

VELS	Year	Blueprint	MIPs and MIPs Best Practice Framework
Level 6 – Physical, Personal and Social Learning Personal Learning Strand – Dimension: Manage Personal Learning Interpersonal Development Strand Dimension: Building Social Relationships	9, 10	Phase 2 (C) Career Building 11.2 – Understand and experience the process of career building	MIPs Aim: Develop Skills to manage their pathways throughout their working lives MIPs Aim: Develop their knowledge, understanding and experience of opportunities in education, training and employment Best Practice Framework 3: Pathways and Planning Process

INTERVIEW PREPARATION

Teachers' notes

Outcome

Prepare for an interview and cold canvas employers effectively.

To help students understand what a job interview is and the reasons for its use. To discuss what employers expect from their employees and understand strategies to maintain employment.

Rationale

The purpose of an interview is to give the interviewers the opportunity to meet prospective candidates for a position (such as employment or enrolment in Structured Workplace Learning) and to discuss their interest in the work and ability to meet the requirements.

It provides the opportunity for students to 'sell' themselves and for interviewers to compare the abilities of the short-listed applicants and choose the best. People gain employment in a variety of ways and students need to develop the understanding and skills to gain and then maintain employment throughout their lives.

Task description

It is recommended that this learning activity be completed before the 'The interview participation' learning activity and may be a part of work experience preparations. This topic deals with the preparation of the students for the interview. The topic 'Interview participation' enables the students to role-play the interviews.

1. As a class students discuss what an employment interview is, and why or how it might be used.
2. In small groups students identify what cold canvassing is, identify an industry where it may be appropriate and identify strategies to ensure the experience is beneficial. Examples could be hospitality, Building industry, retail etc. Students present their findings to the class.
3. They are then asked to write on the board the things an employer could find out from an interview that they could not find out from a written application or telephone call. The list might include assessing your appearance and communication skills, finding out how well you can think on your feet, and finding out whether you would fit into the workplace. What things could a person being interviewed find out from the interview?
4. The teacher outlines the importance of researching the organisation and the job that the students are applying for, e.g. find out about the structure of the company, and know the tasks and responsibilities of that position.
5. Students break back into small groups and brainstorm strategies to maintain employment. Students share their findings with the class and the list developed is recorded in their work books.

Key discussion points

How long has the company been established? Where is it located? How many employees work there? What sort of products or services does it specialise in? What skills/qualities will be required for the position? What is the structure of the organisation? (This can be done by students telephoning the company and asking for information; asking family and friends for information; doing research in a library; possibly reading local or national newspapers or via the company's advertisements; looking in the *Yellow Pages*; researching at the local job or Career Information Centre.)

1. During the discussion, the teacher should point out the importance of keeping all information relevant to the interview in a folder, e.g. a copy of the job advertisement/VET course; a copy of the initial application; information on travel arrangements to get to the interview; name of the interviewer; and subsequent feedback.
2. In small groups, students list reasons for rehearsing for the interview and being prepared to answer interview questions, recording their answers on sheets of paper. One student per group acts as a scribe and briefly reports the reasons to the whole class.
3. In pairs, students read through the interview tips on their handout and prepare questions for the interview – one as interviewer, one as interviewee – for the learning activity in 'Interview participation'. Students should write down their questions so the interviewer can see that they are well prepared.
4. Volunteer students role play both positive and negative examples of body language, e.g. slumping in chair at the interview versus sitting up straight and leaning slightly forward; looking down while being interviewed versus maintaining eye contact and smiling when appropriate.
5. In small groups, students record a list of positive body language, e.g. making eye contact, and greeting with a smile.
6. Teacher facilitates whole-class discussion on the importance of positive body language, especially eye contact (there is a need to be culturally sensitive), posture and active listening techniques during the interview.
7. In pairs, students practise a firm, strong handshake, a smile and a courteous greeting as they role-play the introduction scene. They use the name of the interviewer, maintaining eye contact. It is also useful for students to practise how an interviewer would invite the interviewee to take a seat in the interview room.
8. In small groups, students discuss the appropriate dress standards for a job interview. All students in the group take notes during the discussion. On completion, the teacher facilitates a brief, whole-class discussion on this topic.

Extension activities and Local Standards

- Invite a guest speaker (LCP, LLEN, Job Network, Human Resources from Council) to talk about the interview process and expectations. Could be linked into a session about resumes from the same speaker
- Role-play interviews.
- Brainstorm questions that are likely to be asked or can be asked at an interview.
- View videos on interview techniques or body language
- Discuss presentation and clarify appropriate presentation for a number of different industries

Suggested resources

- Copies of job advertisements taken from a newspaper
- Current personal portfolios to prepare for the interview
- Videos on body language/interview technique (optional), from the Department of Training and Employment in your state or territory
- Copies of 'Preparing for the interview', 'Job interview', 'Vocational Education and Training interview' and 'Questions you might ask' worksheets
- *Job Guide* – in print (Section 2) or online at <http://jobguide.dest.gov.au/>
- The DEST website at <http://www.dest.gov.au/schools/careers/Interviews.PDF>

Career competencies

This activity links to the Planning step in <http://myfuture.edu.au>.

Interview Preparation Worksheet 1: Preparing For The Interview

Read through the following points to help you make the best impression at the interview.

- Find out all you can about the job and the employer, for example, look at the advertisement, contact the human resources or personnel section of the firm, and access their website if they have one.
- Make sure you know how to get to the interview, and plan to arrive at least five minutes early. If you are unavoidably delayed, telephone to explain if possible and apologise. (Have a trial run if possible.)
- Dress appropriately for the interview. Even if you know the position might require you to get dirty or untidy, dress conservatively.
- Make sure your portfolio is up to date and relevant, with spare copies of your résumé, school reports and references in case you are asked to leave copies.
- Prepare your questions.
- Practise your interview with a friend or your family.
- Make sure your hair, fingernails and shoes are clean. Employers and panel members notice these details.
- Be ready to talk about yourself. Do not use 'yes' or 'no' answers, but try to expand your answers into relevant sentences about your strengths and attributes. Where possible, link your experiences and skills to match the position.

Questions the interviewers might ask:

- What do you know about the company?
- Why do you want to work for this company?
- Tell me about your work experience up until now.
- What are your favourite subjects at school? Why?
- What did you do in your last (work) position?
- Do you have any future studies in mind?
- What are your hobbies, interests and social activities?
- Tell us about a significant accomplishment in the past and how you achieved it.
- Why do you think you would be good at the position?
- Why did you leave your last position?
- What are your ambitions for the future?
- Where do you see yourself five years from now?
- When can you start work?
- Why should we give you the position?
- Have you ever had part-time work?
- How will this company benefit by your participation at this workplace?
- What kind of people do you enjoy working with? What kind of people do you find difficult? How do you manage being with people you find difficult?
- What do you think are your greatest strengths and weaknesses as an employee?
- Tell us about a time when ... (you had to deal with a difficult person/things did not go according to plan, etc.).

Look carefully at the job advertisement and try to imagine other questions the interviewers might ask to find out whether you have the right employability skills or personal attributes.

Be prepared to ask some questions. If necessary, write them down. This is a good way of showing that you are keen and you are using your initiative.

- Could you give me more information on ... (e.g. a particular aspect of the work/VET course)?
- Are there any prospects for advancement?
- Why is the position vacant?

You can ask about pay, but make sure that you appear to be at least as interested in the position as in the pay. Thank the interviewers for their time, smile, shake their hands and tell them you are looking forward to hearing from them.