

“So, You Want to Work” Inventory

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The following questions will guide you through an interview that will be focused on employment and the types of work that a student might like. What the student might like to do is only one piece of the puzzle. What skills and what experiences he/she has, and what jobs are available in the local economy are others. The process of getting a job depends on matching what the student brings to the marketplace with what local employers might be looking for. Some personal characteristics simply are essential for success in certain occupations. Another reality of employment is that it is a buyer's market. That means that the employer expects the student to have skills and attributes that are worth the cost. For example, it is a basic expectation that students will show up for work as scheduled.

You can use the following questions as a guide for a structured interview.

You do not need to ask all the questions, but the more that you attempt, the more the student will need to think about work and what might fit his/her talents and needs. **Make sure you match your notes with the number of the question that is being answered.**

You will note that there are no numerical “scores” for each question. They are open ended, and serve the same purpose as “essay questions,” that is, to tease out depth of knowledge and interest as well as emotional and attitudinal issues. You can take any question as far as you think is necessary, and guide the discussion to uncover important related issues.

It is important that the student be honest in his/her answers. Anyone can fudge answers in order to look good, but that does not help anyone, and it wastes a lot of your time. Developing good rapport with the student is a most important first step in conducting the interview. Remember, it is the conversation, the give and take, and the discussion with the student that is important. Think of each question as a chance to open a door to new information.

When you are done with the interview it is important to discuss the interview with the student, providing him/her with initial impressions, and laying the foundation for a more comprehensive review after you have had time to thoroughly review the responses. At that time you might want to go into more detail in specific areas.

The “So, You Want to Work” Inventory

Developed by Dr. Richard Gacka, Ed.D.

Questions

1. Do you really want to work?
2. Are you capable of doing hard physical labor?
3. Are you capable of prolonged physical activity, i.e. standing, climbing, lifting?
4. Are you able to report to an assignment at a given time 5 days per week with minimal absences?
5. Can you accept supervision and being monitored?
6. Can you get along with other workers and interact with them?
7. Do you have any technical skills or unique knowledge that employers would like to buy?
8. Are there any specific tools or machines that you know how to operate/use?
9. Can you read the daily paper without difficulty?
10. Do you have any health problems that would cause you to be absent from work?
11. Are there any problems at home that would cause you to be absent from work?
12. Do you drive and have access to a car?
13. Will you work for less than \$8 per hour?
14. Are you currently using drugs?
15. Is it likely that you would miss work because of alcohol use?
16. Are you currently taking any medications that would prevent you from operating certain machinery?
17. Can you work any shift, any days of the week?
18. Do you have at least a high school diploma or GED?

19. Are you currently on parole?
20. Have you ever been convicted of any serious crime?
21. Are you receiving any mental health monitoring, treatment or counseling?
22. Do you like to be around people or would you rather work by yourself?
23. Do you like to work with your hands or would you rather talk and use words?
24. Do you like unstructured work or do you prefer to have a set routine?
25. Do you like to have to solve problems or would you prefer to have a set list of things to do?
26. Do you like to read or would you prefer to communicate by talking?
27. Are you clumsy or are you coordinated?
28. Do you like to work in groups or do you prefer to work alone?
29. Do you like to sell things or would you prefer to have people come to you?
30. Do you like to draw or paint?
31. Do you like to fix or build things?
32. Do you like to be outdoors in all seasons?
33. Do you like to figure out solutions to problems or fix things that are broken?
34. Are you good at science and math?
35. Do you like to be around children, the elderly or individuals with disabilities?
36. Do you like to help people?
37. Are you shy or self-conscious?
38. Do you have a short temper or are you patient with people?

39. Do you like to discuss, debate or verbally try to persuade people to agree with you?
40. Are you good at doing basic math in your head?
41. Do you like to cook?
42. Do you like to be around animals?
43. Have you ever been fired from a job?
44. Are you able to find jobs but then have trouble keeping them?
45. Do you like to write?
46. Can you type?
47. Do you operate a computer and can you run applications software such as Microsoft Office?
48. Do you like to drive?
49. Can you use the Internet to find things, buy things, schedule trips, etc.?
50. Are there any family issues that might result in your needing to be absent from work?
51. Do you currently hold any degrees or certificates that you earned from prior schooling?
52. Would you like a job where you would travel out of town?
53. Do you have good phone skills and a pleasant voice and phone manner?
54. Would you prefer to stay in the background and be left alone to do your work?
55. Do you like to take charge and to determine how things should be done?
56. Are you nervous and afraid to try new things?
57. Do you have any experience with construction and home repairs?
58. Are you good at managing money?

59. Do you have any musical talent?
60. Would you like to work in a health care facility, a hospital or dental clinic?
61. Would you like to care for a sick person in his/her home?
62. Would you like to sell cars?
63. Would you like to work on a farm?
64. Do you like to read?
65. Do you like to take things apart, even if you might not be able to put it back together?
66. Do you like hunting, fishing or camping?
67. Do you like to participate in group sports (such as softball) or individual sports (such as cycling)?
68. Are you very overweight?
69. Do you like to watch movies and television?
70. Do you like to clean and do housework?
71. Would you like to work in a kitchen or serve food?
72. Do you like clothing and fashion?
73. Do you like to go to bars and socialize?
74. Would you like a job that is known for being dangerous such as a firefighter, police officer, etc.?
75. Have you ever played organized sports?
76. Have you ever played in a band?
77. Can you speak a language in addition to English?
78. Do you pay attention to details? Do you like things to be just right?

79. Could you call people on the phone that you have never met and try to sell something to them?
80. What kinds of jobs have you had that you really liked?
81. What kinds of jobs have you had that you did not like?
82. Would you like a job that involved working in a church or religious organization?
83. Do you have good fine motor coordination (able to pick up small pieces or put small parts together without dropping them?)
84. Would you like to work with wood?
85. Would you like to work in a large factory running a machine?
86. Do you like office work such as typing, filing, mailing, copying, etc.?
87. Can you sing or dance?
88. Would you like to be a classroom aide, counselor or therapist?
89. Would you like to work for a government agency in a job such as a mailman or a park ranger?
90. Do you like to study and go to school?

Thank the student for completing the inventory and take a few minutes to give an overall “snapshot” of your impressions. Structure your comments so that they open the door for ongoing discussions. The more useful you make the feedback that you provide, the more likely that the student will continue showing an interest in his/her career planning. You might provide some brochures or web references, but emphasize that the really important future contacts will be face-to-face.

Note: I would appreciate feedback relative to the usefulness and viability of this interview guide. Other formats such as a student self-report are being reviewed. You can e-mail feedback to ldconsultants@mac.com. For other reading material dealing with learning differences and classroom adaptations please visit <http://www.drgacka.com/>.
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