



INTERVIEWING

for ministry positions



Saint John's
SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY
AND SEMINARY

COLLEGEVILLE, MINNESOTA

STEPS FOR INTERVIEWING

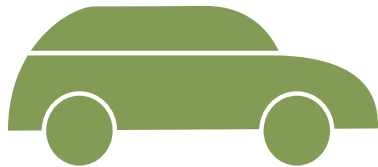


RESUME & COVER
LETTER

RESEARCH



DRESS
PROFESSIONALLY



ARRIVE EARLY

BE CONFIDENT



FOLLOW UP

RESUME INCLUDES:

HEADING

name and contact information

GOALS OR THEOLOGY OF

MINISTRY

EDUCATION

RELEVANT WORK EXPERIENCE

OTHER

volunteer experience, special honors, related skills & interests, extra
curricular activities

REFERENCES

COVER LETTERS:

SPECIFIC TO EACH POSITION

write every cover letter specifically to address each position you are applying for, and make sure you use the correct formal letter heading for your cover letter.

KEEP IT CONCISE

Under one page.

This is *not* a place to recap your resume (they have a copy already!) Tell them something new that addresses why you are right for this position.



POSITION

Be familiar with the job description for the position you are applying. Be ready with questions about anything you don't understand or wish to have more information.

PARISH / ORGANIZATION

Look at the website, social media, and online/printed resources about the organization. Become familiar with the mission, vision, programming, staff structure. Know how you and your experience align with all of this (hint: this is good information for your cover letter!)



DRESS UP

What you are wearing is going to be noticed within the first 10 seconds, it will make a first impression. Dress appropriately for the workplace, and usually a step or two up from what you might expect on a day to day basis.

As a general rule, a suit (men: tie and jacket; women: pant or skirt) is almost always appropriate. Keep your style simple and bold, and you'll be safe.



ARRIVE EARLY

Give yourself time to turn around to grab the folder with your references, a notepad to take notes, and the job description you forgot at home, the unexpected traffic, and missing your exit.

Arrive about 10 minutes early to show you are punctual, to give yourself time to use the restroom, to look over the position description one last time, and adjust to the space.



BE CONFIDENT

Believe in yourself!
*even if you think you don't know
what you're doing*

Before going into an interview, practice with somebody you trust or in the mirror to prepare for possible questions (up next).

In the interview, take a few moments to think about a question before responding. This is a place where it's encouraged to talk about your accomplishments, be humble, but talk about yourself!





WHAT TO EXPECT AT THE INTERVIEW

WHAT TO DO AS YOU BEGIN

Start with a good handshake and a personal introduction to every person in the room. Be sure to remember each person's name.

If there is a chance, express your gratitude for the opportunity to interview and for the time the interviewers have given to you.

The interviewer will likely tell you where you will sit. Take your seat, sit up straight and remember to be confident! If you are offered water, take it if you will want it throughout the interview.

Take a deep breath, the interviewer will take it from here...

POTENTIAL QUESTIONS:

INFORMATIONAL QUESTIONS

These questions will seek information

Tell us about yourself.

What are your strengths and your weaknesses

Why are you currently looking for a new job?

Why do you want this position, or to work at this place?

How do you prioritize projects?

How do you understand this position (i.e. what do you think is the role of a music director or what is your vision for youth ministry)

POTENTIAL QUESTIONS: BEHAVIORAL QUESTIONS

These questions will seek your past performance and behaviors.

Tell us about a time when you dealt with conflict or a difficult situation.

Describe a time you had to be very strategic in order to meet all your top priorities.

Give us an example of a time when you worked on a project with other people.

Describe a time when your team or company was undergoing some change. How did that impact you, and how did you adapt?

Tell us about your proudest professional accomplishment.

POTENTIAL QUESTIONS:

Role Playing Exercises

This will show how you think on the spot and how you interact with people and/or a situation.

You will be given a situation and asked to perform the role. For example: you're interviewing for a pastoral associate, you might be asked to use those in the room as parishioners of the parish and greet them at an event you are hosting.

Critical Thinking

The employer is looking at how you think, the answer isn't important

In ministry, you won't likely get the typical critical thinking questions like, "how many iPhones can fit into this room?"

However, you may be asked questions like: If you got this position, what would be 3 new things you would implement?

Questions They **Cannot** Ask You

The employer is responsible for knowing not to ask these questions, but if they do, you do not have to answer. You can politely state that you will not respond to this question.

Any question that will reveal your age, race, national origin, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, or religion*.

Have you ever been arrested?

Are you married?

Do you have children? Do you plan to have children soon?

What country are you from?

Do you have outstanding debt?

Do you socially drink?

How long have you been working?

When did you graduate from high school?

What type of discharge did you receive from the military?

*In a religious organization, you may get questions regarding your religious practices, if they pertain to the position, they are most likely acceptable.

WHAT TO DO AS YOU END

The last question will likely be: *Do you have any questions?*
Your answer will be: **Yes.**

Some questions to consider:

- What is your favorite part of working here?
- What does a typical day look like in this position?
- Why did the previous person leave this position?
- What does success look like in this position?
- Who would I report to? / What is the reporting structure?
- Why do most parishioners report attending this parish?
- How do staff members collaborate here?
- When can I expect to hear back from you about the job?
- What is the rest of the interview process?

After you are done, shake each person's hand again and thank them by name, tell them you look forward to hearing about the position.

WHEN YOU GET HOME

Write a thank you note to the interviewer.

Include the names of those present at your interview, though you only need to send one note to the main contact. Thank them for the time they spent with you, that you enjoyed the conversation, and that you are looking forward to hearing back from them. An email is an appropriate means of communication.

WHEN YOU RECEIVE THE NEWS

An Offer:

Thank the employer for the offer. Ask how long you have to discern and give your decision. They should tell you the salary they are offering. Upon acceptance, be sure you are given a start date and a date when you will sign a contract.

A Rejection:

Thank the employer for the opportunity. You can ask for feedback on your interview, if you would like.