4-H Public Presentations

Presenter’s Guide

## for

College and Job

Interviews



4-H Positive Youth Development

#

**What to Prepare for ALL Interviews**

To be successful at an interview, significant preparation is required. Follow these guidelines:

**- Job Interview: Applicants must complete and bring the Job Description (see template)**

**- College Interview: Applicants must complete and bring the College Essay (see guidelines)**

**- All Interviews:**

* Write a cover letter that addresses the job or college requirements and explains why you have applied to this business/college.
* Prepare a résumé that is well laid out and up to date.
* Study the evaluation rubric as this explains what the interviewer is looking for.
* Plan ahead and decide what to wear relevant to a formal interview.
* Practice answering the questions below in front of a mirror or to another person.
* Prepare your portfolio.

# Bring a Portfolio to Your Interview

A portfolio is a collection of documents that demonstrate your accomplishments, highlight your achievements, and strengthen your chances of success in your application.

It is *highly recommended* that you bring a detailed portfolio to any interview. Having a strong, well-presented portfolio helps you to stand out among all the others who have applied for the same position.

Most employers and/or college personnel will take only a minute or two to look through your portfolio. During the interview you can take the opportunity to point out your key accomplishments. For example, if asked about your communication skills you could show them a writing sample or slide presentation in your portfolio.

**Tips for Portfolio Development**

* Before the interview, bookmark the pages of the portfolio you would like to highlight, such as a newspaper article with you in it or an award you won.
* Portfolios should be neatly presented in a binder or similar. They should include:
* Table of contents (use dividers to separate sections)
* Résumé
* 2-3 letters of recommendation
* Awards and/or certificates you have earned
* Testimonials and other acknowledgements of your character and actions
* Newspaper articles featuring you or your club(s)
* Details of community service activities you have participated in
* Writing samples (e.g., an essay you wrote)
* Examples of work illustrating your skills, such as slide presentations you have created
* Details of community service activities you have participated in
* Any other documents that strengthen your application

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| **Suggested Interview Questions for JOB INTERVIEW** |

This list of questions is a guide.

Interviewers will not ask all these questions and may choose to add others they feel are relevant.

Practice answering these in preparation for your interview.

* Tell me about yourself.
* Tell me about your previous work and/or volunteer experience.
* What were the responsibilities on your last job or volunteer experience?
* Why did you leave (or why are you leaving) your last position?
* Why are you interested in working for our company/agency?
* What do you know about this position?
* How are you qualified for this position?
* How would your previous boss/volunteer supervisor describe you?
* What qualities or skills do you feel you could bring to this job that will help you to be successful?
* What is one of your greatest strengths?
* What is one of your weaknesses?
* What are you most proud of? Why?
* If you were asked by two different supervisors to complete two different projects and you felt you were unable to complete both by the deadline, how would you handle it?
* Do you consider yourself to be responsible? How so?
* When you have a problem, what methods do you use to solve it?
* Do you consider yourself to be a leader? If so, in what way?
* What motivates you?
* Describe your dream or ideal job.
* *Why should we hire you?*

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| **Suggested Interview Questions for COLLEGE** |

This list of questions is a guide.

Interviewers will not ask all these questions and may choose to add others they feel are relevant.

Practice answering these in preparation for your interview.

* Tell me about yourself.
* What subjects do you like the most? Why?
* What subjects do you like the least? Why?
* What other activities have you participated in during the past two to three years? (In or outside of school)
* Tell me a highlight/personal accomplishment of this year (school, personal, etc.).
* How do you get along with people?
* What is one of your greatest strengths?
* What is one of your weaknesses?
* What are you most proud of? Why?
* Tell me about your previous work and/or volunteer experiences.
* How would a friend describe your character?
* Why do you want to attend this college?
* What qualities or skills do you feel you possess that will help you to succeed in college?
* How have you made an impact on others and/or the community?
* Do you consider yourself to be responsible? How so?
* Describe someone who has had a positive influence in your life and why.
* Do you consider yourself to be a leader? If so, in what way?
* What do you plan to do when you graduate? (Work, travel, grad school, etc.)
* How will this college benefit from your participation?
* Is there anything else you would like to tell us about yourself?

 **JOB INTERVIEW Application**

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| **GENERAL INFORMATION** |
| **Name (Last)**  | **(First)** | **(Middle)** | **Social Security #** | **Date of Application** |
| **Mailing Address (street, city, state, zip code)** | **Phone (daytime)** | **Phone (evening)** |
| **Have you ever been convicted of any criminal offense other than minor traffic violations? 󠄀 Yes No****If yes, please explain in detail.** |
| **POSITION** |
| **Position Applying For** | **Expected Salary Range****$** | **Date Available** |
| **Where did you learn about this position opening?** |
| **EDUCATION** |
| **Institution** | **City and State** | **Dates Attended** | **Major** | **Degree** |
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| **Describe any other training or skills you have had that you feel are relevant to the position for which you are applying.****Please list any organizations, honors, achievements, or certifications that you consider relevant to employment.****What are your hobbies?** |
| **EMPLOYMENT HISTORY** |
| Please list previous employers beginning with the most recent. |
| **Employer** | **Address** |
| **Phone** | **Title** | **Starting Date** | **Ending Date** | **Salary per Week****$** |
| **Reason for Leaving** | **Supervisor’s Name** | **May we contact this person?** |
| **Employer** | **Address** |
| **Phone** | **Title** | **Starting Date** | **Ending Date** | **Salary per Week****$** |
| **Reason for Leaving** | **Supervisor’s Name** | **May we contact this person?** |
| **REFERENCES** |
| Please list three persons, other than personal friends or relatives, who have knowledge of your work experience and/or education. |
| **Name** | **Title** | **E-mail** | **Phone Number** |
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| I hereby authorize investigation of all statements contained in this application. I certify that such statements are true and understand that misrepresentation or omission of facts called for in this form or during any interview is cause for termination of employment without notice. |
| **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** | **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** |
| **Date** | **Signature** |
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 **COLLEGE INTERVIEW Application**

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| **STUDENT INFORMATION** |
| **Legal Last Name**  | **First Name** | **Middle Name(s)** | **Social Security #** | **Date of Birth** |
| **Permanent Address (street, city, state, zip code)** | **Phone (cell)** | **Phone (other)** |
| **Mailing Address for correspondence (if different from above)** | **Email Address** |
| **PARENT/GUARDIAN INFORMATION (if applicant is under 18)** |
| **Legal Last Name**  | **First Name** | **Middle Name(s)** | **Social Security #** | **Date of Birth** |
| **Permanent Address (street, city, state, zip code)** | **Phone (cell)** | **Phone (other)** |
| **Mailing Address for correspondence (if different from above)** | **Email Address** |
| **STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS** |
| **Are you a US Citizen Yes No**  | **If not, country of citizenship** |
| **Gender Male Female Other Choice of Pronouns**  |
| **Hispanic or Latino Yes No** | **First Language** | **Read/Write/Speak English** **proficiently** **Yes No** |
| **How do you Indentify (check one or more)****American Indian or Alaska Native Black or African American 2 or more Races****Asian White Native Hawaiian or Pacific Island** |
| **EDUCATION - include secondary school(s) and any college experience** |
| **Institution** | **City and State** | **Dates Attended** | **GPA if known** |
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| **ACADEMICS** |
| **Please provide details of best subjects/grades since 9th grade: high school classes, SAT, TOEFL/IELTS, AP/IB subjects, honors, and any other relevant academic achievements** |
| **EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES AND WORK EXPERIENCE** |
| Please list your principal activities (e.g., sports, volunteer work, jobs) beginning with the most recent. |
| **Date(s)** | **Description** |
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| **COLLEGE PLANS** |
| **Season/Year of Entry** | **Full or Part Time** | **Do you intend to apply for financial aid?** | **Do you intend to apply for a scholarship?** |
| **Academic Interest 1** |
| **Academic Interest 2** |
| **Career Interest** |
| Under the terms of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), after you matriculate you will have access to this form and all other recommendations and supporting documents submitted by you and on your behalf. |
| **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** | **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** |
| **Date** | **Signature** |

**Job Description Template**

*Use this template to create a ‘fictional job’ or provide a real job description to your interviewers.*

**Job Title** (e.g., 4-H Program Assistant)

**Terms of Employment** (state if the position is part or full time, hours/days to be worked, if it includes weekends and/or evenings, rate of pay and any benefits)

**Detailed Job Description** (give an overview of what the job entails then use bullets to list each task that the employee may need to perform, e.g., respond to phone calls and emails, order supplies, assist teaching children)

**Education and or Experience Required** (e.g., high school diploma/GED and/or 1 year of related experience)

**Competencies and Requirements** (list what the successful applicant must be able to do, such as use Microsoft Office software, drive, work with certain age groups, be willing to do certain essential tasks)

**Guide to Writing a College Essay**

**General Facts About Essays**

The admissions people read *a lot* of really boring essays about “How Great I Am” and “My Plan for World Peace.” Colleges are very worried that their students don’t write as well as students did in the past, so if you have strong writing skills, you have a serious edge. Aim to get your point across, not bury it in words. Your prose should be clear and direct. If an admissions officer has to struggle to figure out what you are trying to say, you’ll be in trouble. Avoid adjectives and exclamation points. As you reread your essay, stop at every adjective, and ask yourself if it is necessary. Don’t even bother asking yourself about exclamation points, just leave them out!

**That’s What Family Is For**

If your essay is filled with misspellings and grammatical errors, admissions officers will conclude not only that you don’t know how to write, but also that you don’t know enough to get help. Ask your mom, dad, teacher, or anyone with the appropriate skill to read your essay and comment on it.

**Pick a Topic, Any Topic**

Here are some common essay questions, followed by typical responses to them and ways to avoid getting stuck in that rut:

***Write about something you have read:*** Many applicants think this means you have to do a book report. Too many responses to this sort of question sound like book reports, and nobody likes to read book reports. Don’t write about an obvious book. Your choice should be relevant to your beliefs and current affairs.

***Write about someone you admire:*** Most people write without much conviction about the president, a relative, Mother Teresa, or Martin Luther King, Jr. While these people are highly admirable and heroic, they seldom inspire interesting essays. Instead, find someone truly meaningful to you; it’s better if your choice surprises your reader. It can be an unknown person who has inspired you.

***Why do you want to attend this school:*** Your real reason may be something better left unsaid, e.g., “Because it is near my home.” Avoid generalities, e.g., “To get a good liberal arts education.” Instead, show you have done research on the college, e.g., “X College is reported as having the highest graduation rate for students in my field. ”

***How do you see yourself ten years from now:*** Avoid describing the perfect job. Narrow your focus. Be realistic. Don’t strain to make a direct connection between it and a college education. Don’t pretend that you think your college degree will be the sole foundation on which you build the rest of your life.

***Write about a meaningful activity:*** Don’t say that your most meaningful activity was, for example, your service on the student council because it taught you the importance of effective leadership. What is effective leadership? Be honest and give a real example of an experience that has left you with skills or knowledge.

**Above all, be honest to yourself. If you write an essay that portrays you as someone you are not and you get accepted, it may not be a good fit.**

