

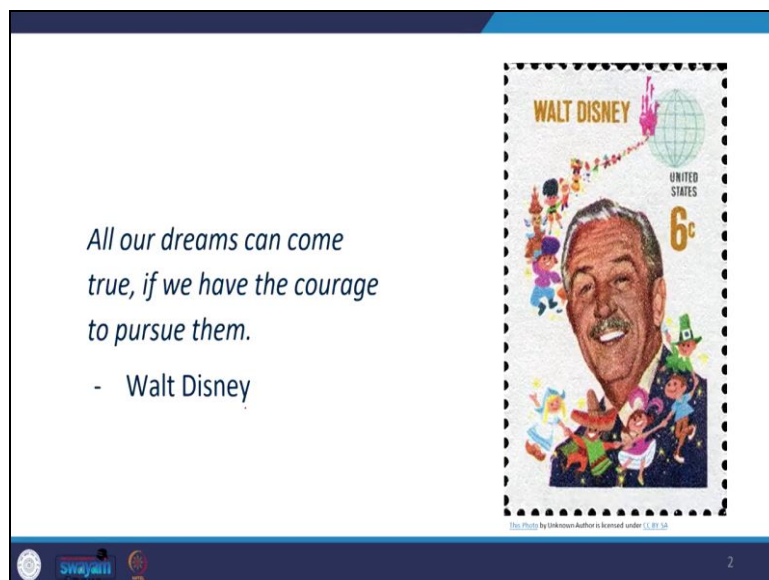
**Public Speaking**  
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**Lecture: 40**  
**Preparing for Interviews**

Good morning friends and welcome back to NPTEL online certification course on Public Speaking. My dear friends in the last two lectures we have talked about the various forms of interview but one thing that all of us must remember is that in order to succeed at interviews, it is actually the preparation that must be given priority to because every now and then you find that there are so, many applicants and so many applications.

But the one who gets the job is the person who is best prepared and there is only a little bit of difference between the person who has been selected and the person who has been left. So, in this lecture we are going to talk about what are the various ways to prepare in such a manner for an interview so that one can succeed despite all the odds. Now let us take a quote by Walt Disney before we start the various ways to prepare for our interview.

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“All our dreams can come true if we have the courage to pursue them.” Who does not want a job, who does not want a committed job, who does not want to succeed? But success does not depend simply by seeing dreams, rather we have to translate these dreams into reality.

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## Introduction

- Interviews are a space for showcasing your qualifications, ability and skills.
- The idea is “to sell yourself” in the job market.
- The candidate is both the product and the seller.
- The candidate should express sound knowledge of his capabilities and the company’s need where s/he is applying for a vacant position.



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Now let us try to have some amount of introduction before we go for the preparation. Now, we all understand that interviews are actually the opportunities to showcase our qualifications, our abilities, and our skills that we have already discussed in the previous lectures too. Now how to do that? Many of us might be under the impression that we need to sell ourselves in the job market, fine and of course, that is true also.

You have the capability but unless and until the other party comes to know about the hidden spots the hidden qualities within you, you cannot be recruited. So, the candidate is both the product and also the seller. You are not only going to sell yourself but you are also going to sell the product that is within you, the qualities that is that are within you. So, what a candidate should do is--- he should actually express his sound knowledge of whatever he knows of his capabilities.

And also how he or his abilities match the company's needs where they are actually applying for a vacant position. Now, here you can find there are certain qualities that most of the candidates must possess. One has to be a leader, one has to have the knowledge, one has to be a team player one has to have strengths. One should also have the ability are to stand true despite all odds. One should also be willing to adapt oneself to different sort of situations and one should also be ready or to take any responsibility that one is given to from time to time.

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Now let us talk about the preparation. And we will do it in a very systematic manner, fine. So, in a stepwise manner--- what is the first step. Of course, the first step all of you must be our thinking is to find out the vacancies the opportunities. Now, when you have done that you must weigh yourself, you must try to understand the capabilities that matches with the description of the job that is why job description analysis.

When you apply for a position you must understand what are actually the expectations of this job if these are the expectations am I eligible for this position. And even if I am eligible, have I done enough research about the organization. What actually are the products that the organization deals in? What actually are the qualities that the organization looks for what actually are the skills that are required to prove oneself the best despite the odds? And then when all these you have researched.

Now is the time to anticipate the questions to think of the questions beforehand because you know when you know all these things about an organization you actually can frame questions. The recruiters do not ask questions which some way or the other are not related to do, otherwise they should not require your CV and of course your subject knowledge is a must because that is your core competency.

So, revise your subject knowledge and then please develop an interview file. In an interview file, you can keep all sorts of documents, any new thing that has been devised in your area, any new development, any new research but meaning thereby you must update yourself with the latest pieces of information in your area.

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Now the time is coming when you are well prepared. Now, you are going for the job interview, is not it? So, when you go for the job interview I think you know beforehand what you as an individual, as a prospective job seeker should get yourself prepared for. Now you are going to approach the interview board. Of course, you will have your resume with you. It is all but said that when you approach the interview board.

Please try to anticipate that there can be four or five people who will be asking questions. So, let there be from your side a revised updated resume, which can also have the references of people and then you have already anticipated so many questions that you can be asked. You have made a proper grooming of yourself meaning thereby you have dressed yourself properly, fine. Because what matters is the first impression that we have already discussed because it is the first impression that is going to be the last impression.

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## Job description analysis

- Search for talking points in the job description.
- Make notes on those key points relevant to your achievements and experiences.
- Pick out stories from the past that will support you to impress the selection team.

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Now when you are going to prepare for a job interview, as I said earlier, you must understand the job description. Now when you start looking for the job description, most of you will get some cues from the advertisements and from the websites of the organizations. So, search for talking points in the job description. There are certain things that are already indicated and if you know them beforehand then you can weigh your own energies capabilities, abilities skills.

And so, you must make a note of all the key points which are relevant to your achievements how you will or how you are the best fit. How you are going to fill this slot? It is always said that one can pick up stories from the past that will support you to impress the selection team. Now imagine that the recruiters want to find out the leader in you and naturally if the position is of a leadership one so you can refer to. Even during your student days you might have conducted certain debates competitions sometimes all the other you might have held certain positions as the class monitor representative coordinator of certain events. So, all these can support your candidature for becoming or for showcasing your talent as a leader.

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## Self-assessment before Interview

Self-assessment before the interview helps the candidate to become aware of their:

- Strengths
- Weaknesses
- Eligibilities
- Goals
- Interests

Through such self-assessment, one can choose to highlight their pros and downplay their cons during the interview process.

Now should we not do a sort of self-assessment before interview of course one should. Because most of the questions come from your CV already resume. So, self-assessment before the interview can help a candidate becoming conscious or aware of certain things. What are my strengths? Everyone knows what his or her strengths are what are my weaknesses, where do I fall short of.

But remember one thing even when in a job interview when you are asked about your weaknesses, please show your weaknesses as one of the strengths meaning thereby, if you can say I often get finicky when I feel that I am not going to meet the deadlines. I mean, even though the sentence appears to be negative but then there is some positivity hidden within. Meaning thereby you actually are very sincere and when you start feeling that you will not be able to, perhaps you actually realize.

So, it is a sort of realization and then your eligibility, your goals---- both your long-term short-term goals, your interests, your hobbies. These are some of the areas which can help you assess yourself. Through your self-assessment, you can choose to highlight your pros and cons and downplay their cons during the interview process. So, this is very important. So, if you can analyze yourself, if you can analyze your own strengths, weaknesses your goals interests likes, dislikes preferences---- all these can help you go a long way.

And it will actually boost your confidence before you go to appear at the interview. Now, one can also prepare a sort of questionnaire is not it. Self-assessment questionnaire, fine. Where, when it comes to your strengths you can talk about what are your greater strengths. Why do

you consider them to be greater fine what are your shortcomings or weaknesses. How can you overcome your weaknesses and then what are your capabilities and how you are eligible are you the right fit for this job?

What are actually your short-term goals and what are your long-term goals? Sometimes all the other they may ask you a question where do you want to see yourself after 5 years after 10 years. Sometimes they may also ask you about your short-term and long-term goals and then as regards your interests,

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**Self-assessment Questionnaire**

Answering these questions shall help an individual to introspect themselves and handle the same questions efficiently when asked during the interview.

- Strengths**
  - What are your greatest strengths? Why do you consider them so?
- Weakness**
  - What are your weaknesses? How do you plan to overcome them?
- Eligibility**
  - How do you think that you are the right fit for this job?
- Goals**
  - Where do you want to be in five year?
  - What are your short term/ long term goals?
- Interests**
  - What courses did you enjoy learning?
  - Tell me about the project which helped you grow in this field?

they may also ask what courses did you enjoy learning do you have some specific or advanced course in language if it if you are a man of computer they can also ask you what sort of computer courses which are really going to sell can you offer if given a chance to provide training to our people inside the organization. Now,, when you are going to have such a questionnaire then answering these questions can help you to introspect yourself.

One can introspect. I often tell people that one should also try to introspect from the questions that one was asked in some of the previous interviews, where he or she could not make himself successful. Because from those lapses also one can learn a lot. Then comes researching about the company fine. So, how can because when we go for a job naturally we simply I know that if it is a walk-in interview. Or if it is an interview where you have been called you simply go unprepared. But before that it is always better and advisable that you make some research about the organization. What are its mission what are the values what are the services that this company offers? You can also check the news section you will find that

in most of the organizations on their websites they actually make a mention of what they have done and what they are going to do.

Future prospects, future goals, fine? These will help you express your interests in their company because you will be able to be since you are going to discover in yourself those qualities. So, that can also help you create a sort of rapport through conversation.

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### Background research about the Company

1. Refer to the company/organisation's website to learn about its mission, vision, core values, services and projects.
2. Check the news section about the company's recent developments and milestones.
3. These steps shall help you express your interests in their company and build a rapport with them through conversation.
4. Make sure you know the fundamentals about the company's location, market value, reputation, current projects, culture etc.



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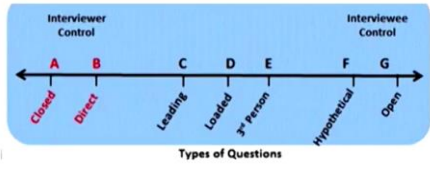
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Also, ensure that you know the fundamentals about the company's location market value reputation current projects and cultures. So, if you can do a little bit of research about the company that is actually going to help you a lot, my dear friends.

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### Types of Questions Expected

1. Open questions
2. Closed questions
3. Probing questions
4. Reflective questions
5. Loaded questions
6. Hypothetical questions
7. Leading questions



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Now most of you might be thinking about the types of questions. What sort of questions they are going to ask? If you are an experienced one and you have appeared at several interviews, then you might be able to frame some of the questions yourself but let us try to understand the nature of questions. The nature of questions can be that as I said earlier also that initially they try to make you very comfortable, is not it?

They try to make you very comfortable so they can put you some open questions some open questions. In open questions you can express yourself you can communicate and they are having a strict watch on your communicative abilities. Then comes closed questions, closed questions are usually questions where the answer can be either in the form of yes or no. But remember even after closed questions there can be a follow up question either it is yes or no, you must also anticipate follow up questions.

Then probing questions. Now probing questions are those questions where they try to discover your opinion--- How do you respond to the opening of so many AIIMS in different part of the countries? So, many IITs and IIMs in different part of the countries? Fine, sometimes they may also ask some reflective questions sometimes they may also try to probe your opinion by asking do you really think that students' participation in student politics is advisable, fine?

I mean such questions actually are prompted or aimed at knowing the opinion of people. Then there are reflective questions then there are loaded questions, in loaded questions there is some amount of ambiguity where they can say: Why do you think our company is the best of all companies working in the area of chip making is not it? Sometimes, they can put some hypothetical questions we have referred to some such questions in the previous lecture.

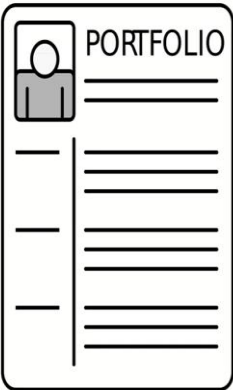
Suppose they actually provide you an imaginary situation and can create such situations where they actually want to know your initiatives these are called hypothetical questions. It is based totally on hypothesis, fine? And then, leading questions leading questions are also loaded questions sometimes they also ask questions uh through which they actually want to trouble you. Say for example are you alcoholic. Now, imagine do you ever expect such a question.

So you drink a moderate amount of alcohol fine. So, such questions we often do not expect sometimes if a female candidate is asked what is your maiden name? This can be a sort of embarrassing questions but please see to it that in such situations, one has to maintain one's cool composer and give a very balanced answer.

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### Developing Interview File

- A solid coloured (black/ brown) leather file with an ample number of holders is suggested.
- Make sure that the *resume* is placed first for easy reference.
- Curate your certificate (educational, professional and extracurricular) for verification purposes.
- Letter of recommendation (LoR) usually comes in handy for job interviews.
- Always have a copy of original documents in case of emergency.

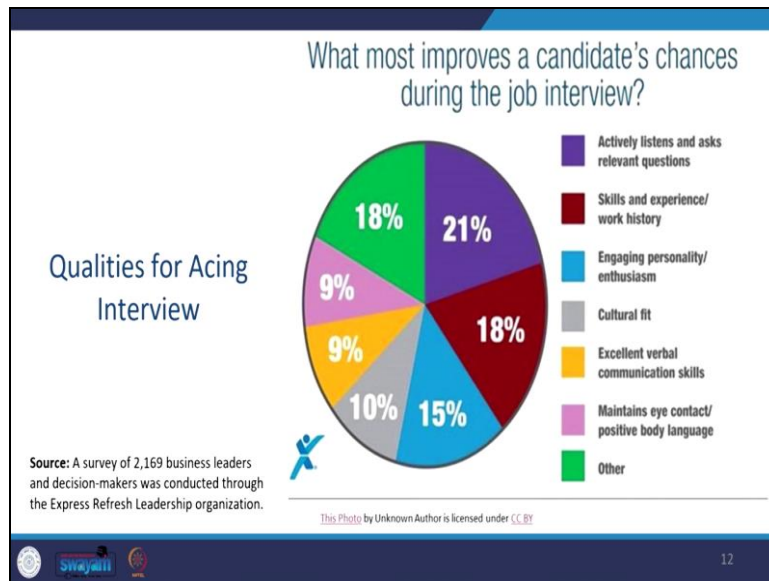


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Now when one is going to develop an interview file what should be there? In most of the cases most of the prospective job seekers, they actually ah develop a solid coloured leather file having so many folders and holders, where they put their resumes, some record of their achievements mark sheets, fine? Sometimes, their participation certificates in conferences and then sometimes the letter of recommendation references.

So, having all these and see to it that once must always have the original documents with oneself because at times they may ask for it. Nowadays though everyone actually makes a lot of inquiry about a candidate they are going to call for interview but then it is nonetheless bad to have a sort of interview file where you can keep all these documents. Now having discussed all these nature of questions you might be thinking as to what can improve a candidate's chance of success during the job interview.

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Now, here you can find that there is a sort of graph which actually says and it is in varied colours you can find that 21% credit is given to one who actively listens, and also asks relevant questions. So, in order to ace the interview, you must know all these things. Then 18% is given to your skills and experience and work history, another 15% is devoted to personality, because some of the questions which are asked they actually try to explore some of the hidden qualities of your personality and then what sort of communicator you are, fine.

9% so they say that one must have verbal communication abilities and then how long can you maintain eye contact. Because you know during the time of the interview you are not only to sell yourself verbally but also non-verbally. And how much during the time you maintain a positive body language that is also 9% and then there are others which come in person. So, maybe that are related to your educational qualification, your behavioural aspects and then your initiatives and all.

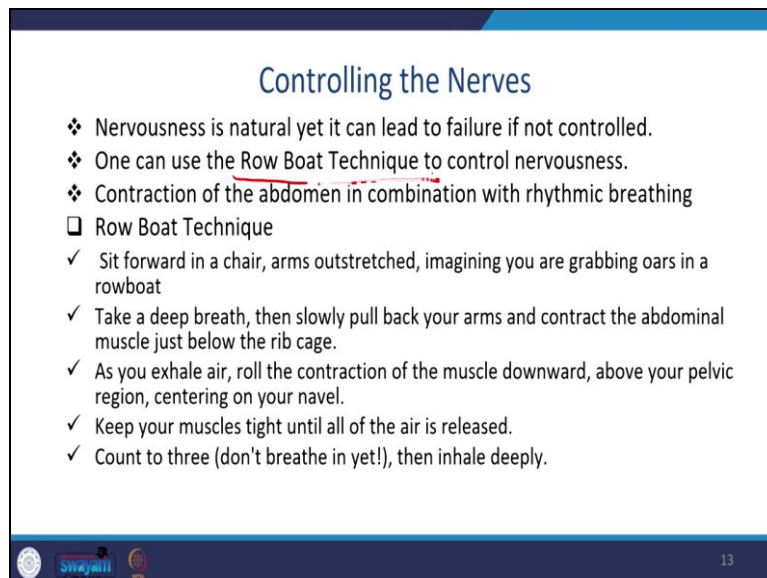
My dear friends, as I said in the beginning uh that recruiters also go to employ a person who can be the best fit for their organizations. One of the recruiters comment you can take here where he says that I always prefer a candidate with a pledge and smile and better communicative abilities than having a high CGPA meaning thereby performance is a must. But my dear friends, while one tries to perform a lot what happens only the name interview actually puts many people under pressure.

And they become too nervous, my dear friends and this nervousness if it is displayed because you know as we have said in the lecture on non-verbal that however hard you try you cannot

hide your facial expressions. So, your nervousness is written all over your body, how to overcome. Let us think because in one of the lectures on Glossophobia we have already discussed a lot about how to control the anxiety of speech because during interviews as a form of public speaking one needs to speak.

So, let us try to understand that nervousness is natural yet it can lead to failure if it is not controlled. For that though we have discussed some of the techniques and we have said that nervousness is natural and when we are going to face an unfamiliar crowd or unfamiliar group, what happens in our body is there is actually a sort of adrenaline surge. But then try to have the advantage of this adrenaline surge which can pump you with extra energy.

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**Controlling the Nerves**

- ❖ Nervousness is natural yet it can lead to failure if not controlled.
- ❖ One can use the Row Boat Technique to control nervousness.
- ❖ Contraction of the abdomen in combination with rhythmic breathing
- Row Boat Technique
  - ✓ Sit forward in a chair, arms outstretched, imagining you are grabbing oars in a rowboat
  - ✓ Take a deep breath, then slowly pull back your arms and contract the abdominal muscle just below the rib cage.
  - ✓ As you exhale air, roll the contraction of the muscle downward, above your pelvic region, centering on your navel.
  - ✓ Keep your muscles tight until all of the air is released.
  - ✓ Count to three (don't breathe in yet!), then inhale deeply.

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However, one can always use a row boat technique to control nervousness. Now what is this row boat technique. Imagine if you are on other seas or in the river and if you have seen boating what actually the boatsman does? The boats man actually rows. So, based on this as a candidate also, you can practice a row boat technique, where what one can do is once always practice this in advance. Sit straight in a chair let your arms be outstretched, imagining as if you are grabbing the oars in a row boat and then take a deep breath, then slowly pull back your arms and contract your abdominal muscle because this nervousness results only of the abdominal surge. So, contract the abdominal muscle just below the rib cage and when you do that then as you exhale air as you let the air come out roll the contraction of the muscle downward above your pelvic region centering on your navel.

And also you need to keep your muscles tight until all the air has been released, this will actually provide you with a sort of relaxation and you will feel better. So, if you can do that, then count to three and while you have released, do not breathe in yet and then inhale deeply. Now even though this appears to be a very complicated technique many of you might say that what if this nervousness occurs during interview.

Even during interview also, you can practice without the notice of the others because you are sitting in the chair and you can take deep breaths and then you can simply let the air come out and then you will feel a sort of relaxation and then that will boost your confidence, my dear friends.

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### Active Listening and Effective Questioning

- Interview is a two-way communication.
- It is a dialogue between the interviewer and the interviewee.
- Thus, it becomes imperative to listen and reflect for engaging in an effective conversation.
- Employ 'inquisitive listening and strategic listening.'
- Active listening helps to reflect with practical questions through which one can impress the interviewer.

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Now throughout the interview a candidate has to practice active listening and effective questioning. It is not that as a candidate you cannot ask questions. So, interview as we have been saying and discussing that it is actually a two-way process, fine. It is actually a dialogue between the interviewer and the interviewee. So, as a candidate what is expected of you is to listen throughout actively.

And reflect for engaging in an effective conversation. At times it has been seen that many candidates they actually do not wait for the complete question and they become so excited and eager that they start answering the question. No, that should not be there. One should listen to the question carefully one should also try to employ inquisitive listening and strategic listening, fine. When you listen thoroughly, you will be able to understand the

nature of the question which can actually allow you prompt you to answer in the most confident manner.


Active listening helps to reflect with practical questions through which one can impress the interviewer. And you know, the interviewers can be impressed just in the beginning by your decorum buy or bearing fine by your behaviour and later on also the way you answer the questions. So, here in this figure you can find that when we talk about active listening there are scopes of clarification.

There actually people are observing your non-verbal behaviour uh they can also from time to time signal you at times you may also feel that you are being encouraged but all these are actually tantrums to make you feel comfortable.

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**Acquired Skills for Interview**

- ❖ Interpersonal skills
  - ❖ Communication
  - ❖ Team work
  - ❖ Problem-solving
- ❖ Negotiation Skills
- ❖ Formal Writing Skills
- ❖ Vocational Training
- ❖ Computer Programming
- ❖ Other Technical Skills



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Now what are actually the skills that one should acquire for being successful in an interview? Interpersonal skills one must know the skill to talk to one and to so many. That is why interview is also a form of public speaking. One must be a very good communicator maybe one is not an excellent one, but then one must know how to state one's thoughts one's knowledge clearly. Then one must always be ready to display one's teamwork ability.

One must have the problem solving ability, one should also know negotiation skills, one is also expected to display formal writing skills, vocational training computer programming other technical skills. My dear friends, all these skills can be learnt and as students if you are

thinking of going for interviews. Now is the time that you started acquiring these skills, there are some skills that can be acquired.

There are other skills which are inherent in you but even those skills can be learnt. Nothing is impossible nowadays. And one must never think that there are only a few opportunities. Opportunities are galore you never know when one door closes, when the other will open. Now when you have done all these acquired all these skills and the D-day is very near. The day when your destiny is going to begin a new phase I mean the date of the interview what should one do.

I mean despite the fact that you have armed yourself with the knowledge with the skills there are certain little acts. There are certain little pointers that one should keep into consideration.

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The slide is titled "Things to do a day before interview" in a blue font. It features a checklist of seven items, each preceded by a checkmark. To the right of the text is a cartoon illustration of two stick figures sitting at a table. The figure on the left is speaking, and a speech bubble above them says "We're looking for someone who is responsible." Below the illustration is a small text credit: "This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under CC BY". At the bottom of the slide, there are logos for Swayam and other institutions, and the number "16" in the bottom right corner.

### Things to do a day before interview

- ✓ Make a thorough research about the organization and also the position.
- ✓ Plan to sell yourself both verbally and non-verbally.
- ✓ Arrange the formal dress for the occasion of the interview. Well pressed, neat and clean.
- ✓ Ensure to wear formal leather shoes making them well-polished.
- ✓ Keep your interview file close and safe, along with the call letter for the interview.
- ✓ Arrive early and familiarize yourself with the interview centre.
- ✓ Anticipate questions and their answers.

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You have already done a thorough research about the organization and also the position that you have applied for. You must also decide how you can sell yourself both verbally and non-verbally. Please see to it that you dress yourself very formally for the occasion of the interview and in this regard colour is very important. Please choose those colours which are not pinching to the eyes of interviewers.

Go for dark suits, navy blue pants, go for colours which are sober and in terms of your decorum and in terms of your entire physical feature see to it that right from your toe to the top, you appear to be prepared you are completely immaculate. One must wear former leather

shoes and that ought to be well- polished because you know this also reflects in a way your concern your sincerity.

If you are having an interview file, have it safely along with the call letter and then now when since it is the day of the interview, it is always better not to take any risks and arrive or reach the interview center well before time. Last minute hurry will always result in a sort of worry. So, arrive early and familiarize yourself with the ambience with the center and you might have already anticipated questions and also their answers.

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The slide is titled "Interviewers' Expectations" and features a list of ten traits on the left and a circular diagram on the right. The list includes: I- Intelligence, N- Negotiation, T- Timeliness, E- Enthusiasm, R- Reasoning, V- Versatility, I- Innovation, E- Earnestness, and W- Well-rounded. The circular diagram contains the following traits: Personality, Communication Skills, Self-confidence, Objective, Competence, General Awareness, Intelligence, and Consistency. The slide also includes a Swayam logo and the number 17 in the bottom right corner.

Now you might also be thinking what are actually the expectations of the interviewers for every word in the interview I have given a clue: intelligence, negotiation, timeliness, enthusiasm, reasoning, versatility, I mean in terms of skills-- innovation in terms of idea, earnestness, what a sort of integrity do you possess and are you a well-rounded personality? Can you adapt yourself to the changing scenario?

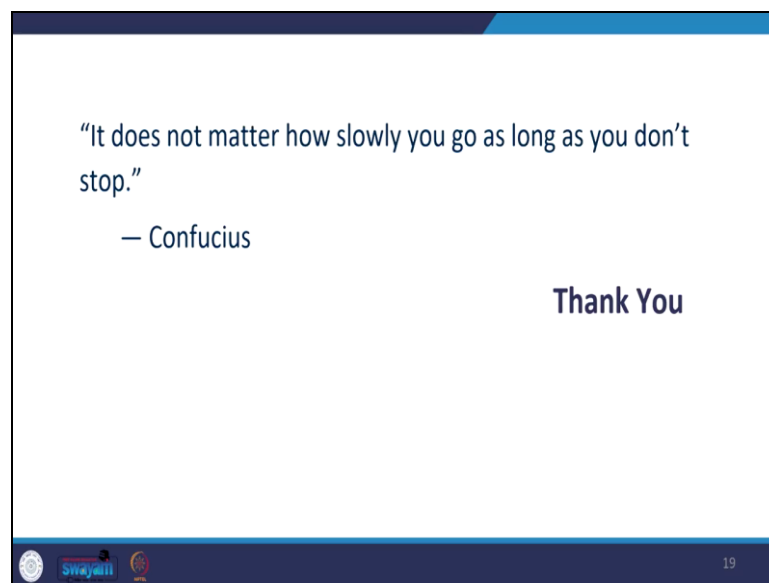
Now there can be questions through some other areas as such your personality your communication skills, your confidence your objective of life your competence your general awareness as to what is happening where and what new developments have taken place in the area and then, of course, intelligence and how consistency can be gauged right from your CV to your real performance.

If you have done all the homework much before you appear on the day of the interview, I can ensure that success is bound to impress you and embrace you despite all sorts of odds, my



dear friends. Through all sorts of interviews, we find that actually the recruiters also want a candidate to be recruited it is not that they do not want candidates to be selected what is actually at the core of their mind is that they should select the candidate, who can prove with their abilities experience and their skill sets the best among all the applicants who had been shortlisted. My dear friends, if you keep all these things into consideration, I am quite hopeful that you will make your destiny. So, having said that, it is time now to end this lecture but on a very optimistic note and that actually is from Confucius, a Chinese philosopher.

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who says—"It does not matter how slowly you go as long as you do not stop". What is the implication? At times, it may appear that lucky is not in your favour despite all your hard efforts. The doors of success do not open for you but that does not and that should not rather disappoint you, you may be slow but you need not stop. We always remember that slow and steady always wins the race and you are going to win the race with grace, with face, with knowledge, with your objective, and with your commitment.

So, the time has come to wind up this talk and I offer you all sorts of hopes and good wishes for your future interview. And in the next lecture, we shall talk about how to face the job interview. So, with this let me come to wind up this talk. Thank you very much have a nice day.