

The Apprenticeship Interview: Information for Applicants



ORANGE COUNTY ELECTRICAL TRAINING INSTITUTE

Congratulations!

You have qualified to be interviewed for an electrical apprenticeship. The oral interview is an important step in the application process.

This handout provides information about the interview process- information that will help you in preparing for the interview.

It addresses several questions you are likely to have about the interview process, such as:

- *How long will the interview last?*
- *Who will interview me?*
- *What kinds of questions will be asked?*
- *Can I do anything to prepare for the interview?*
- *What happens after the interview?*

10 Minutes

Most interviews take no longer than 10 minutes. The interviewers will want you to do most of the talking, but you should try to make your point efficiently. When you are asked a question, organize your thoughts and answer the question completely. Keep to the topic; avoid straying into irrelevant subjects.

The Committee

You will be interviewed by a committee composed of representatives of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) and the National Electrical Contractors Association (NECA).

The Committee members are highly experienced electrical professionals. They are aware of the knowledge, skills, abilities, and other characteristics that individuals need to be successful electrical workers.

The interview team usually consists between four (4) to eight (8) Committee members. In all likelihood, each Committee member will take turns asking you questions during the interview.

Interview Questions

The actual interview questions are confidential, but we can tell you a lot about the types of questions that will be asked. The Committee will be asking you questions about how you have handled situations in your life that are relevant to success in apprenticeship. They will want to know the situation, what you did, and the result, when you were faced with these situations at work, in school, or at home.

Here is an example of the types of questions asked. This sample question is taken from a clerical worker interview: "Tell me about a time when you had to set up and type a document."

Remember, your response to these questions should have the following three parts:

1. *The situation.* First, you should very briefly describe the situation. Usually the situation can be described in a sentence or two.
2. *What you did.* Second, describe the actions you took-what you did, what you made, who you talked to, what you said-in that situation. Use action verbs and first person, such as-"I wrote," "I called," "I discussed," and so on.
3. *The result.* Finally, tell the committee how it turned out. It should only take a sentence or two to describe the result.

An example of a complete response to the question "Tell me about a time when you had to set up and type a document" appears below:

Situation: My boss asked me to set up and type a complicated document with headers and footers. I had never used headers or footers before.

Action: I obtained a copy of the software manual and read about using headers and footers. Then, I set up the document and gave my boss an example page to look at before I developed the whole document.

Result: My boss edited the example I gave him and liked the final document when I was finished.

Interview Tips

- Don't spend too much time on a question.
- When asked about your previous experiences, describe (a) the situation you encountered, (b) what you did in that situation, and (c) how it turned out.
- Avoid irrelevant topics. Focus on the questions that the committee asks.
- Speak clearly and loudly enough for the committee to hear and understand you.
- Relax, Relax, Relax. The interview is not an interrogation. It *is* simply an opportunity for you to meet and speak with the Apprenticeship Committee.
- Get a good night's rest the day before and put your best foot forward during your interview.

Interview Preparation

The interview contains questions about how you have handled situations that are relevant to occupational success. To prepare for the interview, make a list of jobs you have had, special projects that you have worked on at school or at home, and extracurricular activities that you have participated in. Be prepared to discuss your hobbies, your interests, activities you enjoy, as well as, those you have no interest in. Before the interview, review your list of activities. Think about situations that stand out in your mind because you did something that you are particularly proud of; you learned an important lesson; or you had to respond to a real challenge. Thinking about situations you have encountered in the past will help you respond to the Committee's questions. It will also help minimize stress during the interview.

After the Interview

After the interview, you will receive an email from the Orange County Joint Apprenticeship and Training Committee (JATC) informing that your name will remain on an active list for possible selection into the apprenticeship. Feel free to reach out to us either by email, info@ocett.org, or by calling us at (714) 245-9988 in order to find out where you are ranked on the Pool of Eligible (POE) list. Please keep in mind, selections are not always made immediately following the interview. Very often, several months may pass before actual selections are made.