

```
for (i=0 ; i<lnumverts ; i++)
```

# Let Run your Neurons

```
{
    if (lindex > 0)
    {
        r_pedge = &pedges[lindex];
        vec = r_pcurrentvertbase[r_pedge->r[0]].position;
    }
    else
    {
        r_pedge = &pedges[-lindex];
        vec = r_pcurrentvertbase[r_pedge->r[1]].position;
    }
    s = DotProduct (vec, fa->texinfo->vecs[0]) + fa->texinfo->vecs[0][3];
    s /= fa->texinfo->texture->width;

    t = DotProduct (-vec, fa->texinfo->vecs[1]) + fa->texinfo->vecs[1][3];
    t /= fa->texinfo->texture->height;

    VectorCopy (vec, poly->verts[i]);
    poly->verts[i][3] = s;
    poly->verts[i][4] = t;
}
```

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```
    s = DotProduct (vec, fa->texinfo->vecs[0]) + fa->texinfo->vecs[0][3];
    s -= fa->texturemins[0];
```

Fourth Edition

**Your**

**FIRST**

# INTERVIEW

For Students and Anyone Preparing to  
Enter Today's Tough Job Market

**RON FRY**

Author of 101 Great Answers to the Toughest Interview Questions

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# **YOUR FIRST INTERVIEW**

For Students and Anyone Preparing to Enter  
Today's Tough Job Market

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# YOUR FIRST INTERVIEW

For Students and Anyone Preparing to Enter  
Today's Tough Job Market

*By*  
Ron Fry



The Career Press, Inc.  
Franklin Lakes, NJ

Team LRJ

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## Introduction

# The Interview Process, in Good Times and Bad

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Unemployment is at a record high...or record low.

Jobs are plentiful...or scarcer than lilacs in December.

We're at war...or peace.

And you've got a job interview, your *first* job interview, which is happening whichever of the above scenarios occur. To be truthful, they aren't as important as you probably believe. Whether the economy is coasting down Easy Street or preparing to nosedive off the Wall Street pier has little to do with how you land your first interview, prepare for it, conduct yourself during it, and whether you emerge successfully from it...with your first job in hand.

So don't worry if the papers are full of doom and gloom, trumpeting the worst job market for college grads since the reign of George III. And don't get too cocky when the business magazines tell you "It's a Seller's Market!" and visions of six-figure starting salaries start dancing in your head. Whatever circumstances you face, it's still your first interview, and you are probably scared stiff.

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## They *can* spot you a mile away

Most hiring managers and recruiters have little trouble identifying candidates who are waiting for their first interviews.

There they sit in the reception area, those impeccably dressed collegians in standard-issue interview suits.

The nervous *thump-thump-thump* of their hearts is almost audible.

They all seem afflicted with Lady Macbeth Syndrome, constantly rubbing their palms on their thighs in hopes of drying them before they have to shake the interviewer's hand.

There *are* plenty of good reasons for you to be nervous. You are faced with the task of convincing a total stranger to invest company money and time in *you*. Indeed, selling yourself in a competitive market is a daunting task.

And despite what I said just a few paragraphs ago, the situation as I write this is pretty darned dire—the remnants of the dotcom bust are still smoldering, Wall Street is in free fall, consumer confidence is somewhere between slim and none, and most of us have yet to recover from 9-11.

*And* you're more likely to contend with a tougher interview than your slightly older friends because of the rapidly increasing sophistication of those doing the hiring for America's companies. Corporations are spending more money than ever on psychological tests, honesty tests, drug tests, assessments, and computerized screening systems.

They are sending recruiters and supervisors to courses on interviewing and candidate-evaluation procedures. They are subjecting candidates to more and longer interviews.

And they are using new interviewing techniques, some of which would make thumbscrews seem like an attractive alternative.

Although it would be unrealistic to expect any new hire to come with a guarantee, many employers are taking that extra step to make sure they do not even *consider* someone they will quickly wish had never darkened their doors. Simply put, employers can afford to be choosy, and they've found better ways to choose. They are seeking "self-managing" employees— young people who are versatile, confident, and not afraid to roll up their sleeves and get the job done.

But you can't prove you're exactly what they're looking for without making it through the interview process.

If you haven't taken a lot of time to uncover the "real you" beneath the grades and athletics and clubs, don't worry. By the time you finish today's interview process, you'll be ready to lead a self-help seminar on "Getting in Touch With Your Inner Child."

## **Help is in your hands**

But the purpose of this book is to ease your anxiety, not add to it.

Of course, the best way to keep anxiety from hamstringing you during the interview is to be thoroughly prepared. Know yourself. Know the company. And, if possible, know the interviewer. *Before* you're sitting in the reception area filling out an application.

This book will help you do that. It will also help you write effective letters that will get you in the door to show your stuff. It will give you a sneak preview of exactly what to expect during the interview. It will even tell you what your "interview suit" should look like.

Most importantly, this book will tell you, in detail, how to conduct yourself during every phase of the interview—how to make sure you're taking the right approach once you get to know the interviewer a bit, and what you can expect to be asked.

It will tell you how to handle illegal or embarrassing questions, how to field the job offer, and how to make the most of salary discussions.

Like playing the piano, interviewing takes practice. And practice makes perfect. Hours of personal interviewing experience—the tragedies and the triumphs—as well as my years as an interviewer are the basis for this book. My intention is to spare you many of the indignities I suffered along the way by helping you prepare for the interview of your worst nightmares—at a comfortable distance from the interviewer’s glare.

## **You can take charge**

Most of the advice in this book is pure common sense. But even the most seasoned job hunters who read it might well ask, “Why didn’t I think of that?”

The reason is simple: Most job candidates misunderstand their role in the process. They think of the interview as an interrogation. And they see themselves as suspects, not as the key prospects they really are.

This book will show you that *you* are, to a very large degree, in charge of the interview. It will convince you that you are there not only to sell the company on *you*, but to make sure that you are sold on *the company*.

Simply put, the interview is not a police lineup—it’s a two-way street.

## **What’s the worst that can happen?**

As you ready yourself for any particularly stressful situation—an important exam, a big date, *your first interview*—it’s helpful to put things in perspective by asking, “Well, what’s the

worst that can happen?” Here are some true life stories you won’t believe:

- ◆ One candidate, who was extremely nervous at the start of the interview, reached across the interviewer’s desk to deliver his resume and split his suit jacket wide open, explaining, “I knew Dad’s clothes didn’t quite fit.”
- ◆ One man continually asked the director of human resources if he could phone his psychiatrist to make sure he was answering the questions correctly.
- ◆ A candidate at one company laid down on the floor through the entire interview, taking the hiring manager’s advice to “relax” perhaps too literally.

If you’re well prepared—and relatively sane—it’s unlikely that any of these mishaps will befall you. Preparation is the key to surviving the interview process. Just follow the advice in this book and you’re sure to be one of the best candidates that interviewer has ever seen. So don’t worry. Read on!

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## Chapter 1

# How to Develop Your Personal Inventory

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What constantly surprises many interviewers about first-time job seekers is how unprepared they are. These professionals tell me that too many inexperienced job seekers think they can just “wing it,” and that the majority of them usually end up tongue-tied when asked the simplest questions...the ones they should know are coming.

You may have mailed a gorgeous resume and cover letter. You may be wearing the perfect clothes on the day of the interview. But if you *can't* convince the interviewer—face-to-face—that you are the right person for the job, you *aren't* getting hired.

Too many candidates hesitate after the first open-ended question, then stumble and stutter their way through a disjointed litany of resume “sound bites.” Other interviewees recite canned replies that only highlight their memory skills.

For example, the most common job interview question of all time—“So, tell me about yourself.”—hits most first-time job

seekers like a stun gun. A typical candidate searches her brain frantically for the right answer to this seemingly innocuous question.

This common interview question is not at all innocuous. It can make or break the job interview. As a job candidate, you should view this question as a wonderful opportunity to sell yourself to a prospective employer. It may be the only time during the whole job-hunting process that you can talk freely, highlighting those very things that make you uniquely qualified for employment.

Unfortunately, most candidates wind up hemming and hawing and growing more and more nervous until they end up knocking a chair over on the way out. Memorable exit—no job.

## So, tell me, who are you?

The object of this chapter is to prepare you to comfortably answer one—and *only* one—question: “Who are you?” The success or failure of many interviews will hinge on your ability to answer this seemingly simple question.

The interviewing process is a kind of sale. In this case, *you* are the product—and the salesperson. If you show up unprepared to talk about your unique features and benefits, you’re not likely to motivate an interviewer to “buy.” Most candidates don’t really have an answer for, “How would you describe yourself?” or, more simply, “Who are you?”

They don’t know the answer because they’ve probably never *really* thought about the question. Most people are uncomfortable with introspection. And let’s face it, the days immediately before and after graduation seem like the wrong time for contemplating your navel.



However, it's essential to take the time now to get to know yourself better. You might have soared through school with flying colors, but you'll spiral out of the job market unless you take the time to perform a personal inventory.

There are decidedly selfish reasons you should do so. In the course of your lifetime, you'll work some 60,000 hours. Whether that work is productive and fulfilling will depend to a large extent on how well you've identified and utilized your dominant skills and talents, right from the start. Correctly match your skills and talents with the right industry, job, and company, and your work life will be a successful and happy one. If you don't, you'll wind up frustrated, unhappy, and unfulfilled. Given a choice, I recommend the former!

## **Information at your fingertips**

Have you put together a resume?

Of course you have. Well, that process should have provided all of the information you need to answer the question, "Who are you?" in a way that will knock the interviewer's socks off. Most candidates go about putting together a resume as if it were merely a catalog of their accomplishments and education. A resume should also be a reflection of the "real you" behind the facts and dates.

You must look at the process of putting together your resume as a chance to examine those qualities that make you special and those you'd like to improve. It is also an opportunity to organize a great deal of information about your education, the jobs you've held, and your volunteer activities.

How you should put together a resume is discussed at length in the companion volume to this book, *Your First Resume, 5th Ed.* Here's a brief look at the process.

You need to assemble all of the following information. Keeping separate folders with pertinent data, citations, notes, etc., is an excellent idea.

### ***Your employment history***

Prepare a separate sheet for every full-time and part-time job you've ever held, no matter how short the tenure. Yes, even summer jobs are important here: they demonstrate resourcefulness, responsibility, and initiative—that you were already developing a sense of independence while you were still living at home. Whether you choose to include some, all, or none of these short-term jobs on your resume or to discuss them during your interview is a decision you'll make later. For now, write down everything about *every* job. For each employer, include:

- ◆ Name, address, and telephone number of the company (plus an e-mail address if you have one).
- ◆ The names of all of your supervisors and, whenever possible, where or how they can be reached.
- ◆ Letters of recommendation (especially if they *can't* be reached).
- ◆ The exact dates (month and year) you were employed.

For each job, include:

- ◆ Specific duties and responsibilities.
- ◆ Supervisory experience (the number of people you managed).
- ◆ Specific skills required for the job.
- ◆ Key accomplishments.

- ◆ The dates you received promotions.
- ◆ Any awards, honors, and special recognition you received.

For each part-time job, also include:

- ◆ The number of hours you worked per week.

Don't write a *book* on each job. Concentrate on providing *specific data* (volume of work handled, problems solved, dollars saved) to paint a *detailed* picture of your abilities and accomplishments. Believe me, these hard facts will add a powerful punch to your interview presentation.

For example:

- ◆ **Duties:** Write one or two sentences giving an overview of the tasks you handled in each of the jobs you held. Use numbers as often as possible to demonstrate the scope of your responsibilities.
- ◆ **Skills:** Name the specific skills required to perform your duties—highlighting those that you developed on the job.
- ◆ **Key accomplishments:** This is the place to “brag.” But be sure to back up each accomplishment with specifics, including results.

### ***Your volunteer activities***

The fact that you weren't paid for a specific job—such as stuffing envelopes for a local political candidate, running a car wash to raise money for the homeless or manning a drug hotline—is no reason to leave it off your resume. Having hired hundreds of people during my career, I can assure you that your “after-hours” activities will be considered and weighed by many interviewers. Workaholics rarely make the best employees.

So take some time to make a detailed record of your volunteer pursuits, similar to the one you've just completed for each job you held. For each volunteer organization, include:

- ◆ Name, address, and telephone number (plus e-mail address, if available).
- ◆ The name of your supervisor or the director of the organization.
- ◆ Letter(s) of recommendation.
- ◆ The exact dates (month and year) of your involvement with the organization.

For each volunteer experience, include:

- ◆ The approximate number of hours you devoted to the activity each month.
- ◆ Specific duties and responsibilities.
- ◆ Specific skills required.
- ◆ Accomplishments.
- ◆ Any awards, honors, and special recognition you received.

### ***Your educational accomplishments***

If you're a recent college graduate or still in college, you don't need to rehash your high school experiences. If you have a graduate degree or are a graduate student, however, you should list both graduate and undergraduate course work. If you're still in school and graduation is more than a year away, indicate the number of credits you've earned through the most recent semester completed.

### ***Your extracurricular activities***

I'm always interested in—and impressed by—candidates who talk about books they've read and activities they enjoy. So make a list of all the sports, clubs, and other activities in which you've participated, inside or outside of school. For each activity, club, or group, include:

- ◆ Name and purpose.
- ◆ Any offices you held; special committees you formed, chaired or participated in; or specific positions you played.
- ◆ Duties and responsibilities of each role.
- ◆ Key accomplishments.
- ◆ Any awards or honors you received.

### ***Honors and awards you've received***

List all the awards and honors you've received from school(s), community groups, church groups, clubs, and so on. You may include awards from prestigious high schools (prep schools or professional schools) even if you're in graduate school or long out of college.

### ***Your military record***

Many employers are impressed by the maturity of candidates who have served in the armed forces and consider military service excellent management training for many civilian jobs. So if you've served in the armed forces, even for a short time, make sure you can discuss your experiences and how they mesh with your professional aspirations. Be sure to include:

- ◆ Final rank awarded.
- ◆ Duties and responsibilities.
- ◆ Citations and awards.
- ◆ Details on specific training and/or any special schooling.
- ◆ Special skills developed.
- ◆ Key accomplishments.

### *Languages in which you're fluent*

Even if you're not applying for a job in the international arena, your ability to read, write, and/or speak a second language can make you invaluable to employers in an increasing number of research and educational institutions or multinational companies. One year of college Russian won't cut it. But if you spent a year studying in Moscow—and can carry on a conversation like a native—by all means write it down.

At the end of this chapter, I have included 10 data input sheets. The first eight cover employment, volunteer work, education (4), activities, and awards. The last two—which cover military service and language skills—are important if, of course, they apply to you.

While you should use these forms to summarize all the data you have collected, do not throw away any of the specific information—report cards, transcripts, citations—just because it's recorded on these worksheets. Keep all your records in your files. After all, you never know when you might need them again!

## **Dig a little deeper**

Once you fill in these forms, you'll see that they contain a great deal of information. But all they really reveal about you is what you've done and where you've been. These facts alone will not ordinarily land you a job. You must take some time to think over your personal history so that you will be prepared to present the "real you" during the interview. Use the following questions as a guide:

1. Which achievements did you enjoy most? Which are you proudest of? (Be ready to tell the interviewer how these accomplishments relate to the position at hand.)
2. What mistakes have you made? Why did they occur? How have you learned from them? What have you done to keep similar things from reoccurring?
3. How well do you interact with authority figures—bosses, teachers, parents?
4. What are your favorite games and sports? Think about the way you play these games and what that says about you. Are you overly competitive? Do you give up too easily? Are you a good loser—or a bad winner? Do you rise to a challenge or back away from it?
5. What kinds of people are your friends? Do you associate only with people who are very similar to you? Do you enjoy differences in others—or merely tolerate them? What are some things that have caused you to end friendships? What does this say about you?

6. If you were to ask a group of friends and acquaintances to describe you, what adjectives would they use? List all of them—the good and the bad. Why would people describe you this way? Are there specific behaviors, skills, achievements, or failures that seem to identify you in the eyes of others? What are they?

This exercise will be most effective if you write down your answers. Because it's for your eyes only, you needn't be concerned about producing beautiful prose, or, for that matter, even complete sentences. The only important thing is honesty.

## Painting the whole picture

Now, look over all that you've written down so far and distill it into several lists with the following headings:

- ◆ My strongest skills.
- ◆ Areas in which I am most knowledgeable.
- ◆ Strongest parts of my personality.
- ◆ Things I do best.
- ◆ Skills that I should develop to do well in my career.
- ◆ Parts of my personality I could stand to improve.

If you take the time to do this exercise honestly and thoroughly, you will be amazed at the results. It should help you realize things about yourself that you never knew or, more accurately, that you never *knew* you knew.

I urge you to engage in this process of self-examination, even if there is no imminent need to use the information. Then, when you set up your first interview, take out your lists, along



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