

HO-52 Interviewing

For an interview to be successful, it's important to plan carefully, ask interesting questions, listen attentively, and follow up on the information you learn. Here are some specific suggestions for what you can do before, during and after the interview.

Before the interview:

- Know something about the person you're going to interview (the interviewee) and about the topic you're going to discuss.
- Decide on the purpose of your interview. What do you hope to find out?
- Make a list of interview questions that will help you get the information. Try to use open-ended questions rather than questions that will just be answered with 'yes' or 'no'.
- Decide in which order to ask your questions. Begin with general questions, then ask more specific ones.
- Schedule an interview time and place. Let the interviewee know how long the interview will last.
- Explain the purpose of your interview so that the interviewee will be prepared.

During the interview:

- Introduce yourself to the interviewee and review what you hope to learn.
- Listen carefully to the interviewee's responses. Often, they will make you think of an additional question or comment.
- Record the interviewee's responses, either by making jot notes or by tape recording the interview.
- Ask for clarification if there is something that you don't understand.
- End the interview on time, and thank the interviewee.

After the interview:

- Review your notes or listen to the tape recording.
- Decide what information you want to share, who you want to share it with, and how you want to share it.

Assignment:

1. Choose someone to interview – preferably someone you don't know very well.
2. Decide on the specific purpose of your interview.
For example, does your neighbor have an interesting hobby that you'd like to find out about?
3. Follow the steps from this handout and from the video to prepare for the interview, conduct the interview, and present the information you learned from the interview.

