- Exaggerating or lying
- Lack of energy
- Lack of knowledge
- Inability to explain why applying
- Lack of depth in responses
- Inability to answer questions
- Being over-confident/arrogant
- Self-centeredness
- Inattention, lack of focus
- Overly general information not related to specific position

Permissible Interview Questions

Occasionally (& often inadvertently) questions will come up in interviews that are inappropriate, or even illegal for a potential employer to ask. What constitutes an appropriate response depends entirely on the interviewee, their perception of the situation, and their willingness to answer the question. The chart below distinguishes between some permissible and impermissible questions about a variety of topics.

Topic	Permissible	Impermissible or Questionable
Name	Is any additional information relative to change of name, use of an assumed name or nickname necessary to enable a check on your work and educational record?	Any inquiries about a name which would indicate your lineage, ancestry, national origin or descent, or marital status; inquiries into previous name of applicant where it has been changed by court order, marriage or otherwise. Inquiry if a woman is Miss or Mrs.
Photograph	May be required after hiring for identification	Require or request photo before hiring, or attached to application
Address	Questions about place and length of current and previous addresses; “How long have you lived here in Indiana/Bloomington”	Questions about foreign addresses which would indicate national origin; names and relationships of people you live with; whether you own or rent a home
Race, Ancestry, or National Origin	Languages you read, speak or write fluently	Inquiries into your lineage, ancestry, national origin, descent, birthplace or native tongue. National origin of your parents or spouse.
Citizenship	“Are you a citizen of the U.S.?” If not, do you have the legal right to remain permanently in the U.S.?	“Of what country are you a citizen?” Whether you or your parents or spouse are naturalized or native-born US citizens, or when any relative acquired U.S. citizenship. Please see this website for more updated information: http://www.naceweb.org/public-policy-and-legal/legal-issues/legal-issues-navigating-the-interview-process-and-avoiding-a-legal-landmine/
Marital & Family Status	Whether you can meet specified work schedules or if you have activities, commitments or responsibilities that may hinder the meeting of work attendance requirements. Questions about duration of stay on the job or anticipated absences which are made to males and females alike.	Any questions about whether an applicant is married, single, divorced, engaged, etc. Number and ages of children, questions about pregnancy, sexual orientation or child care arrangements.
Handicaps	Whether you have any handicaps or health problems – sensory, mental or physical, which may affect work performance on the particular job in question, or which the employer should consider in determining job placement	General inquiries (e.g. “Do you have any handicaps?”) which would require applicants to divulge handicaps or health conditions which do not relate reasonably to fitness to perform the job.

Religion	Whether or not you are able to work normal hours and days required by the job to avoid possible conflicts with religious or other personal convictions	Your religious denomination or affiliation, church, parish, pastor, synagogue, mosque, or religious holidays observed. Any inquiry to indicate or identify religion or customs.
Military Record	Type of education and experience in service	Type of discharge

How to Answer Illegal Questions

Gender:

Questions related to gender should be redirected by the interviewee. For example, if the interviewer asks “How would you handle managing a team of all men?” Saying “I’m very comfortable in a management role. In fact, in my last position, the department I led exceeded its annual sales goals for three years straight”

Marital or Family Status:

If you’re asked when you’re planning to get married or when you’re planning on having children you can say “You know, I’m not quite there yet. But I am very interested in the career paths at your district. Can you tell me more about that?”

Citizenship, Nationality, or Language

You might be asked “Where are you from” or “Where were you born?” and you can respond “I’m from Indiana. But I am legally allowed to work in the U.S. if that’s what you’re asking”

Age

If an interviewer asks a question or makes a comment about your age make sure to stick to what they are trying to get at which is your experience and accomplishments.

Religion

You may get direct or indirect questions related to religion and reassuring the interviewer that you’re able to work the required schedule.

- Adapted from: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/dailymuse/2012/04/20/5-illegal-interview-questions-and-how-to-dodge-them/#499edac6191f>

The Interviewing Portfolio

What is an Interviewing Portfolio, and why might I need one?

A portfolio is a representation of you and your professional career. Some people think of it as an expanded resume. It is a handy reference tool that is often requested or expected at interviews for teaching positions. Not every educator has a portfolio, and not every potential employer will require you to have one. It can take several days to assemble all the components. Therefore, it is best to plan ahead if you think you may need to want to take a portfolio to an interview.

What Should I put in my Interviewing Portfolio?

Portfolio contents will vary according to the areas of certification and positions sought as well as personal preference. Below are some basic components usually included in an education portfolio and some suggestions for optional additions.

Typical Components

- An attractive cover page
- A table of contents
- Your resume and references
- Your transcript
- Your Philosophy of Education
- Your Philosophy of Classroom Management or Discipline
- A sample lesson plan (prepared by you)
- A sample unit (prepared by you)

Optional Components

- Letters of Recommendation
- Certificates of awards you have received
- Your teaching license
- Photos and/or other media showcasing your teaching
- A link to, or summary of, your own professional website
- Descriptions of your ideal classroom environment
- A list of related areas of professional interest (multiple intelligences, reading, ornithology, inclusion students and practices, critical literacy, etc.)
- A list and descriptions of professional conferences you have attended, or professional organizations of which you are a member

Additional Suggestions

- Your portfolio should be very well organized and neat.
- You can choose from three ring binders, pre-bound report covers, or other methods of organization available (browse through your favorite office supply stores).
- Sheet protectors may be used to keep pages clean and crisp.
- Use color whenever possible to add interest.

ePortfolio Guidelines, Sites & Examples

IMPORTANT: The Office of Career Connections department is providing these links for your information. However, it has not investigated these sites and cannot vouch for the accuracy or legitimacy of the information found on them. Indiana University shall not be responsible for any direct or indirect harm, damage, or loss incurred in connection with these links, regardless of the nature of the claim or cause of action.

Some words of caution on security & privacy:

Be aware of the risk of identity theft when posting personal information online. Consider privacy issues and permissions before posting photos of students, other teachers, etc.

Guidelines:

www.siteportfolio.weebly.com

Free sites:

www.portfoliogen.com

www.foliofor.me

www.weebly.com

www.wix.com

www.wordpress.com

sites.google.com/site/eportfolioapps

www.teacherssupportnetwork.com – Includes direct connection to recruiters

Examples:

<http://www.karegold7.wix.com/msgoldstein>

<https://sites.google.com/site/stephanieladner>

<http://www.livebinders.com/play/play?id=19270>

<https://ostergrenm.weebly.com>

Articles:

Are ePortfolios Still Relevant for Today's Students?

(ePortfolio article dated March 2013, includes guidelines for creating an effective eportfolio)

www.emergingedtech.com/2013/03/are-eportfolios-still-relevant-for-todays-students

“Thank You” Tips

Is a “Thank-You” letter necessary after a job interview?

Yes! Absolutely! A thank-you note not only demonstrates your appreciation for the time the interviewer spent with you, it also demonstrates professional etiquette, provides a space to reiterate your qualifications and will make you stand out as one of the few who took the time to write a thank-you. Many interviewers will only consider candidates who follow this professional courtesy practice.

Should the letter be hand-written?

Although hand-written letters are seen as more personal, business-style letters and/ or email may provide more advantages in the long run since they appear more professional and provide more space for showcasing your qualifications and written communication skills.

What should be included in a thank-you letter?

- Be sure to say thank-you and show appreciation
- Specific information about the interview (general thank-you notes seem indifferent).
- Something unique you learned about the school.
- Supplementary information describing your qualifications for that specific position.
- Restate interest and availability
- Invite continued communication
- NO TYPOS (check spelling of interviewers name)

Additional Suggestions

- Address a specific person
- Use e-mail only when directed to by interviewer
- Take notes during or directly after interview
- Mail within 24 hours of the interview
- Sign the letter

Sample “Thank You” Letter

1002 W. Roosevelt St.
Bloomington, IN 47406

May 21, 2008

Mr. Moller
2743 Right Road Rm 223
Louisville, KY 57512

Dear Mr. Moller:

Thank you for the opportunity to interview for the ESL teacher position at The Charter School at Apple Square. Visiting your school reaffirmed my interest in the position and boosted my confidence in my ability to excel, should I be selected.

The job, as you presented it, seems to be a very good match for my skills and interests. My experience working with underserved, new language learners, my classroom management skills and my work ethic will serve your school well. Additionally, the high expectations you hold for your students and staff assure me that the position would be challenging and rewarding, allowing me to grow professionally.

Once again, I would like to restate my interest in the ESL position. I look forward to hearing from you soon. I can be reached at (812) 333-3333. Thank you very much for your time.

Sincerely,
(Signature)

Mary Ann Abner