



Social Skills

Interviewing Others

Available in the format below:



Learn Quickly!
Learn For Life!

© 2015 Lisa Flowers



Interviewing Others

As I noted in *Being a Good Conversationalist*, I believe being genuinely interested in finding out about another person is key to being good at conversations. Toward that end, I often have my students interview staff members, high school seniors, and/or family members to work on several conversational skills, especially the ability to follow the interviewee's statements with comments and follow-up questions. I teach my students that this ability serves two important functions: extending conversations and making their communicative partners feel truly listened to. Following are various forms to use for interviews, along with notes on therapeutic intervention.

Name _____

Date _____

Staff Interview Questions

What is your position at (name of school)?

How long have you been at (name of school)?

How many years have you been a (profession)?

What inspired you to become a (profession)?

What tasks and responsibilities do you have here?

Do you find your job interesting?

Is your job stressful?

(for teachers) What subjects do you teach?

(for teachers) Do you enjoy teaching one subject more than others?

Have you worked with age groups other than (current age group)?

How do you handle conflicts between students?

How do you help students when they become upset or sad?

What is your favorite thing about your job?

What is the most difficult part of your job?

How do you feel about the current education system?

What other profession would you have liked to try?

Did you grow up in (current state/region)?

Do you have any pets?

What do you like to do in your free time?

Other questions:



Name _____

Date _____

High School Senior Interview Questions

How long have you attended (name of school)?

What do you like about (name of school)?

What would you change about (name of school) if you could?

If you were in charge, what changes might you make to the education system?

What has been your favorite class at (name of school)?

What has been your least favorite class?

Who is your favorite teacher?

What is your favorite part of the school day?

Do you have a job outside of school?

Do you know what profession you'd like to go into?

Do you know where you will be and what you will be doing next year?

Did you grow up in (current state/region)?

When you can live on your own, where would you choose to live?

What are your hobbies?

What do you like to do for fun?

Do you have any pets?

Who do you live with?

Would you describe yourself as an introvert or extrovert?

What do you most hope to achieve in life?

Other questions:



Post-Interview Evaluation

Thank you for being interviewed and for taking the time to fill out this evaluation!

Your name _____

Student's name _____

Date of interview _____

Please score the following: 3 = great job

2 = pretty good

1 = could use improvement

N/A = didn't notice or not applicable

Did the student ...

arrive on time? ____

make you feel comfortable? ____

use appropriate eye contact? ____

speak using an appropriate rate and volume? ____

use any humor? ____

make the questions clear? ____

clarify any misunderstandings effectively? ____

show interest through facial expression? ____

show interest through body posture? ____

follow up your answers with comments? ____

follow up your answers with other questions? ____

respond during your answers with interjections (e.g., "uh huh", "wow", "okay")? ____

thank you at the end? ____

Comments:



Name _____

Date _____

Family Member Interview

1) Pick 6 – 8 of the following questions to video interview a family member:

- What's your earliest memory?
- Who's your role model?
- You have unlimited money. Where would you go for a two-week vacation?
- If you could tame and live with one wild animal, which would you choose?
- Where's your favorite place to hang out at home?
- Show your favorite outfit and tell why it's your favorite.
- Would you rather be an only child or one of ten?
- Would you rather live somewhere other than (current place)?
- What was your favorite age?
- What's your fantasy job?

2) Come up with two questions of your own to ask:

- Your pick:
- Your pick:

3) Decide in what order you want to ask the questions.

Most Important:

- Follow up your family member's answers with comments or more questions.
- "Why" questions are often good follow-up questions.
- Be curious! If you're genuinely curious your follow-up questions will come more naturally.



Name _____

Date _____

Post-Interview of Family Member Questionnaire

1. Family member interviewed:

- Relation to you?
- Name?
- Age? (if this relative doesn't mind providing)
- Why did you choose this relative?

2. What was the most interesting or surprising thing you found out about your relative?

3. How do you think this relative felt during the interview? Circle the number:

self-conscious	not at all	1	2	3	4 very
bored		1	2	3	4
annoyed		1	2	3	4
happy to have the attention		1	2	3	4

4. Come up with a question you would genuinely like to ask the following:

- the same person you interviewed
- your great-great-grandfather
- your 30-year-old self
- your 5-year-old self
- your celebrity crush
- the current president
- your dog/cat/hamster/snake/ferret/fish
- the bird that sings outside your window
- me



Therapeutic Notes: Interviewing Others

I will often have my students interview a staff member before or instead of interviewing a high school senior only because I can count on my coworkers to be non-judgmental and usually less intimidating. The procedure for interviewing staff members and high school seniors is the same. We start by discussing what makes someone a good conversationalist. I explain the connection between being good at interviewing someone and being good at conversing, in part because I always like my students to know why I assign the tasks I do. We go over the expectations listed on the *Post-Interview Evaluation*, and I let them know that the staff member or senior will be filling this form out after the interview. We role-play approaching the staff member or senior to request an interview and set up a time. I help my students choose which questions they would like to ask, usually ten to twelve, including one or two of their own. In preparation for staff member interviews, I point out that the last four questions listed are good examples of personal questions that are not inappropriately personal. I created the *Family Member Interview* and *Post-Interview of Family Member Questionnaire* during the pandemic when I was conducting all my sessions over Zoom, but of course this task is still practical now that students are back to in-person learning. I emphasize the importance of being curious. Once my students have chosen which questions to ask a staff member, senior, or family member, I have them practice first by asking me the questions, focusing on the skill of following up my answers with comments or additional questions.

