



Interviewing for Nursing Students

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Fall 2023



CASE WESTERN RESERVE
UNIVERSITY

Interviewing Basics



What are you most nervous about when interviewing?



Common Fears:

Not knowing
answers to tough
questions

Forgetting names

Not having good
questions to ask
the interviewers

Worried about
physical
appearance

Rambling

Cultural
differences

Forgetting
everything you
practiced (i.e.,
getting nervous)

Not finding the
location

Being late



Interview Types



Format:

- Preliminary Screening
- Follow Up
- Group
- Panel

Method:

- In-person
- Phone
- Virtual
- Pre-recorded



Preparation is Key



Know the job description!



Research the organization/clinic/hospital/unit



Understand industry challenges & successes



Practice, practice, practice!



Interview preparation tips

- Arrive 10 minutes early, 2 for virtual
- Know your story
- What skills do you bring to the table?
- What makes you stand out from other candidates?
- What stories will you tell that demonstrate the above information?
- Research your potential employer
- Talk with friends, colleagues, alumni who work or worked there
- Web search the organization “in the news”
- Browse organization website, annual report
- Be aware of the role of non-verbals, and what yours are
- Much (50%) of what we communicate is done non-verbally
- Smile, firm handshake, make eye contact, sit straight, open posture



Interview preparation, cont.

Look the part

- Look professional and well-groomed
- Bring a padfolio, a pen, extra resumes, your reference list
- Avoid wearing perfume or cologne, and do not smoke, chew gum or eat.
- Turn off your cell phone.

Have questions ready

- Questions reflect interest.
- Allow your research to inform your questions – don't waste precious time on things you can find online

Take care of yourself

- Get plenty of sleep, eat well
- Know where you are going and how you plan to get there, how long it will take

Interview Questions: Qualifications & Background

Answer Tips:

- **Tell me about yourself**
 - Reveals what is important to you
 - Include qualifications for the position
- **What is your biggest weakness?**
 - Don't include something essential to the position
 - How are you improving on it?

Other Possible Questions:

- Why are you interested in working in this field?
- What motivates you?
- What strengths do you have and how do they relate to this position?
- Where do you see yourself in 5-10 years?



Interview Questions: Organization & Position

- Why did you apply for this position?
- How will you ensure your skills and knowledge are current throughout your career?
- What do you know about our organization?
- What do you believe will be the most challenging part of this role?
- How do your personal values and characteristics align with our company?



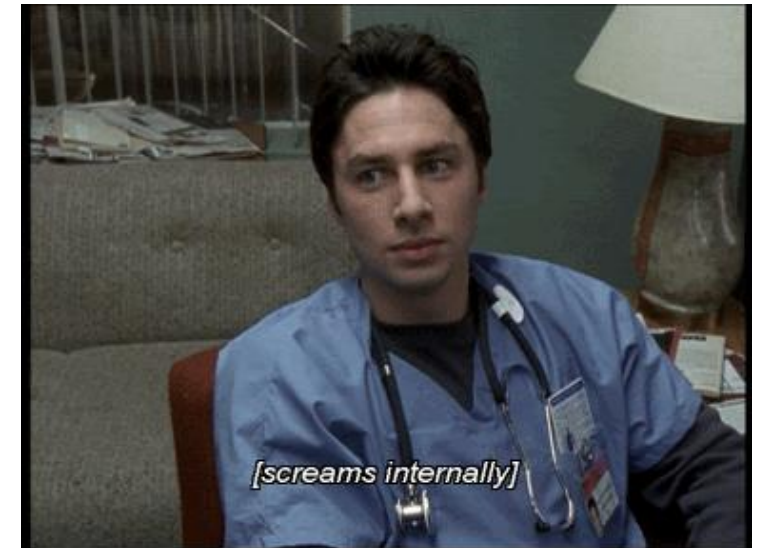
Interview Questions: Work Style & Values

Answer Tips:

- **Do you prefer to work independently or in a team?**
 - Be honest
 - Use examples to justify your preference
- **How do you organize your schedule and tasks?**
 - Share strategies
 - How you prioritize

Other Possible Questions:

- What is the greatest challenge you've faced? How did you handle it?
- How do you handle stress?
- What is most important to you in your job?
- What was the most enjoyable part of your undergraduate/graduate program?
- How do you practice self care?



Interview Questions:

Behavior Based

Answer Tips:

- Focus on past behavior
- Give a SPECIFIC example
- Use the STAR method

Phrased like:

- “Tell me about a time when...”
- “Describe a situation when...”
- “What would you do in this situation?”



The STAR Method

Use the STAR framework to structure your responses to behavioral interview questions. STAR stands for:

- S = Situation: Provide an overview of the situation, give context, help the interviewer understand
- T = Task: Describe the problem or task to be accomplished
- A = Action: Describe what you did and why, given the situation
- R = Result: Describe the outcome(s) of the action you selected.



Interview Questions: Behavior Based

- Describe a time you were facing a situation that was beyond your training & abilities.
- How would you handle a situation where you disagreed with a colleague or a supervisor?
- Give me an example of a time when you used good judgment and logic to solve a problem.
- Tell me about a time when you failed?
- By examples, convince me that you can adapt to a wide variety of people, situations and environments.
- Tell me about a time when you had to work with a patient that you didn't like?



Situational Questions - STAR

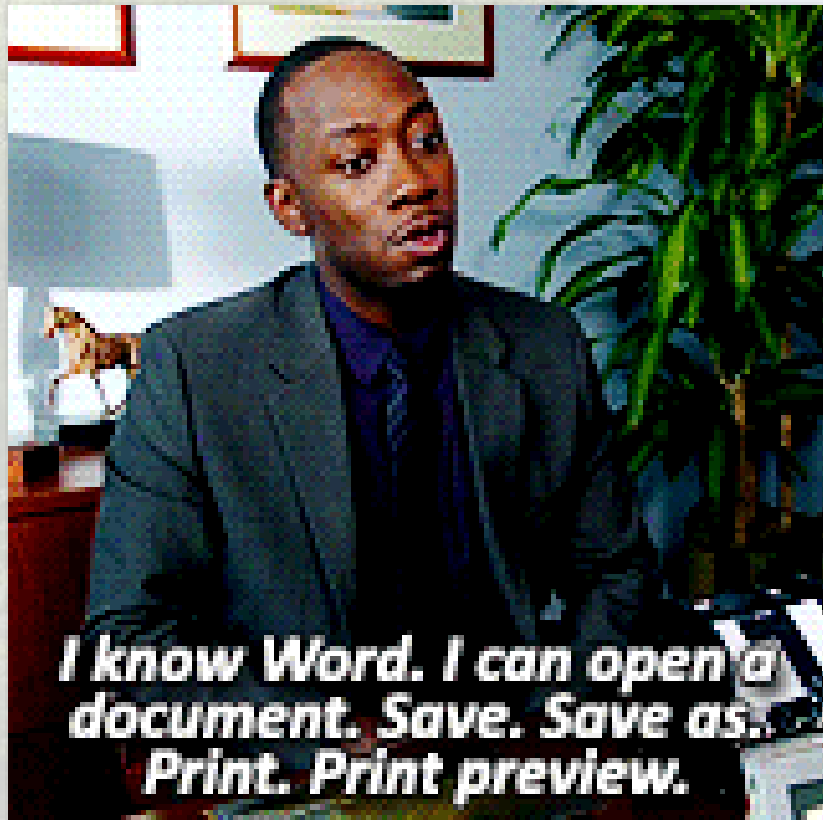
- SAMPLE QUESTIONS

- After an extremely demanding day with a patient who required much attention, his family member aggressively approaches you and accuses you of negligence. What would you do?
- If you are a nurse on a floor and one patient is experiencing transfusion reaction, another patient that is in shock and a third patient with low blood pressure, who do you see first and why?
- What would you do if you made a serious mistake on the job?

- Shall we practice?



Final Question:



Why should I hire you?
Why are you the best candidate?

Answer Tips:

- Highlight your strengths
- Tailor your response to the company
- Summarize your qualifications
- What sets you apart?
- **SELL YOURSELF!**



Questions for the Interviewer

How did this position become available?

How is the orientation and training structured /
How much training?

What are you looking for in a candidate?

What do you like about working here?

How will my performance be evaluated?

What are some of the biggest challenges the organization faces?

What is the next step in the selection process?



Conclusion & follow up

Seal the deal

- “I’ve enjoyed our conversation very much. This position is right in line with my career objectives. I’d like the opportunity to come work with you.”

Show enthusiasm

- Express it clearly at the close of a meeting. You may develop a stronger sense of interest on the way home, but it will be too late to convey it in person. Anticipate the escalation and try to handle it face-to-face.

Strong finish

- (Strong handshake) Good eye contact. Smile.
- Say “thank you”
- Verbal thank you
- Written/emailed thank you



Career Center

- Select Resources
- [Career Search Guide](#)
- [Access via My Career](#)
 - [Handshake](#)
 - [Big Interview](#)
 - [Liquid Compass](#)
 - [Alumni Career Network](#)
 - [LinkedIn](#)
 - [CareerShift](#)
- [Career Interest Areas](#)
 - [Healthcare](#)
- Sears Library 229
- 216.368.4446
- careers@case.edu
- <https://case.edu/studentlife/careercenter/>
- Office hours: M – F 8:30 a.m. – 5 p.m.
- Career Labs:
<https://case.edu/studentlife/careercenter/career-development/career-lab>
- Individual Appointments
- Offered via Zoom, in-person or phone
- Request at journey.case.edu

Questions?

Nurse: Does anyone have any questions?

Me:

