



ACE Every Interview

Interviewing for the first time in years can feel overwhelming, especially after building a long and successful career with one organization. The good news: your leadership, adaptability, and transferable business expertise are highly valuable across industries.

The goal of every interview is to help the employer quickly understand how your experience solves their problems.

Before Any Interview

- Review the company, role, and mission so you can connect your background to their needs
- Prepare 3–5 career success stories that show leadership, problem-solving, teamwork, and measurable impact
- Practice a concise professional introduction: who you are, what you've led, and what you're looking for next
- Be ready to explain why your experience in nonprofit, community, youth, operations, HR, finance, customer care, or program leadership transfers well into a new industry
- Focus on confidence, clarity, and outcomes

Phone Interview Tips

- Take the call from a quiet, distraction-free location
- Keep your resume and job description in front of you
- Smile while speaking—it naturally improves tone and confidence
- Keep answers concise and direct (60–90 seconds when possible)
- Listen carefully and pause before responding
- Have 2–3 thoughtful questions prepared

Always lead with confidence & clarity



Virtual Interview Tips

- Test your camera, audio, internet, and meeting link ahead of time
- Use a clean, neutral background with strong lighting
- Dress professionally, just as you would for an in-person meeting
- Maintain eye contact by looking into the camera, not the screen
- Keep notes nearby, but avoid reading word-for-word
- Silence notifications and close extra tabs/windows

In-Person Interview Tips

- Arrive 10–15 minutes early
- Bring printed copies of your resume
- Offer a confident handshake, smile, and strong eye contact
- Be warm, personable, and professional with everyone you meet
- Show enthusiasm for the organization, team, and mission
- Use body language that conveys confidence: sit upright, relaxed, and engaged



Common Questions to Expect

- Tell me about yourself
- Walk me through your background
- Why are you interested in this role?
- Why are you looking to make a change now?
- Tell me about a time you solved a difficult problem
- How have you led teams or influenced change?
- Describe a challenge involving conflict, people leadership, or change management
- What are you looking for in your next opportunity?
- Why are you on the job market?

Remember!

You are not starting over—you are translating years of leadership into a new chapter.

Be proud of your expertise, speak confidently about your strengths, and trust that your experience has tremendous value in both nonprofit and for-profit environments.

Lead with confidence. Be concise. Sell your impact.

How to Talk About Your Career History

- Focus on the business impact behind your experience, not just titles.
- Highlight:
 - leadership of teams, budgets, programs, or operations
 - process improvements and efficiencies
 - growth, retention, revenue, community impact, or customer/member experience
 - stakeholder collaboration and executive communication
 - measurable outcomes and scale
- If moving into a new industry, position yourself as:
 - A strong business leader whose skills in people, process, strategy, service, and execution transfer across environments.



What to Avoid

- Speaking negatively about past employers, leadership, restructuring, or the layoff
- Overexplaining your entire career history in too much detail
- Rambling or giving answers longer than needed
- Sounding unsure about what you want next
- Underselling leadership experience because it came from community-based organizations

Although restructuring, reduction in force and lay offs are difficult times, bring positivity to the interview and focus on the future!



Reach out with any questions:

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