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# Job Interview Strategies: Steps for Success

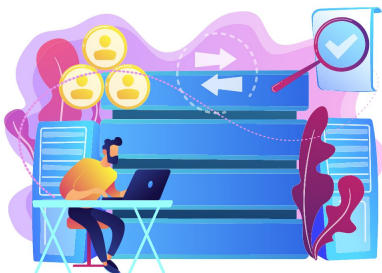
## Preparing for Your Interview

### Study the Job Description

- Investigate the meaning behind specialized terms and phrases
- Identify key job requirements
- Compare your strengths to these job requirements, mentioning outcomes and impact when possible
- Plan which stories to tell of your successful experiences
- Note other work-related experiences that may enhance your standing as a job candidate

### Learn about the Sector and Organization

- Search for current issues facing the sector or industry
- Conduct internet searches to learn about the organizational mission, goals, work, products and services
- Review the organization's annual reports, publications, press coverage, and social media
- Access your professional network for organizational knowledge
- Use LinkedIn or your own network to learn about the hiring manager



### Focus on Employer Concerns

- Formulate some key employer issues both from your understanding of the organization and from what the hiring manager says during the interview
- Discuss relevant prior experiences related to these issues, as well as organizational growth, impact, and effectiveness
- Offer examples of your “solutions mindset,” your ability to meet deadlines and cope with budgetary constraints, and your experience working in teams

### Explain Anthropology's Usefulness/Relevance

- Be ready to draw on key concepts (e.g., culture, holism, insider points of view, ethnography, context, induction) to:
  - Reveal how you think
  - Help differentiate you from other applicants
  - Emphasize how you might work to fulfill the key job requirements using examples that highlight anthropology concepts, methods, and theory
  - Offer brief synopses of successful projects on which anthropologists have worked—as they pertain to elements in the job description; explain the problem faced, the approach taken, and the outcomes
  - Balance the discussion of your anthropology background with other experiences and skills





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## Approaches during the Interview

### Present Yourself Effectively

- Dress appropriately
- Give examples of your work-related experiences; emphasize their outcomes or impact—the So what?—including stories about what others have said, but do so with humility
- If you show a portfolio, present only the relevant parts of it
- Introduce your anthropology skills (e.g., listening, building rapport, asking open-ended questions, serving as a “translator,” recognizing cross-cultural differences) as strategies for fitting in the organization
- Be ready to explain how you are addressing/might address your weaknesses, including upskilling

### Adjust to Hiring Manager Challenges

Manager is rushed, just skimming your interview:  
*“Let’s get to the point: what can you do for me?”*

**You:** “Would you be able to fill me in on one or two of your big issues—without revealing anything proprietary, of course?”

**You:** “In addition to my relevant technical skills, I am also good at figuring out people problems and coming up with potential solutions to them.”

Manager is interrupted by calls he had to take:  
*“I apologize. Unfortunately, I have a hard stop at 2:00.”*

**You:** “No problem. That’ll be enough time to tell one quick story about why I applied to work here.”

**You:** “I understand. What would help you learn more about me right now?”

### Adjust to Hiring Manager Challenges

Manager seems disinterested:  
*“I don’t know why HR wanted me to talk to you.”*

**You:** “I’ll hazard a guess and say that the tech industry, and UX especially, has discovered the value of anthropology. Anthropologists bring a holistic or big-picture understanding of the user experience.”

**You:** “The recruiters told me that they liked how I spent time abroad and worked with different kinds of people. They said that experience would be helpful with your Spanish-speaking customers.”

**You:** “I told HR that I was passionate about using my skills to improve products and services for visually-impaired people.”

Manager seems argumentative:  
*“We just use quantitative methods here.”*

**You:** “I am sure you know what has worked well for you in the past. But with attention shifting increasingly to supply chain breakdowns, conversations and observations can really help you understand quickly what is going on. A mixed methods approach offers the best of both worlds.”

**You:** “It is certainly the case that surveys provide a lot of information about what is happening. But, if you want to know *why* it’s happening, or *how* it happens, anthropologists are pretty good at figuring those things out.”

**You:** “Oh, I use them too! But, when learning about the best survey questions to ask, a qualitative approach can be very helpful.”