

Interviewing Yourself Into a Career

Q: What is the best way to learn about an occupation?

A: Talk to as many people as you can who work in that field!

Informational Interviews

Find career information. Develop a professional network. But...do not ask for a job!

Whether you are undecided about what career to pursue or know exactly what you want to do, visiting with career professionals can provide important insights into careers — insights you can't find by reading a book or looking at employment statistics.

Unfortunately, few career explorers utilize this valuable human resource. Yet, the advantage of conducting what are termed "informational interviews" with career professionals is that you are the one doing the interviewing — there is no pressure, no competitive forces at work. You are also visiting a potential place of employment and gaining information about what that job is really like, whether it is something you would like to do and, if it is, how to better prepare for it.

Jim Stark, a technical team leader for a watershed research group, says that while he was still in school he scheduled regular informational interviews with watershed resource professionals so he could ask them about their jobs and begin to develop a network of contacts.

"It was amazing," Stark recalls. "I never got turned down by any one of them, and three out of four times they were really motivating experiences." The network of 20 professional contacts Stark developed during his senior year in college not only advanced his understanding of his career field, it also led him into his first job. "If you're out there meeting with people, you're more likely to see opportunities when they arise. Opportunities aren't usually in the 'Want Ads.' They come from being out there talking to people," Stark says.

Besides interviewing people who do the kind of work that interests you, relatives and friends can also be sources of information about career possibilities. Even though they may not be doing work you are especially interested in, you can practice your interview skills and quite possibly begin getting a clearer picture of what does interest you. Relatives and friends can also provide you with a list of referrals with whom to visit to learn about other jobs.

Scheduling and Conducting Informational Interviews

Remember that when you conduct an informational interview, you are not seeking employment. You are seeking specific information about a job, the skill and educational requirements, training and advancement opportunities, and preparation requirements.

When contacting professionals to interview, identify yourself, tell them how you obtained their name. Explain that

you are gathering career information. Ask for 20 to 30 minutes to talk with them about their career. Don't limit yourself to contacting just one individual in one company in a particular field. Every job, even in the same field, is slightly different. So, scheduling visits with several people who work in the same occupation will be more useful. It will also help you expand your knowledge and network of contacts.

Do your homework before an interview. Learn as much as you can about the field you are investigating. Log on to the Alaska Career Information System (AKCIS), O*NET or other Internet resources for a description of the occupation. If possible, learn about the organization your contact works for by reading the company's literature. Ask the company's receptionist how you can learn more about the company. You might also talk with people you know who work there, or those who do business with the company.

Write down a list of specific questions you want answered during the interview. The list will help you keep the interview on track and gain the information you are seeking (see Informational Interview Questions on page 11).

When going to your interview, or when visiting a company to gather information, dress appropriately. Don't just walk in off the street in ragged jeans, a T-shirt and a baseball cap. Make a good impression every time you visit a company. You may want to work there some day, and first impressions are often lasting ones.

When going to the interview, bring a pad of paper and a pen (one that works!) to take notes, but don't get carried away writing everything down. Listen intently. Jot down important ideas and job search information, or the names and phone numbers of other potential contacts. You can also take an updated copy of your resume. Either before or after your interview, ask the career professional if he or she would be willing to review it. Ask for recommendations regarding your overall career plans and qualifications.

Thank your source for meeting with you, both upon your arrival and upon your departure. Express your appreciation for the chance to learn about their career field. If additional contacts are not offered during the interview, before you depart, don't be afraid to ask for additional names. Do not ask them for a job! You scheduled the interview to gather information about their career and to express your career interests. Asking for a job, or for a job referral, will leave them feeling that you asked for their time under false pretenses. However, if they mention a job opportunity, certainly express your interest in finding out more about it.

Lastly, follow up with a thank you card or letter. Ask to be kept informed of any other information that may be of help to you in your career research.

Informational interviews are one of the most practical, educational and effective methods to explore career options and to develop a network of professional contacts. So, get out there and start talking to people. You just might end up interviewing yourself into a career.

Informational Interview Questions

Here is a list of questions to help you get the most out of an informational interview with a career professional.

1. What motivated you to pursue this occupation (or career)?
2. What is your job like? On a typical day, what kinds of problems do you deal with and what kinds of decisions do you make?
3. What do you like most about your job? What do you like least about it?
4. What social obligations go along with your job? Are you expected to join any organizations or participate in any activities outside of work?
5. What kind of preparation such as: work, activities, schooling or hobbies did you do before entering this occupation?
6. What was most helpful in preparing you for your current position?
7. What are the most important skills you use in this job?
8. Are there any specific educational requirements for this job?
9. What do you think is the best way to prepare for and enter this occupation?
10. Are there advancement opportunities in this field?
11. Are there any major changes taking place in your occupation, either due to technology or the marketplace?
12. Why do people decide to leave this occupation?

Remember, these are just sample questions, but they cover most of what you should ask during an interview. If your source(s) do not provide you with any referrals during the interview, before you leave, be sure to ask if they know of anyone else in their profession who you might contact. Thank them for their time then follow up with a thank you note or card.

Never ask for a job. The purpose of an informational interview is to help you better understand what is involved in a specific occupation and to develop contacts who may be able to refer you to a possible job opportunity in the future.



**Jason
Carroll**
age 30

2001 Bachelor's Degree
Business Administration

Branch Manager
First National Bank Alaska

Hometown:
Kenai, AK



“When I graduated from the
University of Alaska, Fairbanks

I never imagined that in two short years I would be handed the keys to my own bank branch.

First National Bank Alaska's Management Associate program made it possible for me to achieve my goals. Today I have an established career—I can't imagine doing anything else. **”**

**Get started on
your career today.**

Application and information available at
FNBAAlaskaJOBS.com

FIRST NATIONAL BANK IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER.

The Art of Successful Interviewing

A job interview can be an intimidating experience, but there really is no secret to developing effective interviewing skills. Preparation and practice are the keys!

In preparing for interviews, you must be able to assess your skills and experiences and then state how your unique qualifications match the career or specific position you seek. In addition to self-assessment, the more you research an occupation and/or company, the better your ability to express yourself in an interview.

Students who have conducted informational interviews prior to beginning their job search (see Interviewing Yourself Into A Career on page 10), have found that preparing for job interviews is so much easier and they feel more comfortable because they know more about their employment field and the particular company/organization to which they have applied. Participating in mock interviews (practice interviews with Career Services staff or with career professionals/mentors willing to volunteer their time) also allows you to practice and acquaint yourself with the interview process.

You want to accomplish two objectives in a job interview. First, you want to make a favorable impression. Second, you want to gather information to help you determine whether or not you actually want to work for the interviewer/employer.

The interviewer's objective, on the other hand, is to obtain enough information about you to make an accurate assessment of your qualifications, background, and career goals. They want to select the best possible candidate for their organization.

When preparing to tell your story to a prospective employer, it can be helpful to use the **STAR Method**. Explain a past **Situation**, your **Task** or role, the **Action** you took, and the **Results** of your action. If you get nervous during an interview, you can think of the points by remembering "STAR."

The STAR method also helps you determine if an experience is a good one to use at an interview. Here is an example: "When I worked at the state library, many of the books were not filed correctly (Situation). I was in charge of shelving books on three floors (Task). I talked to my boss about designing a new employee training method at the next staff meeting (Action). All the library assistants helped in sharing ideas for the new training on shelving. After that meeting, there were fewer misplaced books, and customers asked fewer questions about finding books that were listed as 'in' (Results)."

Once you have six to eight experiences, practice telling the stories out loud to a friend or to Career Services staff. Besides experiences, it may also help to pick three or four skill areas that you wish to focus on during the interview. Example: I am a team player, have multi-cultural experience, and have strong computer skills. If you think through the job requirements, identify skills that match, and practice talking about your experiences, you will be well prepared for the interview.

It Starts With First Impressions

Any time you interact with a potential employer, whether it is conducting research on the company, inquiring about job openings, picking up a job application, or visiting the business as a customer, imagine yourself being evaluated by those who you contact. Always be positive, upbeat and professional when corresponding in person, by mail, phone or email. Always be respectable in the way you dress and the way you act. First impressions are usually lasting ones.

Even though being invited to a job interview is certainly exciting, more preparation is needed. **The following steps are keys to landing the job.**

Continue researching the organization through its marketing literature and/or its web site. Talk to people who know the company, or to current employees. Learn about its history, customers, services or products, business philosophy, the kind of people it employs and, if possible, its management.

Make sure you know the location of its offices or stores, especially the location where you are to be interviewed. Identify the parking situation, with whom to check in for the interview and where, and the company's preferred attire in the workplace. Knowing this information beforehand can help reduce the pre-interview anxiety and allow you to concentrate on preparing mentally for the interview.

Plan ahead by making sure the clothes you plan to wear are fresh, clean and pressed, that you are well-rested and properly groomed. Stale clothes, tired eyes, smelling of alcohol or tobacco, won't leave a positive impression. Plan to go alone, and give yourself plenty of time to get to the interview location — preferably five to ten minutes early. Wearing appropriate clothes, appearing clean and alert, and arriving early will allow you to feel more confident, at ease, and better able to adjust to the surroundings. You can use the extra time to dry off your hands, take deep breaths to relax, or visit the restroom.

When you arrive at an office for an interview, introduce yourself and tell the receptionist you have an appointment for an interview. Give the time of the appointment and the name of the person who will interview you or who scheduled the interview.

Greet your interviewer by name, shake hands, and introduce yourself. "Hello Mr. or Ms. So and So" is always appropriate. Don't call your interviewer by their first name unless asked. Wait for the interviewer to offer you a seat. Do not sit down until they have seated themselves.

Many employers and recruiters begin interviews with small talk. Topics can range from the weather to sports and will rarely focus on anything that directly draws out your skills. Nonetheless, you are still being evaluated. Many interviewers are trained to evaluate candidates' various qualities. This means you must do more than smile and nod. Employers seek people with direction and motivation. You can demonstrate these characteristics by your answers to these innocent sounding questions. If you are nervous, it is okay to mention it. Interviewers are used to nervous job applicants. However, they

will pay attention to how you handle pressure. Simply saying, “I’m a little nervous. This opportunity is really important to me,” may help create a more relaxed atmosphere and help restore your confidence.

Engaging in the Interview

Once the official part of an interview begins, interviewers will carefully be listening and evaluating your answers to their questions. Here is a list of what you are likely to be evaluated on:

1. **How mentally alert and responsive are you?**
2. **Can you draw proper inferences and conclusions during the course of the interview?**
3. **Do you demonstrate a degree of intellectual depth when communicating, or is your thinking shallow and lacking depth?**
4. **Have you used good judgment and common sense regarding life planning up to this point?**
5. **What is your capacity for problem solving?**
6. **How well do you respond to stress and pressure?**

If you have done your research on the position and organization, and have carefully evaluated how your own experiences and skills relate to the position, you should easily be able to formulate concise answers to some of the questions you will be asked. However, refrain from reciting memorized answers. You want to come across as interested and naturally enthusiastic about the job, not rehearsed and flat.

During the interview, sit up straight and look alert. Do not chew gum or smoke, even if the interviewer does. Feel free to smile when appropriate. When being asked a question, look the interviewer in the eyes to show you are listening, but avoid staring. Try to maintain eye contact while answering the question, though glancing away occasionally as if thinking is fine. Vary the tempo and tone of your voice. Have your resume and/or portfolio with you to refer to, as it may trigger your memory. Be sincere, positive, and honest with your answers and steer away from any troublesome areas. You, more than your interviewer, can control the content of the interview. Know in advance what you want to stay and look for opportunities to say it.

Do not talk about what was wrong with past jobs or past employers. This is a common mistake job applicants make. Instead, talk about what you are looking for in a job or what you have learned about yourself and how you work. Do not mention financial or personal problems.

When you have questions about the job duties, ask them early in the interview so that you can target your abilities to the job as the interview progresses. Relate your background and accomplishments to the employer’s needs. Some employers will tell you that they have set aside time at the end for questions. Others might be comfortable with you asking questions throughout. Pay attention to an employer’s body language and watch how they react to your questions.

If the interview isn’t going smoothly, do not panic. Some interviewers might test you to see how you handle stress. Stay positive, and ask your interviewer to repeat anything you do not understand so you can gather your thoughts.

Expect the Unexpected

During the interview, you may be asked some unusual questions. Many times questions are asked simply to see how you react. For example, surprise questions could range from, “Tell me a joke” to “What time period would you have liked to have lived in?” These are not the kind of questions you can prepare for in advance. But through your reaction and the response given, you will be evaluated by the employer. The best advice is to pause briefly to consider the question then give a natural response.

The Closing Counts, Too

The conclusion of the interview is also very important. During this time, your overall performance is being assessed. Remain enthusiastic and courteous. Often this is when you are given the opportunity to ask questions. Be sure to have some questions written or at least thought through that will help you to decide whether the position is suitable for you. It is appropriate to ask the interviewer about the hiring process and when a decision will be made. You could also ask if there are any important skills needed for the job that have not been covered in the interview. This allows the employer to state some issues/concerns, and for you to then speak to those issues/concerns. If training has not been addressed during the interview, you could ask how training is provided by the company to help employees improve their skills and job performance.

Do not ask questions about salary, benefits, vacation or other perks of the job. Wait for the interviewer to introduce these subjects. The best time to talk about salary is after you have been offered the job. You are then in a much better position to negotiate.

The conclusion of the interview is usually indicated when the interviewer stands up. Shake their hand and thank him/her for considering you. Being forthright is a quality that most employers will respect. During the interview or shortly after, write down the name(s) of the interviewer(s) so you won’t forget them. Send a thank you letter within two days.

Tips for Telephone Interviews

Telephone interviews can be challenging because you receive no visual cues from the interviewer. However, there are some advantages. You can use notes, you can move around, talk with your hands, or wear whatever you want.

If you have applied for a job and anticipate hearing from an employer about an interview, or if you expect a call from a prospective employer for any reason, consider the following in preparation for that call.

- Make sure the message on your answering machine or voice messaging is courteous and professional. It may be the employer's first impression of you.
- Inform everyone who may answer the telephone that employment calls may come at any time. If you feel your roommates or members of household are unreliable, consider listing a message or cell phone number. Be sure to manage your cell phone calls appropriately.
- If you leave a message after returning a missed call, always leave your first and last name, your phone number and a good time to call you back.
- If an employer schedules a specific time to call you, make sure you are available and that you have a quiet place to talk.
- Keep a copy of your resume and cover letters close to the phone.
- Keep paper and a pen next to the phone, or on you at all times for taking notes.
- Create a file on each organization that you have contacted in any way. You can refer to the file while talking on the phone and bring up pertinent information.

There are also some important things to remember when an employer does call.

- If a call surprises you, ask the employer to hold for a moment and compose yourself. Do not put the employer on hold for more than 30 seconds. If the timing is extremely bad for you, ask if you can return the call. Let the employer know the exact time that you will call, or arrange an appropriate time convenient to both of you and stick to that time.
- Never put the employer on hold while you answer "call waiting" or another "incoming call."
- Be aware that the interviewer may actually include a group of people. If they do not introduce themselves, ask if they would mind doing so. Write down their names and titles, and feel free to ask who is asking a specific question if you are not sure.
- Voice is important. Be sure to convey energy and enthusiasm. Although the employer can't see you, smile. It will help you feel more energized.
- Listen carefully to each question asked. Envision the recruiter sitting across from you and answer as if they are present.
- Speak directly into the phone. Keep the mouthpiece about one inch from your mouth. Do not eat, chew gum or smoke while on the phone, sound is amplified! Do not use a speakerphone, even if the interviewer does.

Types of Interviews

Screening

A few questions designed to find out if you would fit their company's culture and the basic job requirements. For example, human resource representatives may do screening interviews at job fairs.

Individual

One-on-one interview with a full range of questions about the position. Usually at the company.

Tag-team

An individual interview back to back with an interview with another interviewer. The interviewers could be the immediate supervisor, the boss, or a co-worker. They may ask the same questions. It is okay to give the same responses.

Group

Interactive type of interview with other people who are applying for the same position. Employers use this technique to see how you work in a group. They look for leadership and team skills. Mainly used in banks or residence halls.

Stress

A type of interview where you feel like someone is kicking the back of your chair. Usually used for sales or finance positions where they want to know that you really want the job. They may suggest you apply to another company or ask the same question over and over.

continued on page 36

Types of Interviews
continued from page 35

Panel

Two or more employees interviewing you at once. They may take turns asking you questions. Direct your answers to the person who asks you a question. As you are answering, calmly make eye contact with the other people at the table.

Problem solving

Questions to find out how you think through and solve a problem. How many pennies are in the state you live in? How many telephone poles are there from here to the next largest city? Talk through how you would figure this problem out. It is not about coming up with the right number. This type is usually used in technology or for science related interviews.

(Adapted from the Alaska Career Information System)

Questions Employers Ask

The main part of the interview starts when the interviewer begins asking direct questions. If the interviewer only vaguely describes the position and you want more specific information, ask questions. Be sure you have a clear understanding of the job and the company. Be prepared to provide examples of your skills and successes, as well as deal with the aspects of your background that could be construed as negative, e.g., low grade point average, no participation in outside activities, or no related work experience. It is up to you to convince the interviewer that although these points appear negative, positive attributes can be found in them. For example, a low grade point average could stem from you having to fully support yourself through college. You might have no related work experience, but plenty of experience that shows you to be a loyal and valued employee. Sharing specific examples of your successes is important. Maintain a positive atmosphere during the interview. The interviewer controls the question. You control the atmosphere. Below are some interview questions you may encounter.

Personal

- Tell me about yourself.
- What do you consider to be your greatest strengths? Weaknesses?
- What are your goals?
- What motivates you most?
- Describe your ideal job.
- Describe a situation in which you recognized a potential problem as an opportunity. What did you do?
- Where do you want to be in five years? Ten years?
- Tell me about a time when you came up with an innovative solution to a challenge you were facing. What was the challenge? What roles did others play?
- What kind of problems are frustrating you? How do you deal with those problems?
- Have you had difficulty getting along with a former professor/supervisor/co-worker and how did you handle it?
- Define success. Define failure.
- Of which accomplishments are you most proud?
- What are your hobbies?

About the Job

- How does your college education or work experience relate to this job?
- Why do you want to work with our organization?
- What do you know about our organization?
- Why should you be the one hired for this job?
- Why do you want to change jobs now? (if applicable)

Education

- Describe your education.
- Do you plan to return to school for further education?
- Why did you choose your major?
- In which campus activities did you participate?
- Which classes in your major did you like best? Least?
- Which elective classes did you like best? Least?

- Do your grades accurately reflect your ability?
- Were you financially responsible for any portion of your college education?
- Did you drop out of school? If so, why?

Work History & Experience

- Tell me about your most recent job or internship. What were your responsibilities at that job or internship?
- What was the best part of your last position? What did you like the least?
- What job-related skills have you developed?
- Did you work while going to school? In what positions?
- What did you learn from these work experiences?
- Have you ever quit a job? Why?
- You have not worked before or not worked in several years. Explain why.
- Give an example of a situation in which you provided a solution to an employer.
- Give an example of a time in which you worked under deadline pressure.
- Have you ever done any volunteer work?
- How do you think a former supervisor would describe your work?
- Are you comfortable with public speaking? Give us an example of groups you have spoken to.
- Have you ever supervised a group of employees?
- Describe your supervisory style.
- Give an example of how you prioritize workload.
- Describe a situation when you worked on a team.
- Tell us about your computer skills.
- Have you ever been convicted of a felony or misdemeanor?

Career Goals

- Do you prefer to work under supervision or on your own?
- What kind of boss do you prefer?
- Would you be successful working with a team?
- Do you prefer large or small organizations? Why?
- How do you feel about working in a structured environment?
- Are you able to work on several assignments at once?
- How do you feel about working overtime?
- How do you feel about traveling in your job?
- Would you be willing to relocate?
- Are you willing to work flextime?

Questions to Ask Employers

When the interviewer asks, “do you have any questions?” it’s important to have a few ready. Ask well thought out questions that communicate your knowledge of and interest in the company. Questions should elicit positive responses from the employer. Prepare more questions than you will ask as some questions may be answered during the course of your interview.

Important questions to ask are: “Would you like me to clarify or give more information relating to any of my answers to your questions?” or “Is there anything else you’d like to know about me?” A good question to end with is “Is there anything that would prevent me from coming on board?” These questions give interviewers an opportunity to voice their concerns and/or objections and you can address them before leaving the interview. Below are some questions to consider asking. Keep in mind, however, not all of these questions are appropriate for all situations.

Personal Qualities

- After reviewing my application is there anything else you would like to know about me?
- How do you feel about creativity and individuality?

Organization Related

- What is the largest single concern facing your staff (department) now?
- Why did you join and stay with your company?
- What characteristics do the achievers in this company seem to share?
- Tell me some of the reasons people like working here.
- What type of training or workshop programs do you offer new employees?
- How often are performance reviews given?
- What products (or services) are in the developmental stage right now?
- Do you have plans for expanding this company/department?
- What are your growth projections for the next year?
- Have you cut your staff in the last three years?
- Is your company environmentally conscious? In what ways?
- Does your company offer either single or dual career-track programs?
- What are the chances for growth in this job and in this company?
- Is it your company’s policy to promote from within?
- Where does this position fit into the organizational structure?
- What kind of partnerships does your organization have with others in the community?

Questions to Ask Employers (continued)

Job Specific

- Describe the typical first six months or year assignments?
- Is this a new position or am I replacing someone?
- Was the person successful? Why or why not?
- Has there been much turnover in this department?
- What skills and qualities are considered the most useful for success in this position?
- What is the most difficult part of the job?
- To whom would I report? What will my first assignment(s) be?
- What special projects will I have the opportunity to work on?
- Is there any travel involved in this position?
- May I talk with the last person who held this position?
- What are the typical career paths? What are realistic time frames?
- How will my performance be evaluated?
- Once the probation period is completed, how much authority will I have over decisions?
- What kind of teamwork projects will I be involved in?
- How will the training for this position be completed?
- Describe the work environment; walk me through a typical work day.
- What do you see as the greatest challenge for the person in this position?

Interview Process

- What is the next course of action? When should I expect to hear from you, or should I contact you?
- I would really like to work for your company. I am confident I could do this job well. When will you be making your decision to fill this job?

Attire to Get You Hired

During an interview or when starting a new job, your appearance can enhance or hurt the impression you make. Complimentary clothes, accessories and other factors are important to making an appropriate visual statement. Though preferences change between organizations, there are some basic rules to follow. Keep in mind that some organizations still draw a distinct line between business and casual dress. For a good rule of thumb, pay a visit to the company before your interview to see how the people dress. Dressing a notch above their typical workday wear is a good plan.

Alaska Standards in Work Attire

Alaskan professional attire often differs from other places. Keep this in mind as you research information on dressing for interviews and jobs, and dress appropriately for the organization. The general tips still apply, especially during the first impression stages of an interview. When in doubt, ask someone in the organization. It is important that you conform to wearing professional clothing during your job search, especially so that employers will know that you take the situation seriously.

Women

- Business suits
- Dress skirt and blouse
- Shoes: simple, low heels
- Slip (make sure it's hidden!)
- Pantyhose should be worn with dresses

Men

- Suit and tie
- Sport coat and dress slacks
- Shoes: dark, dress shoes
- Socks: match shoes or pants, long enough to avoid showing leg when sitting

General Appearance Tips

- Be conservative – avoid loud colors or patterns and trendy clothing.
- Wear simple jewelry and light make-up; accessories should compliment your outfit, not overshadow it.
- It is better to over dress than to under dress.
- Avoid perfume or cologne (allergies & personal preferences can be your demise).
- Maintain good hygiene, including trimmed nails, deodorant, brushed teeth, hair off face, etc.
- Do a final check in the bathroom: comb your hair, straighten your tie or skirt, dust your shoes, wash your hands, etc.
- Carry a briefcase with extra copies of application materials and a portfolio.

How to Address Illegal Questions

INQUIRY AREA	ILLEGAL QUESTIONS	LEGAL QUESTIONS
National Origin	Are you a U.S. Citizen? Where were you/your parents born? What is your “native tongue?” Photos cannot be required to accompany applications.	Are you authorized to work in the U.S.? What languages do you read, speak or write fluently?
Age	How old are you? When did you graduate from college? What is your birth date?	Are you over the age of 18?
Personal/Family	What is your marital status? Who do you live with? Do you plan to have a family? Have you ever been arrested?	Would you be willing to relocate if necessary? Travel is an important part of the job. Would you be willing to travel if necessary?
Affiliations	What clubs or social organizations do you belong to? Do you go to church? Do you have a handicap? Have you ever collected disability or workers’ compensation?	List any professional trade groups or other organizations that you belong to, especially if they are relevant to your skills and qualifications.

What is the right answer when asked an illegal question?

- First, you may simply ask the interviewer how a particular question may relate to your position.
- You have the choice to simply answer the question. Do so, however, with the knowledge that you are giving information that is not job-related.
- You have the choice to refuse to answer the question. By selecting this option, you’ll be within your rights, but you risk being perceived as confrontational or uncooperative.
- Another option is to examine the intent behind the question and respond with an answer as it may apply to the job. For instance, the interviewer may ask, “Are you a U.S. citizen?” or “What country are you from?” You could say, “I am authorized to work in the United States.” Or, your interviewer might ask, “Who is going to take care of your children when you have to travel?” You might answer, “I can meet the travel and work schedule that this job requires.” You could further clarify by adding, “because childcare has already been resolved.”






BP recruiting Alaskans for key professional and operations positions

BP now attracts increasing numbers of Alaskan university graduates for positions in the company’s petroleum technology and commercial fields. BP puts a special emphasis on recruiting from the University of Alaska and among Alaska college students attending school out of state. The efforts to recruit Alaska students from out-of-state universities were expanded in 2007. BP hired 10 Alaska university students this year for its “Challenger” program where young people are introduced to scientific, technology and commercial positions within the company. New hires train two to three years in several jobs within their professional fields. BP has recruited 45 Alaska graduates since 1998 in the fields of petroleum technology and commercial, introducing these young people to careers in the petroleum industry that will be challenging and rewarding - and in their home state. BP will be visiting the University of Alaska this Fall. Please visit our website at www.bp.com/uscollegecareers