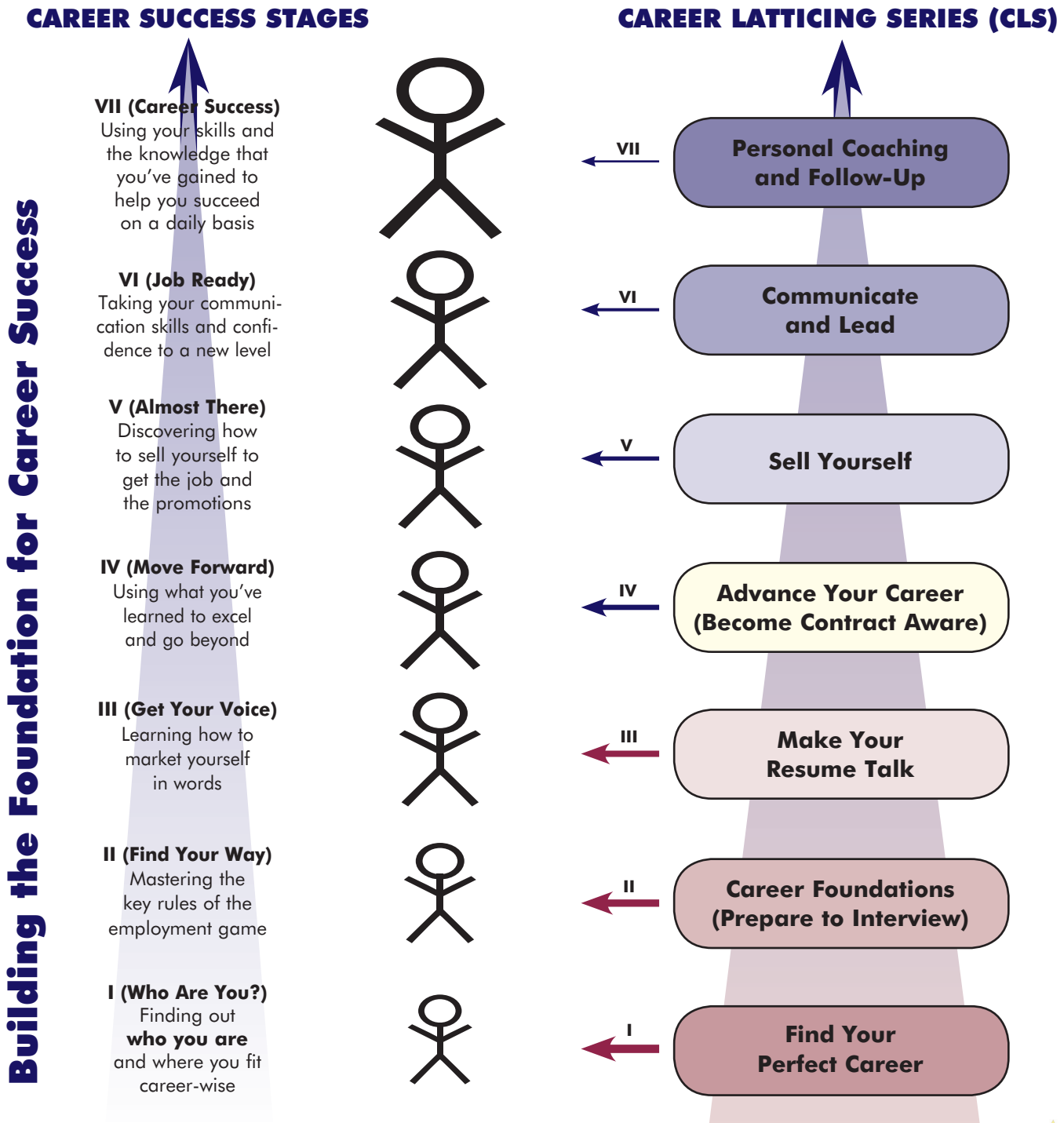


Sell Yourself: *Personal Selling at Its Best*



The Avadon Group 7-Step Path to Career Success

The objective of the Avadon Career Latticing Series Program is to help individuals rethink their career, prepare them to make a meaningful contribution, help them to create the road map that ensures the best chance of employment and career success, and provide the navigational tools that will get them to their desired destination.



The Rap on “Sales”

1. What do you think sales is?
2. What do you think of when you hear the word sales?
3. What did you think this class would be about when you signed up?
4. What are you hoping to gain?
5. Why are we afraid to talk about ourselves?

I

Everybody Sells

1. Effectively – Do the right things in the workplace
2. Efficiently – Do them right so co-workers take notice
3. Persuasively – Learn how people listen and speak, so you can deliver what they want and need, and can get the information to provide your value
4. Elegantly – Deliver and communicate to people what they want — the way they want to receive it:
 - a. The Platinum Rule revisited

II

Components of the Sales Presentation

1. Compare it to a cover letter
2. The opening:
 - a. A statement of fact or information used to gain excitement
3. The body:
 - a. Why buy?
4. Why should you hire me?

III

Components of the Sales Presentation

5. The close:
 - a. Summarize what you are asking for / be clear and direct
6. Are you working toward a win/win solution?

IV

The Opening

1. You must:
 - a. Gain attention
 - b. Gain interest
 - c. State your purpose
 - d. In an interview, the interviewer opens, so you have to be able to follow that lead

V

The Body

1. Contains the why buy / why hire statement
 - a. Features:
 - i. The reasons why...
 - b. Benefits:
 - i. Convert features to benefits for the buyer / interviewer
 - c. Which means X, Y, Z...
 - d. It is not a feature unless it is a benefit to that specific buyer / interviewer
 - e. Give specific examples and tell the story
 - f. Create a visual account of the examples

VI



The Close

1. Close the sale:
 - a. Summarize the “why buy”
 - b. Ask for the “order” (the job)
 - c. State what you are asking for clearly
 - d. Do a trial close
 - e. Use objections as an opportunity, and ask the right questions

VII

Objections Are Opportunities

1. Why are we afraid to close or “ask for the order?”
 - a. Fear of rejection
 - b. Remember, objections tell us what barriers are in the way of our sale
 - c. Proper handling of objections opens the door for increased chances of the final sale (job) if you address them well
2. Do not be defensive
3. Agree in some cases and then resell the greater benefit

VIII

The Brand

1. Can you wrap up those features plus benefits and summarize them into a brand?
2. A brand is:
 - a. Unique
 - b. Significantly different
 - c. Simple and engaging
 - d. Easy to remember
 - e. Brief

IX

The Brand

3. Understand the selling process and how to strengthen your statements to form a brand
4. Give powerful examples that illustrate why someone should buy your product (you)
5. Become a product — “Me Inc.”

X

Reading List

1. **Advertising Yourself: Building a Personal Brand through Social Networks** (Knowledge at Wharton Marketing Research Article: <http://knowledge.wharton.upenn.edu/article.cfm?articleid=2208>)

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Personal Selling Samples

Connie Lopez

My name is Connie Lopez. I was born on Martha's Vineyard, the youngest of 7; I attended a Technical High School, served in the United States Air Force, and paid for my college and MBA myself, which means I have always been a natural self-starter and very independent and motivated.

I am the "Mission Impossible" Information Technology manager. I am assigned the large complex initiatives that the Project Management team refuses. For example: I consolidated 34 Oracle application databases, residing on 7 Sun servers, to 1 Oracle instance, residing on 1 AIX server. The result was a \$600,000 per year savings. My biggest compliment was that upon completion, senior management did not realize it had taken place.

To quote my most recent supervisor, "Connie is a model manager who has a commendable work ethic and strong interpersonal skills."

I'm the IT guy you want on staff who can get the job done when the mission is impossible.

Mark Bruno

My name is Mark Bruno, I am the youngest of 7 children and was raised in the suburbs of Chicago by a middle-class, working single mom. My mom and grandmother instilled in me a strong work ethic, of being dependable, an innovative problem-solver and having a mathematical exactness down to the decimal.

I am known as the "Bill Nye the science guy" of the lab, which means I am knowledgeable in the science of my discipline and able to describe, in layman's terms, the "HOW-TOs" and pitfalls of any complex procedure.

An example would be while I was working at the American Red Cross during the launch of a new blood product. A leukocyte poor packed cell was drawn in a complex bag system consisting of an octopus of filters, satellite bags, and admixtures. I had identified error-prone steps and sequences where critical observation and timing was crucial in producing a quality product. This resulted in a doubling of proficiency by all technicians, resulting in increased revenues by the new product of \$1.3M.

This is a good example of someone who is able to train a varied workforce in accomplishing company goals, in this case, a new product innovation.

Christina Holley

My name is Christina Holley. I was born in Columbus, OH, the first of 5 siblings to pay for and graduate from college, which means I am a self-starter, take initiative, and value hard work and dedication.

I am like a "Swiss Army Knife," which means people can rely on me to do multiple things and get multiple jobs done. For example, as a Business Analyst, I was assigned two projects with competing priorities. One Six Sigma project I initiated eliminated the manual effort to create, print, and mail overpayment notification letters. The manual process increased cycle time, cost, and potential errors. I coordinated efforts with geographically dispersed project team members, gathered requirements, determined root cause, and researched errors or falloffs. At project end, letter functions were automated to Enterprise Printing Services Department, cycle time was reduced by 60%, and \$200,000 was eliminated from the annual budget. At the same time, I worked on a project that streamlined manual processes in Oracle from 25 to 6, reducing staffing and operations costs by 25%.

Former bosses and peers say, "Christina is a team player and a great asset to the team."

Hire me and I will use my many tools to get the job done.



Mike Keller

My name is Mike Keller. I was born in DC, the first son of six children so I was required to be a leader from almost day one. My Dad is a WW2 veteran. I was raised under military authority, receiving a classical education, attending a DC military high school, which means I understand the value of hard work, respect, and discipline.

Former bosses and peers say, “Mike is a make-it-happen person,” which means I bring over 15 years of global project management skills in leadership, communications, problem-solving, specializing in projects that are in “trouble.” For example, on my last engagement, I was a replacement PM for Advance Auto Parts (AAP). The project was in “trouble” because AAP was ranking dead last in net store profitability compared to its competitors, and lacked critical business tools needed to better manage daily store operations. I was hired to bring the delivery team together, better communicate daily progress to all stakeholders, solve problems, manage project tasks, and schedule, and to test and deliver the new business tools to all AAP retail stores. At project end, my team successfully deployed a brand new “one-click” Web-based retail score carding tool to 3,800 AAP stores, increasing bottom line net profit by \$15M. This success provided up-to-date Business Intelligence tools for AAP stores and corporate managers to more effectively manage their business, making AAP more competitive in their market.

Hire me and I will solve your problems and make it happen for you.

The 10-Step System

Step 1: Pre-planning

- a. Identifying your purpose, goals, and outcomes
- b. Getting yourself ready:
 - i. Your assessments and how to use them
 - ii. Researching
 - iii. Putting together your personal resource guide
 - iv. Your personal development path
 - v. Goal setting — to set up what you want and need
 - vi. Determining your outcomes

XI

The 10-Step System

Step 2 – Building rapport in the workplace

- a. Building rapport builds trust and the ability to:
 - i. Learn who you are and how you fit
 - ii. Learn how you make decisions
 - iii. Learn who others are
 - iv. Learn how to connect with others and bridge the communications gap with ease and less effort

XII

The 10-Step System

Step 3 – Find the pain or the challenge to solve

- a. Learn that what people and organizations want is not always what they need.
- b. Learn how to get to the real issues or person underneath.
- c. Find out how you learn about what is truly important to others and the company or clients.
- d. Help people become emotionally committed in positive outcomes for your and your co-workers’ success.
- e. Learn about people’s past, present, and future goals in order to position yourself as a valuable resource to help them and the organization achieve their goals (defining your ROI).

XIII

The 10-Step System

Step 4 – Salary or sales: qualify the opportunities

- a. In this step, you will learn how to uncover the level of commitment or the amount of time people are willing to invest in getting their needs met or having a successful outcome.
- b. Budget, terms, and conditions: everybody has a budget and knows what it is.
 - i. Budgets include:
 - Time
 - Commitment
 - Ego
 - Dollars

XIV

The 10-Step System

Step 5 – The decision-making process

- a. If you know how the promotion decision is made — you are more likely to succeed. With this step, you will learn:
 - i. How people make their decisions
 - ii. Why they make their decisions
 - iii. Who they might rely on
 - iv. How they keep their promises

XV

The 10-Step System

Step 6 – The review

- a. You will find out how to determine:
 - i. If the plan is realistic
 - ii. If the plan is acceptable
 - iii. If it is doable
 - iv. What to do to correct acceptance of the plan and how to get back on track and move forward
 - v. If you have done the first five steps correctly you:
 - Did your homework
 - Found out what is important and what gets people emotionally involved
 - What their commitment of time, energy or money is
 - How they make a decision to take action and proceed forward... including yourself

XVI

The 10-Step System

Step 7 – Presentation:

- a. How to present and communicate to anyone:
 - i. What they want or need
 - ii. The way they want it
 - iii. What their commitment is
 - iv. How to move forward
 - v. Your case:
 - Simply
 - Systematically
 - Interactively
 - vi. So all parties are involved in a mutually beneficial outcome

XVII

The 10-Step System

Step 8 – Reinforcement

- a. In this stage you learn:
 - i. Where you stand in the entire process
 - ii. What you need to do to finalize the outcome

XVIII

The 10-Step System

Step 9 – Completion

- a. Learn how to help people make decisions more easily and with less effort

XIX

The 10-Step System

Step 10 – Confirming your value

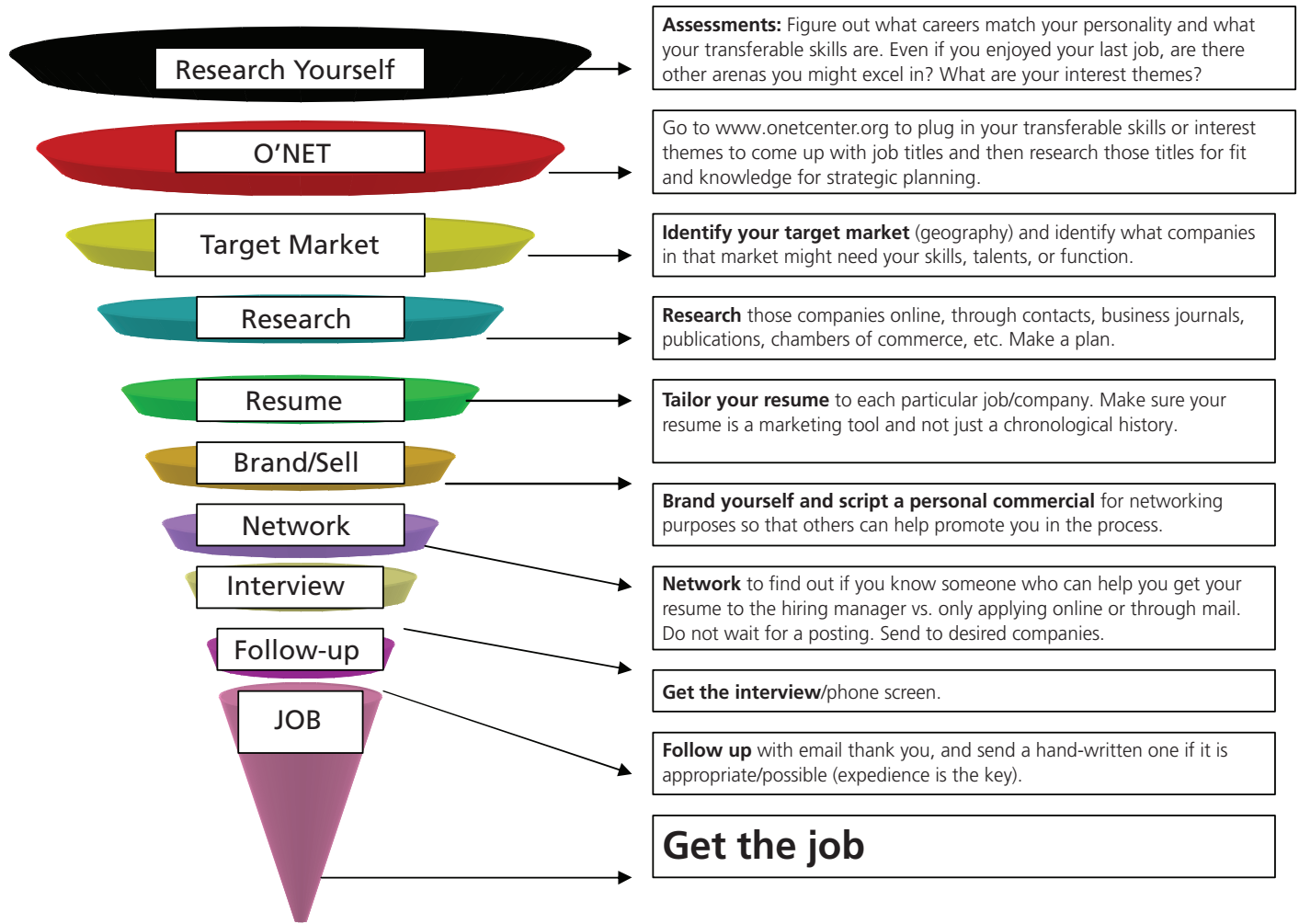
- a. In this step you will learn how to reinforce your value by learning:
 - i. How to validate the other party's decision
 - ii. How to confirm their agreement and work together in fellowship to achieve both parties' goals

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For more information on the 10-step process go to www.SalesDoctor.com



Targeted Approach to the Job Search



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Fifty Common Interview Questions*

- 1. Tell me about yourself.** It is the most often asked question in interviews. You need to have a short statement prepared in your mind. Be careful that it does not sound rehearsed. Limit it to work-related items unless instructed otherwise. Talk about things you have done and jobs you have held that relate to the position you are interviewing for. Start with the item farthest back and work up to the present.
- 2. Why did you leave your last job?** Stay positive regardless of the circumstances. Never refer to a major problem with management and never speak ill of supervisors, co-workers, or the organization — if you do, you will be the one looking bad. Keep smiling and talk about leaving for a positive reason such as an opportunity, a chance to do something special, or other forward-looking reasons.
- 3. What experience do you have in this field?** Speak about specifics that relate to the position you are applying for. If you do not have specific experience, get as close as you can.
- 4. Do you consider yourself successful?** You should always answer yes and briefly explain why. A good explanation is that you have set goals, and you have met some and are on track to achieve the others.
- 5. What do co-workers say about you?** Be prepared with a quote or two from co-workers. Either a specific statement or a paraphrase will work. “Jill Clark, a co-worker at Smith Company, always said I was the hardest workers she had ever known.” It is as powerful as Jill having said it at the interview herself.
- 6. What do you know about this organization?** This question is one reason to do some research on the organization before the interview. Find out where they have been and where they are going. What are the current issues and who are the major players?
- 7. What have you done to improve your knowledge in the last year?** Try to include improvement activities that relate to the job. A wide variety of activities can be mentioned as positive self-improvement. Have some good ones handy to mention.
- 8. Are you applying for other jobs?** Be honest but do not spend a lot of time in this area. Keep the focus on this job and what you can do for this organization. Anything else is a distraction.
- 9. Why do you want to work for this organization?** This may take some thought and certainly should be based on the research you have done on the organization. Sincerity is extremely important here and will easily be sensed. Relate it to your long-term career goals.
- 10. Do you know anyone who works for us?** Be aware of the policy on relatives working for the organization. This can affect your answer even though they asked about friends not relatives. Be careful to mention a friend only if they are well thought of.
- 11. What kind of salary do you need?** A loaded question. A nasty little game that you will probably lose if you answer first. So, do not answer it. Instead, say something like, That’s a tough question, can you tell me the range for this position? In most cases, the interviewer, taken off guard, will tell you. If not, say that it can depend on the details of the job. Then give a wide range.

*The ubiquitous *50 Common Interview Questions* is adapted from *The Accelerated Job Search* by Wayne D. Ford, Ph.D., published by The Management Advantage, Inc.



12. Are you a team player? You are, of course, a team player. Be sure to have examples ready. Specifics that show you often perform for the good of the team rather than for yourself are good evidence of your team attitude. Do not brag, just say it in a matter-of-fact tone. This is a key point.

13. How long would you expect to work for us if hired? Specifics here are not good. Something like this should work: I'd like it to be a long time. Or as long as we both feel I'm doing a good job.

14. Have you ever had to fire anyone? How did you feel about that? This is serious. Do not make light of it or in any way seem like you like to fire people. At the same time, you will do it when it is the right thing to do. When it comes to the organization versus the individual who has created a harmful situation, you will protect the organization. Remember firing is not the same as layoff or reduction in force.

15. What is your philosophy toward work? The interviewer is not looking for a long or flowery dissertation here. Do you have strong feelings that the job gets done? "Yes." That's the type of answer that works best here. Short and positive, showing a benefit to the organization.

16. If you had enough money to retire right now, would you? Answer yes if you would. But since you need to work, this is the type of work you prefer. Do not say yes if you do not mean it.

17. Have you ever been asked to leave a position? If you have not, say no. If you have, be honest, brief, and avoid saying negative things about the people or organization involved.

18. Explain how you would be an asset to this organization? You should be anxious for this question. It gives you a chance to highlight your best points as they relate to the position being discussed. Give a little advance thought to this relationship.

19. Why should we hire you? Point out how your assets meet what the organization needs. Do not mention any other candidates to make a comparison.

20. Tell me about a suggestion you have made? Have a good one ready. Be sure and use a suggestion that was accepted and was then considered successful. One related to the type of work applied for is a real plus.

21. What irritates you about co-workers? This is a trap question. Think real hard but fail to come up with anything that irritates you. A short statement that you seem to get along with folks is great.

22. What is your greatest strength? Numerous answers are good, just stay positive. A few good examples: Your ability to prioritize, your problem-solving skills, your ability to work under pressure, your ability to focus on projects, your professional expertise, your leadership skills, and your positive attitude.

23. Tell me about your dream job? Stay away from a specific job, you cannot win. If you say the job you are contending for is it, you strain credibility. If you say another job is it, you plant the suspicion that you will be dissatisfied with this position if hired. The best is to stay generic and say something like: A job where I love the work, like the people, can contribute, and can't wait to get to work.

24. Why do you think you would do well at this job? Give several reasons and include skills, experience, and interest.

25. What are you looking for in a job? See answer# 23.

26. What kind of person would you refuse to work with? Do not be trivial. It would take disloyalty to the organization, violence, or lawbreaking to get you to object. Minor objections will label you as a whiner.

27. What is more important to you: the money or the work? Money is always important, but the work is the most important. There is no better answer.

28. What would your previous supervisor say your strongest point is? There are numerous good possibilities here: Loyalty, energy, positive attitude, leadership, team player, expertise, initiative, patience, hard work, creativity, problem-solver.

29. Tell me about a problem you had with a supervisor. This is the biggest trap of all. This is a test to see if you will speak ill of your boss. If you fall for it and tell about a problem with a former boss, you may well blow the interview right there. Stay positive and develop a poor memory about any trouble with a supervisor.

30. What has disappointed you about a job? Don't get trivial or negative. Safe areas are few but can include: not enough of a challenge; you were laid off in a reduction; company did not win a contract, which would have given you more responsibility.

31. Tell me about your ability to work under pressure. You may say that you thrive under certain types of pressure. Give an example that relates to the type of position applied for.

32. Do your skills match this job or another job more closely? Probably this one. Do not give fuel to the suspicion that you may want another job more than this one.

33. What motivates you to do your best on the job? This is a personal trait that only you can say, but good examples are: challenge, achievement, recognition.

34. Are you willing to work overtime? Nights? Weekends? This is up to you, be totally honest.

35. How would you know you were successful on this job? Several ways are good measures: you set high standards for yourself and meet them; your outcomes are a success; your boss tells you that you are successful.

36. Would you be willing to relocate if required? You should be clear on this with your family prior to the interview if you think there is a chance it may come up. Do not say yes just to get the job if the real answer is no. This can create a lot of problems later on in your career. Be honest at this point and save yourself future grief.

37. Are you willing to put the interests of the organization ahead of your own? This is a straight loyalty and dedication question. Do not worry about the deep ethical and philosophical implications. Just say yes.

38. Describe your management style. Try to avoid labels. Some of the more common labels, like progressive, salesman, or consensus-builder, can have several meanings or descriptions depending on which management expert you listen to. "Situational style" is safe, because it says you will manage according to the situation, instead of one size fits all.

39. What have you learned from mistakes on the job? Here you have to come up with something or you strain credibility. Make it small, well-intentioned mistake with a positive lesson learned. An example would be working too far ahead of colleagues on a project and thus throwing coordination off.

40. Do you have any blind spots? Trick question. If you know about blind spots, they are no longer blind spots. Do not reveal any personal areas of concern here. Let them do their own discovery on your bad points. Do not hand it to them.

41. If you were hiring a person for this job, what would you look for? Be careful to mention traits that are needed and that you have.



Sell Yourself: *Personal Selling*

42. Do you think you are overqualified for this position? Regardless of your qualifications, state that you are very well qualified for the position.

43. How do you propose to compensate for your lack of experience? First, if you have experience that the interviewer does not know about, bring that up, then point out (if true) that you are a hardworking, quick learner.

44. What qualities do you look for in a boss? Be generic and positive. Safe qualities are: knowledgeable, a sense of humor, fair, loyal to subordinates, and a holder of high standards. All bosses think they have these traits.

45. Tell me about a time when you helped resolve a dispute between others. Pick a specific incident. Concentrate on your problem-solving technique and not the dispute you settled.

46. What position do you prefer on a team working on a project? Be honest. If you are comfortable in different roles, point that out.

47. Describe your work ethic. Emphasize benefits to the organization, things like determination to get the job done and work hard but enjoy your work are good.

48. What has been your biggest professional disappointment? Be sure that you refer to something that was beyond your control. Show acceptance and no negative feelings.

49. Tell me about the most fun you have had on the job. Talk about having fun by accomplishing something for the organization.

50. Do you have any questions for me? Always have some questions prepared — ones where the answers show you will be an asset to the organization are good. How soon will I be able to be productive? What type of projects will I be able to assist on?

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Behavioral-Based Interview Questions*

Behavioral-based questions have been designed to assess your personality, attitude, and behavior. Interviewers ask these questions in order to see how you react and deal with problems, and if you do it in a calm civilized way or an angry way.

1. Describe a situation in which you were able to use persuasion to successfully convince someone to see things your way.
2. Describe a time when you were faced with a stressful situation that demonstrated your coping skills.
3. Give me a specific example of a time when you used good judgment and logic in solving a problem.
4. Give me an example of a time when you set a goal and were able to meet or achieve it.
5. Tell me about a time when you had to use your presentation skills to influence someone's opinion.
6. Give me a specific example of a time when you had to conform to a policy with which you did not agree.
7. Please discuss an important written document you were required to complete.
8. Tell me about a time when you had to go above and beyond the call of duty in order to get a job done.
9. Tell me about a time when you had too many things to do and you were required to prioritize your tasks.
10. Give me an example of a time when you had to make a split second decision.
11. What is your typical way of dealing with conflict? Give me an example.
12. Tell me about a time you were able to successfully deal with another person even when that individual may not have personally liked you (or vice versa).
13. Tell me about a difficult decision you've made in the last year.
14. Give me an example of a time when you tried to accomplish something and failed.
15. Give me an example of when you showed initiative and took the lead.
16. Tell me about a recent situation in which you had to deal with a very upset customer or co-worker.
17. Give me an example of a time when you motivated others.
18. Tell me about a time when you delegated a project effectively.
19. Give me an example of a time when you used your fact-finding skills to solve a problem.
20. Tell me about a time when you missed an obvious solution to a problem.
21. Describe a time when you anticipated potential problems and developed preventive measures.
22. Tell me about a time when you were forced to make an unpopular decision.
23. Please tell me about a time you had to fire a friend.
24. Describe a time when you set your sights too high (or too low).

*Adapted from Claremont Graduate University's *Sample Behavioral-Based Interview Questions*.



Key Reading

1. Three Tricky Interview Styles – And How To Ace Them

(www.beyond.com/articles/three-tricky-interview-styles-and-how-to-ace-them-359-article.html)

2. Advice: Controlling Your Online Image While Looking for Work

(<http://blogs.wsj.com/laidoff/2009/06/11/advice-controlling-your-online-image-while-looking-for-work>)

3. The Quintessential Guide to Job Interview Preparation

(www.quintcareers.com/Quintessential_Careers_Press/Job-Interview-Preparation)

Next Steps

1. Questions? Ask now!!
2. Review your career plan from Class 4: **Advance Your Career.**
3. Review your resume — keep it current and remember to market yourself.
4. Remember to have a support system and consider working with an Avadon Group coaching expert to increase your ability to sell yourself.
5. Practice your communication and leadership skills and take a training course like the Avadon Group's **Communicate & Lead** (CLS Class 6).

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