INTERVIEW WORKSHOP

October 21, 2025

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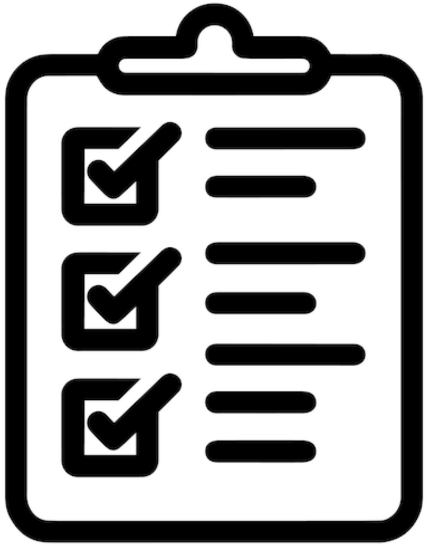
AGENDA

01 Different Types of Interviews

02 How To Prepare Before Your Interviews

03 Different Types of Interview Questions

04 How To Make a Lasting Impression



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01

DIFFERENT TYPES OF INTERVIEWS

1. PHONE INTERVIEW

- **Typical length:** 15–45 minutes
- **Who it's with:** Most often a recruiter or talent acquisition team; sometimes the hiring manager
- **When it happens:** Usually the first round of the interview process, serving as an initial screening to determine if you'll move forward to later stages.
- **Purpose:**
  - Basic fit with the role and company
  - Communication skills and professionalism
  - High-level experience alignment and salary expectations
  - Logistics (work authorization, location, timeline)

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1. PHONE INTERVIEW

DO	DON'T
Find a quiet spot with strong signal.	Allow background noise or weak reception.
Answer professionally: "Hello, this is [Your Name]."	Start casually or sound unprepared.
Keep answers concise (60–90 seconds) using STAR.	Ramble or talk without a clear point.
Speak clearly at a steady pace; smile to warm your tone.	Speak too fast/slow, mumble, or sound monotone.
Confirm next steps and send a brief thank-you.	Hang up without clarity or skip follow-up.

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2. RECORDED INTERVIEW

- **Typical length:** Usually 15–30 minutes, depending on the number of questions
- **Who it's with:**
  There's no live interviewer. You record responses on a video platform (like HireVue) that the recruiter or hiring team reviews later.
- **When it happens:**
  Usually, the first or second round after an application or initial recruiter screen, before moving on to live interviews.
- **Purpose:**
  - To assess communication skills, confidence, and how you present yourself on camera.
  - To evaluate fit with the company's culture and values through behavioural or situational questions.
  - To give every candidate a consistent, fair first impression opportunity.

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2. RECORDED INTERVIEW

Things To Keep In Mind
Your webcam and microphone record your answer. Test them beforehand for clear video and audio.
You often get multiple attempts per question, plus time to read and plan before recording your response.
It can feel awkward or robotic at first, take a deep breath and treat it like a real conversation.
Focus on eye contact, tone, and enthusiasm, since body language is limited.
It's generally easy to prepare for, practice by recording yourself answering common interview questions to improve clarity and comfort.
Review the Do's and Don'ts for Online interviews most apply here too.

3. ONLINE INTERVIEW

- **Typical length:** Usually 45–60 minutes, depending on the number of interviewers and question depth. Panel interviews may run longer (up to 90 minutes).
- **Who it's with:** Typically, with the hiring manager, actuarial analyst, or a panel via platforms like Zoom, Microsoft Teams, or Google Meet.
- **When it happens:** Usually, the second or third round of the process, after a phone or recorded interview, and before any final in-person meetings (if applicable).
- **Purpose:**
  - To assess your technical skills, problem-solving, and team fit more deeply.
  - To evaluate how you communicate and engage in a professional, remote setting.
  - To observe your confidence, collaboration style, and readiness for the role.

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3. ONLINE INTERVIEW

DO	DON'T
Test Zoom/Teams, camera, mic, and screen-share beforehand.	Start without testing or troubleshoot live.
Log in 5 minutes early and confirm your display name.	Arrive late or with an unprofessional username.
Dress professionally and greet with a smile and eye contact.	Open casually, skip the intro, or appear disengaged.
Choose a quiet, well-lit location with a clean background.	Allow background noise, clutter, or visual distractions.
Look into the camera, keep answers concise, and use brief notes off-screen.	Stare at yourself, type loudly, or make note-reading obvious.

4. IN-PERSON INTERVIEW

- **Typical length:** Usually 1–2 hours, though final-round or panel interviews may last half a day or include multiple sessions.
- **Who it's with:** Typically, the hiring manager, team members, and sometimes senior leaders or HR representatives. You may also meet several interviewers back-to-back.
- **When it happens:** Usually the final round of the hiring process, after phone and/or virtual interviews. It's often the last step before a hiring decision or offer. Could take place on Campus (Career Center) or on-site
- **Purpose:**
  - To evaluate your fit with the team and company culture in person.
  - To assess your communication, professionalism, and interpersonal skills.
  - To confirm your qualifications, problem-solving ability, and enthusiasm for the role.
  - To give you a chance to see the workplace and questions about the team.

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4. IN-PERSON INTERVIEW

Tip	Why It Matters
Arrive and check in 15 minutes early.	Builds buffer for logistics and signals professionalism.
Dress to impress.	Strong first impressions set the tone.
Your interview starts when you enter the building.	Reception/security interactions influence feedback.
Treat everyone as an interviewer; maintain eye contact with all.	Respect + inclusive eye contact show confidence and team awareness.
Expect multiple ~30-min sessions; keep answers consistent and assess "office fit."	Panels compare notes, consistency counts; you're also gauging team/role fit.

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4. IN-PERSON - FINAL ROUND

Tip	Why It Matters
Reconfirm schedule & interviewers the day before.	Preps you for back-to-back sessions and tailored examples.
Bring copies of your résumé + a portfolio or work samples.	Makes it easy to reference accomplishments and spark discussion.
Lead with impact; keep stories tight.	Final rounds value depth—use clear results and metrics.
Ask strategic questions in each session.	Vary questions to learn about team norms, growth, and expectations.
Close strong in the last meeting.	Restate fit, enthusiasm, and what you'll deliver in the first 90 days.

02

HOW TO PREPARE FOR INTERVIEWS

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DO YOUR RESEARCH!

- **Study the company, role, and interviewers.** Review the mission, products, recent news, and the job's must-have skills.
- **Look up interviewers on LinkedIn** (if known). Note their background and team, find authentic common ground to build rapport.
- **Use multiple sources and cross-check.** Company site & careers page, blog/newsroom, LinkedIn, Glassdoor, Wikipedia, Google, and tools like Perplexity. Capture 3–5 talking points.
- **Tap your network.** Ask classmates, alumni, or colleagues who've interviewed or worked there for quick tips on process, culture, and what to emphasize.
- **Know your resume cold.** Be ready to discuss your key academic/professional experiences with 5–6 STAR stories that highlight impact.
- **Prepare tailored questions.** Draft 2–3 smart questions per interviewer about team goals, success metrics, and upcoming challenges.

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WHAT TO BRING + TIPS

1. Laptop/headphones (for virtual)
2. Phone on silent and in your bag
3. Multiple copies of resume for all interviewers
4. Pen/paper for note-taking
5. Business professional attire (Career Fair Attire)
6. Double-check time zones, links, and interview format
7. Sleep well, eat beforehand, and hydrate
8. Take brief pauses — it’s okay to think before answering
9. Smile and engage naturally

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DIFFERENT TYPES OF INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

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BASIC QUESTIONS

1. Tell me about yourself.
2. Why do you want to be an actuary?
3. Why are you interested in this industry (e.g., P&C/Life/Health/Consulting) and our company?
4. What recent industry news or regulatory change have you been following, and why does it matter?
5. Tell me about a project, internship, or experience where you used analytical skills to solve a problem.
6. Where do you see yourself in 5 (and 10) years?
7. How many actuarial exams have you passed, and which ones?
8. What does your study plan look like for upcoming exams?

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TELL ME ABOUT YOURSELF

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WHY DO YOU WANT TO BE AN ACTUARY?

BEHAVIORAL QUESTIONS

Interviewers use these questions to assess how you work, act, and perform in a professional setting

1. Tell me about a time you had to work with a difficult person or stakeholder.
2. Describe a time you took initiative without being asked.
3. Give an example of explaining complex findings to a non-technical audience.
4. Tell me about a time you helped resolve a conflict in a team.
5. Describe a situation where you received critical feedback and how you responded.

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STAR METHOD

Listen carefully to the question and think of an instance. It is okay and encouraged to ask for time before answering.

01 SITUATION

Set the scene with just enough context to understand the challenge. State the who, what, when, and where - no analysis yet.

02 TASK

Define your objective and your specific responsibility in that situation. Call out any constraints or challenges.

03 ACTION

Describe the actions you took to complete these tasks. These should be aligned with the job description.

04 RESULT

Close with the impact and what changed because of your actions, quantify when possible.

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STAR EXAMPLE

SITUATION

During my summer internship on Instagram's Growth team, we noticed engagement dipping on a few key surfaces.

TASK

I was responsible for identifying the user behaviors and friction points contributing to those drop-offs.

ACTION

I launched a targeted in-app micro-survey linked to instrumented click and scroll events, A/B-tested the prompt timing, and built a concise dashboard to synthesize insights for the PM and design teams.

RESULT

Within a week, we uncovered three high-impact friction patterns that informed two UI tweaks, and the playbook we created reduced planning time for similar studies by about 50%.

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RESUME QUESTIONS

1. Give us a 60–90 second tour of your background, highlighting the choices that shaped it.
2. Walk us through your internship scope and impact. What were your responsibilities and measurable outcomes?
3. Which 2–3 skills did you develop the most, and how have you applied them since?
4. Describe the toughest challenge in your last role, what made it hard, what did you do, and what changed as a result?

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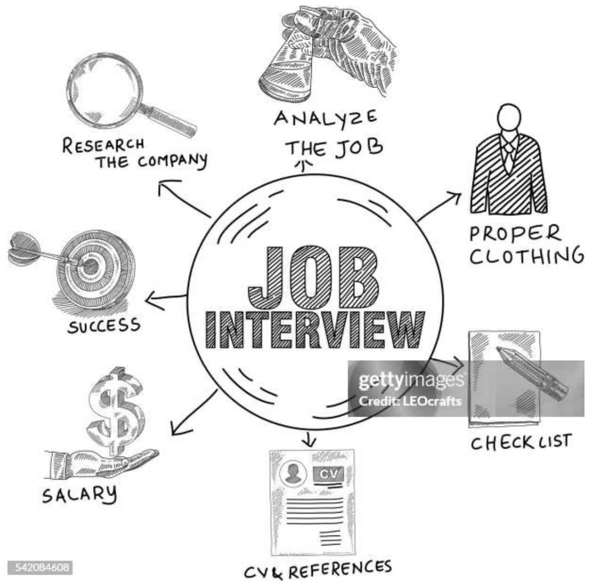
COMPANY-SPECIFIC QUESTIONS

1. What about our clients, products, or approach makes this firm a strong fit for you specifically?
2. Which actuarial track are you leaning toward (P&C/Life/Health/Retirement) and what draws you to it?
3. What would success look like in your first 6–12 months here? How would you measure it?
4. How do we compare to other companies you're considering, and why us now?



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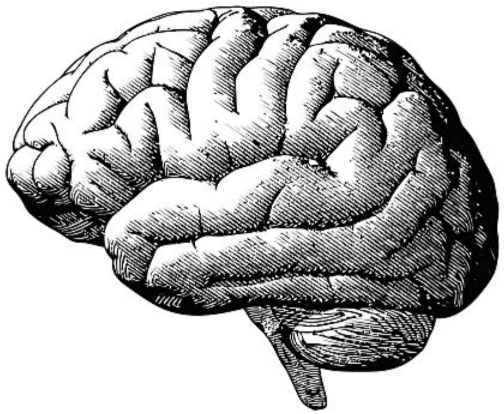
BRAIN-TEASER QUESTIONS

These questions are being asked to assess how you think/your logic & reasoning

1. How many basketball could fit in a bus?
2. How many lbs of fries does a McDonald sell a day?
3. How many diapers are being used in a year?
4. What degree do the minute hand and the hour hand make when the clock is 3:15 PM?



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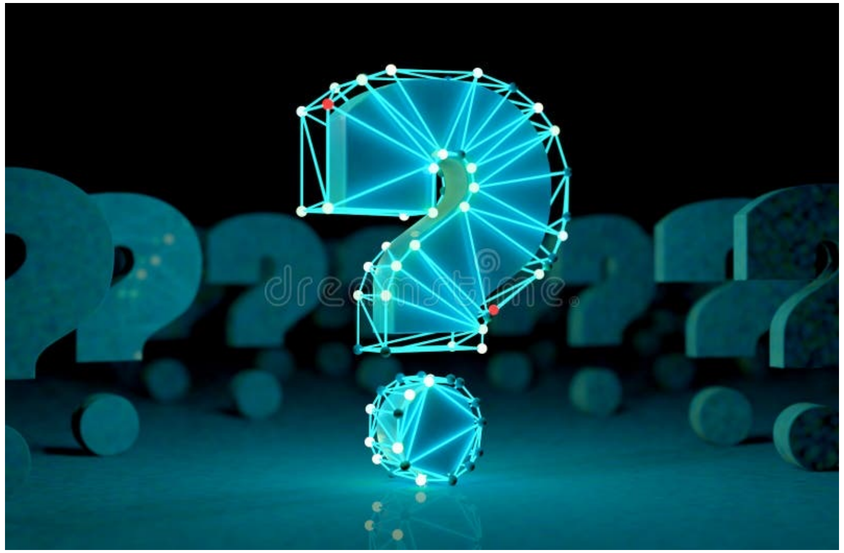
CASE STUDY QUESTIONS

These questions are more actuarial-related. You can look up "Actuarial Case Study Questions"

1. Price a new phone insurance
   - What factors would you take into account?
2. What are some factors that affect the frequency and severity of the auto insurance?
3. What are some factors that you take into consideration when insuring a restaurant?
4. Trend analysis by looking at graphs



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HOW TO MAKE A LONG-LASTING IMPRESSION

THREE THINGS TO REMEMBER

During Your Interview

- Maintain eye contact
- Sit up straight
- Avoid fidgeting or touching hair
- Keep legs still
- Smile and show enthusiasm
- Listen actively
- Speak clearly and confidently

Ask Good Questions

- What does success look like in this role?
- What are the biggest challenges the team is facing?
- How is performance evaluated?
- What does a typical day look like?
- What training or growth opportunities are available?

Post-Interview

- Thank the interviewer for their time
- Ask for their email or LinkedIn to send a thank-you note
- Send a short thank-you email within 24 hours
- Follow up politely if you haven’t heard back by the expected date

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Do your research and know your resume
- Use the STAR method to structure answers
- Dress professionally and show confidence
- Prepare thoughtful questions and Follow-up

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

- *First-Year & International Student Workshop* 10/23 @ SMC (MS 3974)
- *Coaching Actuaries Workshop* 10/28 @ MS 6627
- *Basic Excel Workshop* 10/30 @ MS 6627

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THANK YOU!

Any questions?