

30 Second Elevator Statements

Your interview may begin with a request like “tell me about yourself.” An “elevator statement” can help you make a great first impression. Elevator statements are short (about 30 seconds) and clear.

Think of your statement as a sales tool. If you only had 30 seconds to convince the employer to hire you, what does he or she really need to know?



Some of the things that you could include in your statement are:

- Relevant information about you that relates to the position (education, paid/unpaid experience, skills and abilities)
- Why the position interests you
- Why you’re a good fit for the position and organization

Examples:

Jennifer Meyer:

Jennifer is a recent graduate who just landed her first job interview. She wrote the following 30-second elevator statement that she will practice and hopes to use in her interview.

I recently completed a Computer Systems Technology diploma. I really love the technical challenges in this type of work. I even like the problems. It’s great to see the people I help get excited about new equipment and become less frustrated when I find ways to make their systems run smoothly. I’d love to work for your company because you’re known for offering great network support. Working here would let me use the skills I developed in school and also continue to learn.

Sarah Jones:

Sarah also wrote an elevator statement. She is interested in finding employment as a sales clerk after being home with her children for the past 10 years.

I love fashion and have wonderful customer service skills. I’ve always been told I have a knack for helping people find a “look” that suits them. Amy’s Boutique offers an amazing selection of women’s clothes. I’d love the opportunity to work here, helping your customers look and feel their best.

Write your own 30-second elevator statement here. You may need to rewrite it a few times to find the best combination of words and phrases to highlight your assets. Once you’ve got a 30-second speech that you love, memorize it, practice it and use it!

Advanced Interview Resources

Guide to Job Interviewing Resources

www.quintcareers.com/intvres.html

Provides extensive information on interviewing including tips, resources, a quiz and articles

STAR Method

<https://gecd.mit.edu/jobs-and-internships/interviews-and-offers/interviewing>

Highlights how to use STAR (Situation, Task, Action, Results) stories in behavioural interviews

Job Interview Resources

<http://www.job-interview.net/interviewgen.htm>

From the type of interview to different types of interviews and interview questions, you'll find it here.

Interview Tips Summary & Checklist

- prepare for your interview
- have a good night's sleep the day before your interview
- bring along:
 - resume
 - cover letter
 - job application (if applicable)
 - portfolio (if applicable)
 - references
 - note paper and pen
- be neat and tidy
- dress appropriately
- arrive 15 minutes early
- be scent-free (some interviewers may have allergies to perfumes and colognes)
- reserve smoking cigarettes until after the interview
- eat before your interview
- keep cell phone off during your interview
- be sincere
- smile
- maintain good posture
- look interested
- make eye contact
- speak clearly
- be aware of your body language and avoid fidgeting
- think before you answer
- answer questions honestly
- give examples
- listen well
- say only positive things about your current or former bosses
- ask for questions to be repeated

- say thank you



REMEMBER

Practice Techniques - Homework

The best way to improve your interview skills is through practice! Find a friend, co-worker, family member or employment consultant to help you practice your skills. Try to use questions related to the job you're applying for. Look at the job ad, the organization's website or brochures, or a job description. Make a list of questions you might get during the interview. Use the Common Interview Questions attached.

To practice effectively:

- Use the same format as the real interview – example: phone, face to face, panel
- If possible, videotape your practice
 - o Review the video and critique yourself
- Sometimes play the role of the interviewer
 - o Understand the interviewer's perspective

Effective Story Telling:

Whether you are writing your resume or preparing for an interview, it's important to find ways to make your skills stand out. You can do this through good communication and storytelling. Think of examples where you did well at work, at school or while volunteering. Break those examples down into three parts:

1. The issue
2. What you did about it
3. The outcome

This approach will help you tell effective stories in your interview

Example: Susan York

Susan took several years off work to raise her children. She has been working part-time as a bank teller since her youngest started school. Now Susan is looking for full-time work. She wants to create an effective story that she can use in her job interview.

By answering three questions, Susan created a powerful story. Here's her example:

The issue: As a part-time bank teller, I got to know some of my client's very well. One day, one of my clients came into the bank really upset! He was leaving that afternoon to go to Florida for a month. When he was at the drugstore buying a few last minute items, he realized that his Visa card was missing from his wallet! He thinks he dropped it in the parking lot when he used it earlier that morning. However, when he went back to look, it wasn't there.

What I did about it: I immediately helped the client report his missing card. We arranged for a new one to be sent to his hotel in Florida. I helped him set up his debit card to allow cash withdrawals until his new card arrived.

The outcome: The client was able to get away on his vacation as planned. His card arrived a couple of days later. He was so excited that he sent flowers to me at the bank and wrote a wonderful letter to my manager.

Activity: Use the space provided to develop your own great story to share in an interview. Ensure your stories relate directly to the position you are being interviewed for.

What was the issue?

What did you do about it?

What was the outcome?

Types of Interviews and Questions:

There are literally thousands of questions that interviewers could ask in an interview. The most common interview questions cluster into four categories:

General / Behavioural / Situational / Stress

Type of Interview Question	Description	Sample Questions
General	<p>General interview questions allow interviewers to learn more about you. They may be used to assess “fit” with the job and the organization.</p>	<p>Why do you think your skills and experience make you a good candidate for this position?</p> <p>What are your strengths and weaknesses?</p> <p>Why should we hire you?</p> <p>Tell me about your experience in this type of workplace.</p>
Behavioural	<p>Behavioural interview questions are based on the idea that past behaviour predicts future behaviour.</p> <p>By learning how you handled past situations, employers get a sense of how you might handle similar situations if working for them. Here are some tips for answering behavioural questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is no right or wrong answer. • Try to connect your answer to the job that you’re interviewing for. • Review the job description, job advertisement and notes from informational interviews; find ways to include this information in your responses. • Review skills and qualities that the interviewer is looking for; identify specific examples of times you showed those traits. <p>Some people find the STAR method useful in responding to behavioural questions. STAR stands for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Situation • Task • Action • Result 	<p>Tell me about a work situation in which you were proud of your performance. What were some of the factors that contributed to your performance (ex: skills, knowledge, team members)?</p> <p>Tell me about a time you had a conflict at work with a co-worker or a customer. How did you handle it?</p> <p>Tell me about a time when you had to make a difficult decision. What steps did you take and what was the outcome?</p> <p>Tell me about a time when you had to deal with multiple deadlines. How did you handle it?</p>

<p>Situational</p>	<p>Situational interview questions can be great opportunities for you to highlight your problem-solving skills.</p> <p>Although these are usually hypothetical questions (ex: “what would you do in a situation like this?”), try to draw on your experiences to provide examples if you’ve handled similar situations in the past.</p>	<p>Describe how you would prioritize tasks or needs on the job.</p> <p>You have an angry customer who has interrupted your conversation with another customer. What will you do?</p> <p>Tell me about a time you had a conflict at work with a co-worker or a customer. How did you handle it?</p> <p>You’ve been asked to lead a project that involves supervising several co-workers who are also your friends. How would you handle this situation and preserve your relationships?</p> <p>You’ve been asked to take on a new task, one that you’ve never done before. You want to make sure that you do it well because it could lead to a raise in the future. What are the first steps that you would take?</p>
<p>Stress</p>	<p>Stress interviews are used when an interviewer wants to see how you handle stressful situations.</p> <p>Interviewers may create stress by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • using an aggressive tone of voice • asking you questions designed to unsettle you • leaving you waiting unnecessarily in the waiting area before the interview • appearing distracted, bored, or uninterested • saying hello and then not saying anything else, to see if you will take the initiative to start the interview 	<p>How do you handle stressful situations?</p> <p>What would you do if you caught one of your co-workers stealing?</p> <p>Tell me about a time you had a conflict at work with a co-worker or a customer. How did you handle it?</p> <p>How are you feeling about your performance in this interview so far?</p> <p>Which do you like better, chocolate or vanilla ice cream?</p>

Websites for more information:

www.careercruising.com (username: barrie password: centre)

http://www.manitobacareerdevelopment.ca/CDi/docs/outstanding_intvws.pdf

http://www.jobbank.gc.ca/content_pieces-eng.do?cid=208

<http://www.quintcareers.com/intvres.html>

Source: Career Development Manitoba