

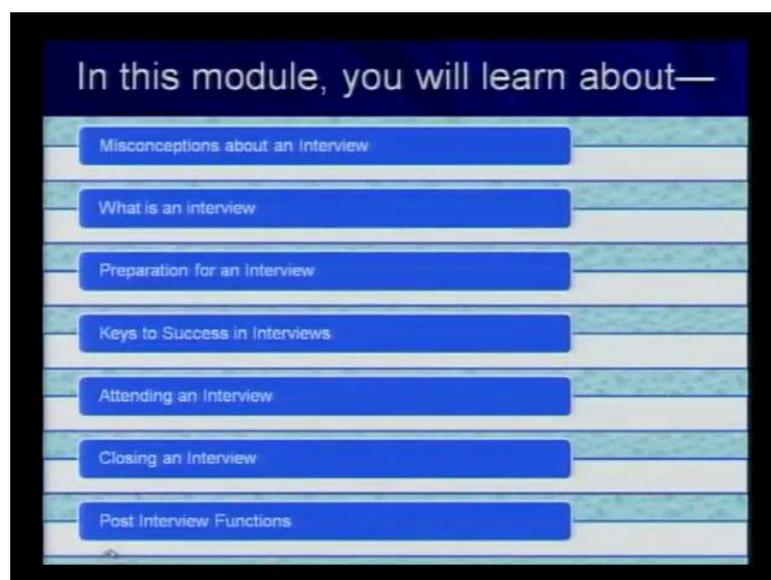
Communication Skills
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Module #8
Lecture - 3
Interview Skills

Hello and welcome to NPTEL's course on communication skills. We are now on a very interesting module. This is on interview skills. This is module number eight and lecture number three. Already, you have the opportunity to listen to two lectures on interview skills. This is series of lectures on interview skills and this module is completely focused on interview skills. In the previews, the previews that I gave and the lectures that we had previously, I already talked about the misconceptions with regards to interview.

I just made it very clear that mere good resume, mere marks; mere looks are not the ones which are going to guarantee success in interview. Then, I was just saying that you have to go for something plus such as the soft skills, communication skills and basically the interview skills. Then, I started discussing with you as what is an interview.

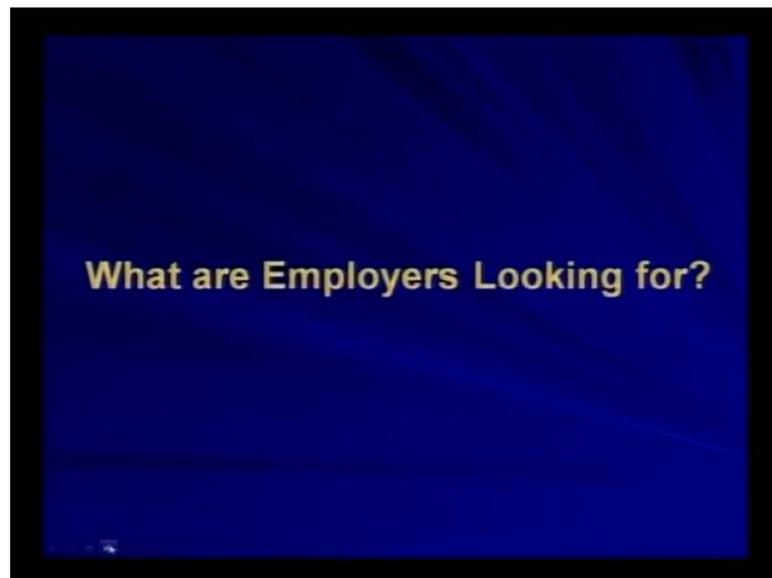
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What are the basic components, what is the purpose and what are they actually doing? While doing that, I also tried to psyche you up. Then, I talked about how you can overcome your fear in terms of attending an interview and what kind attitude, the right attitude, the positive frame of mind that you should have while attending the interview. Before doing that, I said that you should go for three Ps if you really want to have peace of mind, before, after, during the interview process. The three Ps comprise of plan, prepare and practice.

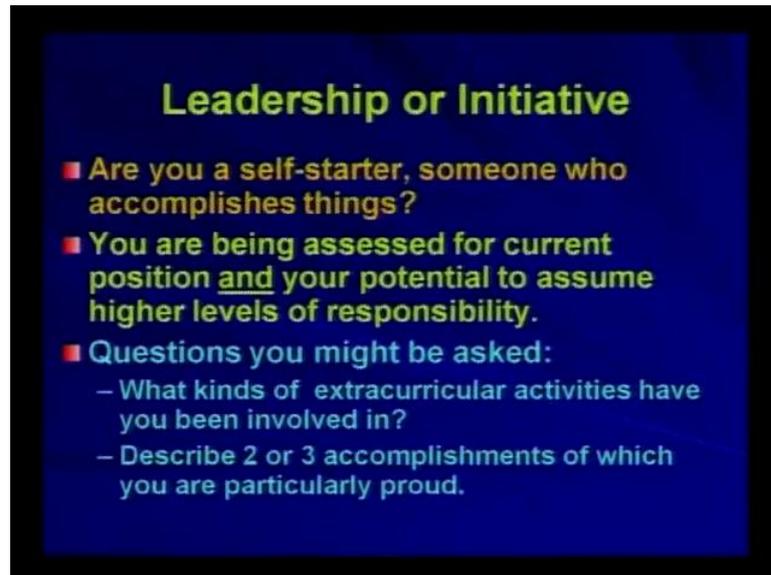
So, to start with, in the first two lectures, we talked about planning and in the second one, exactly I started discussing about preparation. In preparation, I also told you what kind of questions that you should prepare for and what is at that the company is looking for? Now, the company is basically looking for your sound knowledge in the subject.

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Now, apart from that thorough knowledge, which I spent lot of time in the previous lecture...

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...the company is also looking for leadership or initiative, your ability to show either overtly the leadership qualities or at least potential for leadership qualities. Then, your ability to take initiative is something that they are actually looking for. So, what kind of questions that they will be having in mind? They would like to know whether you are a self-starter, are you a self-starter, someone who accomplishes things on your own without expecting somebody to goad you to do things, without expecting that somebody will come with the carrot or the stick, either to reward or punish and then you get motivated, without having some external agent.

Do you have that in you intrinsically? This is what they are looking for. Then, this is done by assessing you for the current position. Do you have enough leadership qualities manifested in you for the current position? Now, this will be also seen in comparison with what you have done in the past. So, in the past, you managed a post very well. Suppose you are to be promoted or absorbed to the current position, which is higher and since it higher in terms of position, it is higher in terms of responsibility, so do you have those qualities, skills as a leader in you? This is something they want to check.

So, your potential to assume higher levels of responsibility is what they are actually looking for. So, what kind of questions will be asked in this context? Questions you might be asked are what kinds of extracurricular activities have you been involved in? Now, today on the one hand, there is so much emphasis on extracurricular activities, like

in foreign countries, extracurricular activities are reflected on the grade card itself. It becomes part of the entire curriculum and so much emphasis is given on that and all the time they look for a fully rounded personality.

In an Indian context, you know most of the times, at least till you reach the higher education, if you get good marks, if you are the topper in the class and if you are literally the book worm, much to the ignorance, negligence of sports and extracurricular activity, then also you are the pride of the school, you are the pride of the family and society and so on. But, once you reach a level, when you reach that higher education, it is high time that you reconsider your earlier career options and then reorient yourself towards extracurricular activities.

Now, why it is so important because they feel that a kind of mono-typical pattern in the mind in which one way of thinking is said and one way of leadership qualities have been achieved, that is fine, that is purely academical, but then when you go to do some extracurricular activities, let say there is a cricket game or any other game related to sports, while playing the game, suddenly there is quarrel between two teams, there is a conflict. Now, you may be just on the field. You are not even the team captain, but you just run to the spot and then try to resolve the conflict. Then, you make people listen to you and then you pacify the whole situation. Instead of making it violent and taking it even to bloodshed and all that, you just interfered and you happen to be the peace maker.

What did you do? You are not even the team captain. You are not the referee, but you did something. This is on the one hand is very important for the people who are going to employ you because these are occasions, extracurricular activities and sports are the ones that bring the other aspect of you, which will be much more useful for the employers in a practical sense. So, your academics credentials are fine as far as it is filling your resume and taking you like a passport to the room in which interview is conducted literally, but beyond that, they are also looking for your other talents, other potentials, which can be revealed only through extracurricular activities.

So, in case, you are the one who is neglecting it, it is high time that you think seriously about it. Then, when you say extracurricular activities, you are to be serious about it. You should have involved yourself seriously also. That means just for the sake of being somewhere in some club and doing nothing, so that also is not a good thing as far as the

credentials will go. So, you should be there and you should be taking a lead. If you are not taking a lead, even if you are given any designated position such as you happen to be the secretary, let us say, so take your extracurricular activities seriously. I would suggest that you should be taking initiative to lead some extracurricular activities.

If there is a cultural program, you can just suggest your name to be the coordinator, to be the convener of that program and you should have proved your credentials even before suggesting your name in coordinating some minor activities such as coordinating a local group discussion program, coordinating some quiz event. So, people will observe that you are able to show your coordination qualities. Then, they should be able to confer on you convenership to some big events. So, extracurricular activities in terms of organizing, even if you are not able to get that leadership post such as the convener or coordinator, even if you are given something like secretary in which you are asked to collect only the money and then account it and then plan for the budget, even that shows something about your financial management.

So, anything that you do and then if you are given a certificate, preserve it, mention it, whether it is sports or extracurricular, it is going to give an entirely different dimension to your CV. Then, we will talk more about this as when the situation comes. Right now, you remember this much, do not underestimate your extracurricular activities. Take them seriously. Then, they may also be concerned about your accomplishments. So, they can also ask you to describe two or three accomplishments of which you are particularly proud. Now, again this is in relation to extracurricular activities.

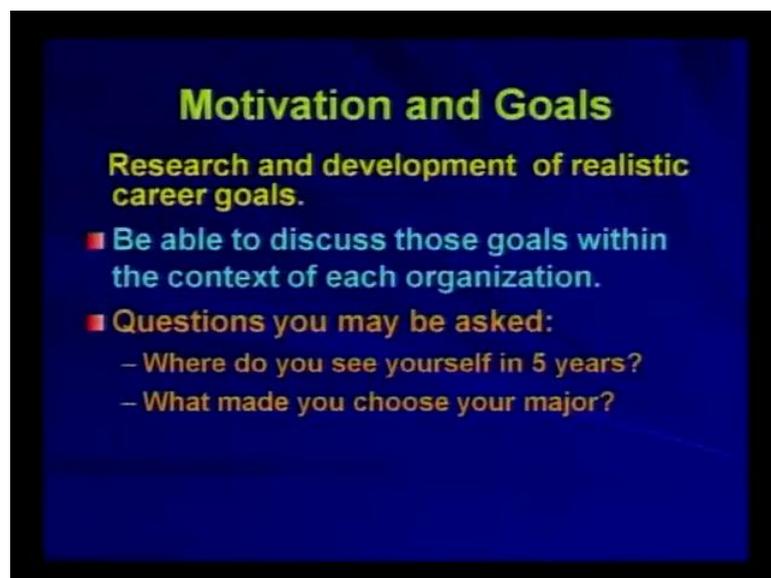
Maybe if you can say that there was an international conference in which my director gave the entire responsibility to me and then there was a professor also, but he was so busy, so the entire responsibility was on me including receiving people from the airport, taking them to the accommodation and then taking care of their financial thing, taking care of calling for papers, sending the selection, results, etcetera, etcetera, so if you say that I organized it successfully and then I was part of this organization team and then if you have some kind of certificate from the professor, so you can include it there.

So, that shows that you did something on your own. Then, without even expecting some rewards, you did it because you enjoyed doing it. So, that is one thing. You can also show that you are really proud of doing certain things like organizing some cultural

events. So, in big institutions, some of the cultural events have huge budgets, sometimes fifteen lakhs and then even sponsors give another ten lakhs, so about twenty five lakhs budget.

Now, with that budget, how did you manage the whole thing? Then, you should be able to tell that until that time, you have hardly earned or hardly managed about twenty five thousand rupees, but in that event, you could manage twenty five lakhs and without anybody pinpointing that you mismanage the money, you did everything efficiently and successfully. You can say that I am really proud of it. So, think of something that you do it efficiently well and which you can be proud of at a later stage and which can be pointed out in the CV, which can be asked further in the interview.

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Apart from just leadership skills, they are also looking for your motivation and goals. So, how do they identify your motivation and goals? That is just through the research and development that you are doing. What kind of research you are doing and how are you developing and are you having some realistic career goals? So, if they ask you something about your project, something about your future plans, so you should be able to discuss those goals plans. They should some over other, whether remotely or closely should be associated with some goals of the organization as much as possible. So, that makes them realize that you have a plan and they have a vision.

So, your plan, your goal is also or it can be synchronized with their vision. So, that again makes you most suitable and very much desirable for the company's profile. So, think about that. Then in relation to this, you may be asked questions like where do you see yourself in five years? Now, you should be very realistic. You cannot say things like I will be the president of United States in five years; I will be the prime minister of the country. Now, if that is the situation, what kind of goals you have and how are you moving towards that goal?

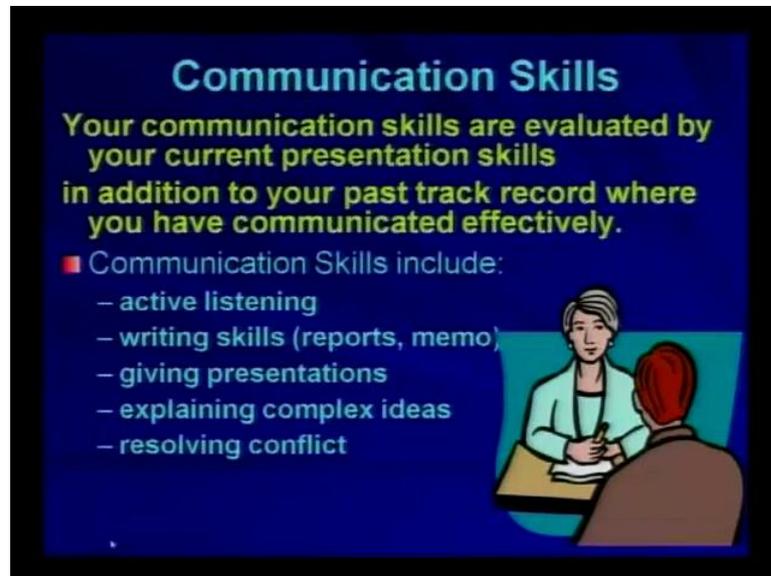
Now, if you are going for the lowest position, it will be feasible if you can say in five years from then, if you are joining as assistance manager in five years from then, you will be the deputy manager, you can say I can be the deputy manager or at least you can say that I will be the manager. It is more or less feasible and realistic, but if you say that in five years, you will become the CEO of the company, and then you should be able to justify how realistic the goals could be, which will be very difficult and sometimes embarrassing if they put very probing questions. So, be realistic about your goals and then keep a plan, what will you be in five years, what will you be in ten years, fifteen years, twenty years, and twenty five years?

How would you like to spend your life in retirement? What would you be when you are going to retire? What would you be when you are at the death bed? How would people address you after you die? What will be your position? So, visualize that much and move your career plans accordingly. Then, another question that can be asked in relation to this is what made you choose the major? Now, if you are a computer science and engineering student, you cannot just say that now I heard that there are good job prospects in this branch. That is why I chose it. They are actually looking for something like I am really interested in developing some software related to this. I am interested in artificial intelligence, so something related to that.

That makes it very clear that you chose the branch because you are interested in developing into an area, a specialized area at a later stage. Now, if you say that I chose this because I will get a good job, then that is going to be a negative thing. They just want to see that apart from that financial perks that you may be getting, are there other considerations? Are there other things which are intrinsically related to your inner goals and aspirations? So, be careful about saying something about your major and try to see

how best you can relate to the goals and your major. The next thing that they are looking for is obviously your communication skills.

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They are not looking for this directly, but they are looking for this through so many ways, the way you speak, the way you have dressed, the way you are carrying yourself, the way you sit, the way you are shaking your hands. So, as they say that first five minutes even decide and determine your success. So, communication skills overall, what are they looking for in communication skills? First it is evaluated by your current presentation skills. How are you presenting yourself at that point of time, verbally and non verbally? Even when you are silent, how are you showing that response? Are you reflective, are you meditative or are you just indifferent or apathetic?

Even that silence can mean so much. So, you are evaluated according to how you are presenting at that moment basically, in addition to your past track record where you have communicated effectively. Now, how do you show this? You can show that I was the one chosen for presentation in that international forum in which I had to go and present about my company and get that proposal through. Then, I was the one who gave the proposal, I suggested and it was unanimously approved and then we got some crores to the company because of that. Now, that shows you are good in presentation.

You are good in writing a draft, you are good in giving an idea to your proposal, not only that you are able to see through that the proposal is communicated clearly, efficiently,

succinctly. Then, it also got you have very favorable response, so that they are going to take into consideration. So, you should be able to show how in the past, you were able to communicate effectively. Now, communication skills overall include active listening. I would urge you to go back to the module that I discussed on listening skills. I particularly focused on active listening. I also gave you tips on overall becoming an effective listener.

Now, active listening, I said so many things that it is against passive listening, it is just involving lot of mental energy, it is focusing, concentrating on the given subjected hand thinking that you will able to use it for future recording, interpreting and not just hearing, but also listening. So, active listening is something that they are looking for. So, when they ask you something, if you keep asking them again and again, excuse me sir, could you please repeat it? I am sorry. I am not able to hear it properly or you do not even say this, but then they ask you something and then you give wrong answers, but you did not listen at all. Then, they get a feeling that oh, this guy never listens to whatever we are asking and he is just saying something. He is a poor listener.

Active listening is responding to the questions correctly, exactly and satisfactorily just because you paid enough attention to what they are asking you. Sometimes they will put you under pressure by asking questions from different corners literally. There may be six, seven, eight members in the panel and all the people attacking you deliberately just to check how well you are in terms of listening under pressure. So, if you could respond one by one or sometimes you can even clop two three questions and tell them. So, I would like to answer both of your questions this way and just to answering you. Then, somebody may interfere. Keep listening to the person while answering to this question and then respond to the person.

So, if you could do this, they will very much appreciate that you have great potential as a communicator just because you are showing good results in terms of listening. Then, I said communication is not just about any one particular one skill like speaking, it is also about listening, and it is also about writing. In terms of business communication, they are more interested in your writing skills. Can you write a good report?

So, if you have a report project report done already submitted for which you got some marks, so you keep that handy. If your project report won some prize, you keep that

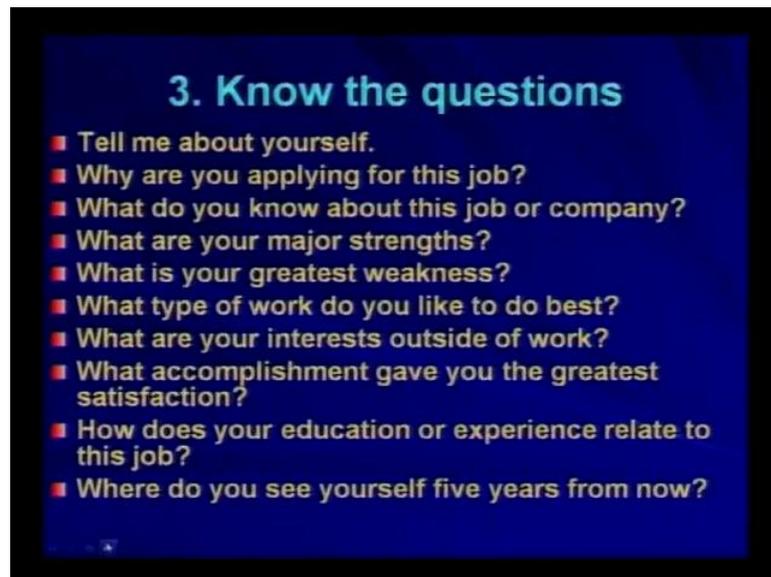
certificate handy. So, show your writing skills. Can you write memo? Can you even send a good email? Again, I would urge you to get back to our module on etiquette where there is so much discussion on email, how to write an email, send an email, get a favorable response using a good email. Now, these are the skills that they are going to check under writing skills and then under spoken and soft and communication skills, your ability to give presentations. These days especially, it is power point presentations.

Are you good at basically handling the computer? Are you good at handling even the mouse? Are you getting nervous while touching the mouse? Are you comfortable if they give you remote and then tell you to operate that from a distance or are you so dependent on the monitor? Apart from that, how have you arranged your slides? Are they packed with information, but utilizing proper font size, the color that is appreciable to the decorum of the forum? Then, overall how are you handling the presentation of those slides? Are you using that as a kind of added, appended part, as a complimentary visual to your verbal component or are you using that as a substitute or the one that you are just reading out from? That will also reveal your poor presentation skills.

So, presentation skills focus on it which they are looking for it verbally. They want to ensure whether you have done some power point presentations before in your previous organizations. So, you can just show some record and then your ability to explain complex ideas. Now, let us say you use the term, new term, a term like ecocide. Now, they can tell you, could you please explain this or even something like artificial intelligence. They just tell you could you please explain this. Now, without resorting to jargons, without going to complicated word sentence structure, will you be able to say that in very simple words, but at the same time, show that you are scientifically and objectively describing what they asked you to do?

So, your ability to describe, define complex ideas in simple manner that also calls for your communication skills. Then, your ability to resolve conflict, here again you have to use lot of your verbal and non-verbal communication to resolve conflict. Here you can go back to the extracurricular activity or some situation where either in that extracurricular activity or in the office, where there is a conflict between two colleagues or two different disciplines, so you went and then you took the initiative to resolve the conflict. You can even explain how you did that, but overall when they talk about communication skills, they are also even looking for your ability to resolve this conflict.

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Now, know more questions, what are other questions that can be asked in relationship to your knowledge, communication skills, and leadership qualities and apart from that, what are the general questions, overall questions? Now, the questions that I am going to tell, each of these ones have been half repeated questions. Take any book on interview skills. You will get these questions in different forms or sometimes the same question is just repeated. You will be surprised to know that at least 60 percent, 70 percent of the questions that I am just going to put you now, make you expose to, are the ones they are going to ask you again. So, why not you reflect on these questions? Think about these questions and then be ready with the answers. Some of the answers I am going to tell you.

Some of the answers I going to guide as how you can think over the answers. Now, tell me about yourself. Now, most of the times, the students are taken aback, the candidates are taken aback when they ask them tell me about yourself. They start mumbling, I, I, my name as you know is this one and I am from this place. I did this and my marks are like this and that is about me. So, you see the poor impression that he will be creating. Now, this is one lifetime chance that you have got and to express yourself succinctly in terms of communication skills, apart from telling your name, background and all that you should be to relate your main objectives, goals. What is it that you are motivated? What is it that you are interested in, about yourself, let say you are a chemical engineer.

As a chemical engineer, what did you do or what is it that you are thinking of doing? So, I am so and so I got this from here. I got this many marks, but apart from that, very briefly in a nutshell telling your CV. Apart from that, you also add a personality dimension that tells much about you. So, as I was telling in the previous one, think of describing you in a single word, in a single sentence, in just phrase. So, overall if you say that I should be considered as an optimist person because I try to look for opportunities even in tough situations. So, you leave it there and then they can ask you to give an example. So, always keep some backup. So, then you can give an example and show how you emerged victorious in a very hard situation just using our positive thinking.

Why are you applying for this job? Now, the negative response to this question, why are you applying for this job is saying that because your company is giving me a better package. Obviously, you are out. You are applying for this job because it is suggesting a bright career opportunity compared to some other job, which you do not want to take it up. Now, you may have some obvious considerations in terms of finance. You may think that this company is giving you better monetary gains compared to the other one, but this is not the time to spell it out.

This is the time to reflect as why you will be seriously concerned about it and to think, why is it they are giving you more money in this job compared to the other job, which obviously means they are looking for higher responsibility. They are looking for more outputs. Now, what is it that is in you that is capable of giving that better output than in the previous company, so that you try to highlight. So, I like this job because it is challenging.

It is going to challenge some of my capabilities in this area, which I have not explored it before because I did not have, I did not get an opportunity to explore it before. So, do not say that you are applying for the money. Say that you are applying for the challenge that the job is giving you in terms of exploring your personality and relating to the company's goal. What do you know about this job or company? The first thing I said about preparing, planning for interview is that I said that know your company. I spent so much time on telling how you can research on the company. By the time you go there, you should have done a research project, minor research project on the job and the company.

You should have all the details at your fingertips, so when they ask, so you should be ready to tell everything. You know the CV of all the persons, you know the origin of the company, you know the product line, you know the current problem, you know what they are planning to launch after ten years, you even know where you are going to fit and why they are really showing some interest in selecting you. So, anything that they ask about the company, be prepared to answer. Generally, you can tell something about the company's profile, the product, their future vision and then the vision of the chairman or CEO. If you are able to say that, they will be very happy.

Then, the next and the obvious question that can be asked what are your major strengths, followed by that, what is your greatest weakness. Nowadays, company which goes to the campus, which we call as campus interviews, they also give a CV profile; they also give a standard format in which they ask the candidate to write some basic information. Apart from writing that basic information, they ask the candidate to write five of their top most strengths and write five of their limitations or weaknesses, they ask for five. Some companies ask for three or some companies just ask for the top most one and ask for at least one weakness, which is in the candidate's opinion the greatest weakness.

Now, as a teacher, when students come and ask me, sir, tell me about my strength, tell me about my weakness that is most embarrassing moment for me. Now, you should realize that that is the most embarrassing moment for anybody, any senior person to whom you approach and ask for your weakness and your strengths, the teacher obviously must have noted some of your strengths and weaknesses, but the teacher can even help you in sorting it out. But, this is something that you should have reflected on.

Remember the second point I was telling that I said know thyself, know yourself, so you should reflect on this. You should have thought about it. You should have identified your strengths and weaknesses. Why is it that it is very important because a leader, a visionary leader and entrepreneur or any person who is worthy of leading the group, country, nation, is somebody who knows his strengths thoroughly, not only the strengths, but also the weaknesses. This person not only knows the weakness, but also tries to do something to overcome this weakness time and again.

Now, when somebody tells you, you sometimes feel that I may be having this strength, but I am not sure about it. Somebody is thinking that is a weakness, rather I am thinking

that is a merit. So, you do not agree fully or you have your own opinion on strengths and weaknesses. They want that exact opinion on your strengths and your weaknesses. They just want to see whether you have actually thought of it before coming to the interview or not. So, strengths ask you. As I said how you would define yourself or ask your friends, how they see, you ask them to define you in some five, ten words.

So, if they say that you are determined, you are known for your will power, you are an incorrigible optimist, so these are your strengths. I am determined; I finish the tasks in time. I am known for finishing the task advance in time. I am a punctual person. How I always go there five minutes before, ten minutes before, there was never in occasion in my life where I have gone for a meeting late. These are strengths. So, then that can be strength like something which is unique. Now, when I am saying this, these are strengths, these are something that everybody can say for instance, I am a very sincere and hard working person.

That could be the strength of anybody. Anybody has to be sincere and hard working to reach that level of interview. It is the degree, the intensity, the time you spend in terms of sincerity and hard work that matters and that differs to individuals, but they just want to see. When you see that this is my major strength, how is that differing from others? I remember a strength written by a student that was very interesting. Then, that actually got through the job interview for the student. He had written as his strength. I do not recommend that you should write it unless you are like that that he is the good trouble shooter.

Then, he has detailed it, how especially anything that is lying useless or anything that is thought to be written off or anything that is lying idle and unused, he knows how to bring that back to its original function and he can sort it out. So, then they asked so prove it. So, then he said, I am from this computer science engineering department.

Then, there was a costly equipment costing crores of rupees that was lying in our lab because specialized people were ought to deal with that. They could not be call from foreign countries and then even, then something was not there and certain cable something was disconnected, it was not in working condition. So, what did you do? I asked my teacher who is in charge of that, the instructor in charge, the professor to give me that as the project restoring that machine to proper function.

So, he accepted and he gave that as the project. He also told me if I fail in that, he will give me zero. I took it and not only I took it, I worked on it day and night. Then, at the end of it, I actually got that machine to its original shape and function. Everybody was surprised. I was even prized by my director. I was given an appreciation letter by the director. I was given even a kind of merit certificate in terms of that. Needless to say, I got a plus in the project. Now, look at this thing. He took initiative; he showed knack ability, technical knowhow to how to deal with that. He identified that something is wrong.

He also understood his capabilities that he is the one who can go and set that something that is wrong, he can set it right. Then, he took the risk when the teacher said I am going to give you zero if you fail in it. He took the risk and his risk was amply rewarded when he proved himself. So, when they ask about this strength, be sure of giving some strength, but also be sure of giving strength that also shows that you are different from the rest of the people instead of simply saying I am sincere, I am hardworking, I am an optimist.

The same thing goes with weakness. So, I will just talk about weakness in detail just in the coming slide. Apart from knowing your strengths, the company is much more interested in knowing your weaknesses also; not that they want to use it and exploit it you, but there, they know very well that how better you would suit in the organization, given that you have certain weaknesses and limitations.

Now, here again you should think about your weaknesses and over all, you should try to overcome one weakness after other. Then, you should try to become a professional. Who is a professional? A professional also has the weakness, but he has put that weakness into control. For instance, if you say your weakness is that you are not an early riser, you wake up late in the morning, now how late is the question? If you say that sometimes, I get up at eleven o'clock, so, sometimes eleven is fine.

What about the normal thing? Normally, I get up at one o'clock, but sometimes, I get up at eleven. Now, if the office starts at nine o'clock, now they just want to know whether you can reach the office at eight fifty at least. If you say it is not possible, it is not in my bio clock, I cannot get up. It is difficult to change my habit, they have to reconsider

giving you the job, but on the other hand, if you say it is my limitation that generally I do not get up early in the morning, but I am also making amendments.

So, I am also realizing that this is going to mar my professional career. I am taking active steps to overcome this problem. What are you doing? So, you may say that initially I used to get up at one o'clock or so. Then, slowly I made it eleven. What about the recent time? So, recently I get up at ten o'clock, but then occasionally, I am compelling myself to get up at eight, seven thirty, sometimes I am getting up at eight fifty, nine. Now, you are giving them hopes. You are also giving them the view that you know your limitation, but also, you are taking that seriously and doing something about it. Then, you are able to do something about it.

If you can get up one day at seven thirty at least, there is a hope that you can get up on the remaining days and you can make it to the office in time. Sooner or later, you will completely overcome this habit. Now, this although it is a weakness, is also telling something about your personality that you are aware of your limitations that you are doing something to overcome those limitations. You are determined and you have strong willpower to overcome those limitations. This is highly appreciable although it is a limitation. Think about another thing like I tend to postpone things. So, postponement is sometimes like a stock limitation. All of us have this problem.

Now, they are concerned about postponement is delaying doing certain things in time, just delay things just like that. You have various reasons. You may say that unless and until I get the mood, I will not be able to start this activity.

You may have your own reason, but for some reason or other, you keep postponing. Now, they just want to know whether are a chronic postponer or you are an occasional postponer. What is the difference between a chronic postponer and an occasional one? Chronic postponer is like by birth, he is a postponer. So, he always kept doing things in a much delayed manner. Now, if you say that you can never overcome, but instead of that if you can say, I know that this is my limitation. So, what do you do?

Now, I am reading lots of books on doing things in time. I underwent a course on time management. What are the lessons that you have learnt? I learnt that instead of waiting for the right moment, right mood, I should start doing something. So, why were you not doing this? I was not doing this because I have the tendency to be a perfectionist. Now,

this is something that you can point out in your merit that you are a perfectionist. You do things with meticulousness to detail. You do everything perfectly. Nobody can point out a single mistake on whatever you have done. This is your merit.

Now, this can also be your limitation when you say that I am a perfectionist, what is the problem? It is because that I am a perfectionist, I tend to postpone doing things. If I do not get that perfect moment, if I do not get that right mood, if I do not get all the information available, even excess information related to what I should do, I do not start the job. So, you being a perfectionist is quoted as a merit and highly appreciable merit, but at the same time, it has its own limitations. This is another trick to give something that is a meritorious one, but also has some limitations which can be shown as a weakness also.

But, again it should be genuine. Just because that I am telling you, you should not immediately put this in your CV. You should think of your own problems. Now, again coming back to postponement, if the person says for example, I would not have completed this project in time for which I won a award had I not thought of applying this time management technique, which said that I should do something every day. Then, after sometime, it will gain momentum. After sometime, it will absorb me. Once it has gained momentum, I realized it. After I did something for one week, I realized that I am just getting the heat of the things. Then, I was absorbed in it. Then, I was completely immersed.

Then, I finished it in the next couple of days, but had I not started something every day, I would not have completed that project. I would have still waited for that most perfect moment. So, this is how I making amendments to my limitations. Now, how would some limitations like some habits, what kind of habits, habits like smoking, drinking, what kind of habits are they? What do they expect in terms of these habits? Now, once again as I said, a professional is somebody who can control his or her limitations and habits. A professional knows that certain limitations, certain habits should not interfere in the routine, in the day to day activities of his job.

Now, smoking is not bad in a professional situation. There are so many situations where you will find that the company itself is allowing you to keep a cigar/smoke and do the work. The company has no objection. There are certain jobs which demand that you

drink coffee, you have tea, and you do whatever you eat, but keep working. There is no problem. There are certain jobs in which drinking is part of the organizational set up itself. The boss himself arranges for a beer party.

The boss himself when there is a kind of target achievement or some profit, calls everybody and gives a very good wine party. Everybody is expected to drink. Every time when they want to discuss over a serious issue, drinks, smoke, I mean cigarette and other things are just offered. So, there is no issue, but there are certain organizations, let us say a very highly disciplined school, which has let us say another religious back up to support it or a very highly reputed institution where teachers and instructors are taken as role models. Then, they have strict norms for or against smoking drinking inside the campus.

Now, inside the campus, it is not allowed for anybody, the students as well as the teachers. Now, is it right on the part of a teacher to just smoke before the student or offer a cigarette to the student and saying that nothing happens, so just smoke, no problem. Let me see who will come and charge fine. Now, this is something the organization is looking for in terms of work ethic. Now, your limitation will be related to your work ethic, will be related to your mental frame of mind, will be related to your ability to badly influence others. Now, the office norms clearly spell out that you cannot do this, but you do it.

Now, you are resisting, you are violating the norm. You are showing that you do not care about it, not only that you are influencing somebody to do that and you are becoming a very evil and corrupt influence. Now, this, the organization does not want if that is not there in the norm. I remember a place where I worked before where we were all asked to sit with the candidates and then ask to take their response, candid response and then report to the director. Why I am saying this? You should not think that I can just bluff. I can say some lies and then get through.

Suppose in the organization that I am referring into, there was one write up that the candidates were supposed to give. There was a question on what is your attitude about smoking. Do you agree that it should not be done in the campus, at least during the office hours? So, they write something, but apart from what they have written, we, some of the senior faculty were just talking to them, interacting with them in an informal manner.

Even we were saying bad things, we were even asked to say bad things about the institute and then just get their actual thinking. So, when they were about to finalize a candidate, we were asked.

So, this candidate has written that he does not like this smoking, at least during office hours. Do you think that he means it? Now, if there is somebody who says no, no, he does not mean it. Even before the interview, he was looking for a match box because he was desperate to smoke. Then, when I asked him, you wrote something. There, he said, no, no, that is just for writing, just for getting through in the interview, I wrote, but I do not mean it. I have to smoke; every half an hour, I have to smoke. I hope your interview will be over in twenty minutes. I do not know. If it goes beyond half an hour, I will get nervous. So, without smoke, I cannot live.

Now, this becomes a serious consideration to reject the candidate. So, think about these things when you say something as your limitation. There are some limitations which are coming because of your habits, whether they are good or bad is again relative depending on the organizational set up. But, if those habits are bad to a particular organizational set up, lying or bluffing through and getting the job will not be a good thing because sooner or later, they will find out. If you are caught smoking in the bathroom or if you are caught smoking somewhere, so you will be just fired off. Not only that, you are just fired off from a reputed institution that is a black mark in your career and you will be carrying it through all the time.

In the next interview, it will not be that easy to explain why you are fired off despite your talents and extra ordinary potentials. Then, they can always go back to the previous institution and ask the boss and just find out. So, your person says that there was some problem with the company. That is why; he resigned from the job, but was it true? There are always people to tell the fact to tell that no, that was not true. He lied about certain things, particularly about smoking and he was caught unawares. He was fired off immediately. In certain cases, he was suspended for some time, but then also, he did not rectify his behavior. He was caught frequently. He was given so many warnings.

Once the manager was frustrated with giving warnings and warnings, he finally decided to fire him off from the job. So, think about this. Habitual limitations, you should put in check. You should ask yourself whether it matches with the organizational setup. If not,

you either think seriously whether you can stop that habit or tell them openly that you have this habit. If they are agreeing to it, it is fine. If not, you have to think of an organizational set up that will have you there with your limitations.

Conversely, if you are having limitations in relation to things like postponement things like getting up late and all that, not being punctual, try to show that you are actually making some steps, some amendments to improve on the situation. That again helps because even in the panel, although people are very experienced and sitting there, they are also human beings. They are mature enough to understand that you are a very young and dynamic person. You are prone to have some limitations. You of course, have the maturity to overcome. So, that is what they are looking for.

Limitations, as such, mentioning you need not be afraid of at all, but see whether you can defend them. As Richard Bach says in *Illusions*, he says that argue for your limitations, sure enough, they are yours. So, when you argue for the limitations, I am sure enough, they are yours. You are not discarding them. You are not even defending, but then, you know very well that they are yours. Then, you are taking active steps to overcome those limitations and make those limitations emerge as your strengths also and due course. Then, there are certain other questions, which I already discussed, which again I would like to reinforce.

What type of work do you like to do best? Here again, be honest. What kind of work you like? Just whatever you like, you tell them. What are your interests outside of work? Now, something like if you are an ornithologist, you are interested in going to sanctuaries, watching birds, you are interested in some other organization like saving wild life, saving trees, you go for plantation during this weekend or you are involved in blood donation.

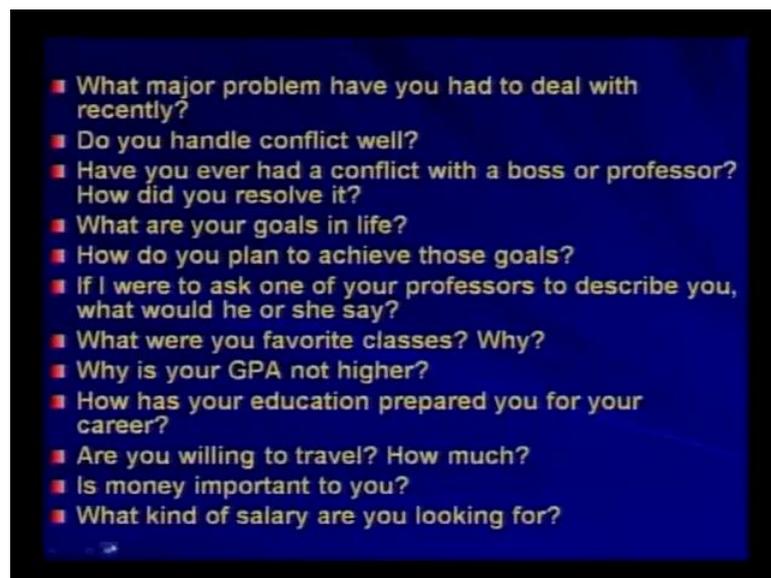
Now, highlight all these points, something that is showing that you have a social service motive apart from getting money in the job. You are concerned about the environment. You are concerned about the eco system. So, show these things. So, that also shows that they really have a fully grown up human being instead of a machine that has information and that has capabilities of functioning according to the organizational needs.

Then, what accomplishment gave you the greatest satisfaction? This can be extracurricular. This can be job oriented. In a professional situation, again job oriented,

again you can highlight an achievement that nobody could do, but you did it. You are interested with something that was supposed to be tough, but you performed it very well ably. How does your educational experience relate to this job? So, here again, the job is demanding some skills. The education does not support it. You did something in your past and then changed track, did something, some kind of course, so that it suites the job.

So, you should be able to justify why you changed the track or whether you are really interested in that. Mistakes can happen. You can say that you started with something, but you changed track just because you realized that you are not meant for that. Then, you gave it up and then you came to this. You are now very sincerely involved in this. So, that is also fine. Then, where do you see yourself five years from now? Already, I discussed about this. They just want to check your goals.

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They just want to see whether you are aware of these goals. What major problem have you had to deal with recently? You cannot say that I never had any problems. So, wherever I go, I am happy. No, there will be problems and you should be able to highlight one professional problem and how you overcame that problem. Often, things happen when you least expect them. As Murphy's Law states, if things can go wrong, it will and especially it will go wrong when you when you are sure about everything that nothing will go wrong. Then, something goes wrong and something will definitely, will go wrong.

So many times you must have observed this kind of situation that you just assessed all possibilities and then made a full proof kind of system, but something happened at the last minute and then everything went wrong, something which was not in your control. A party that was arranged out door, then you managed everything meticulously everything was kept there. Suddenly there was a heavy downpour of rain. You did not think of that thing because the rain was totally unexpected. It was not expected in that part of the year. It was not season, it was not monsoon time, but it came.

Now, that was totally unanticipated and the whole food stuff was kept in open and they got drenched. Despite your meticulous plan, careful handling of things, it became a flop. You did not have any, any kind of alternate arrangement once it rained. So, it failed. So, think of the problems. Then, do you handle conflict well? Now, show a situation either extracurricular or in the regular career that you handled it well efficiently. Have you ever had a conflict with the boss or professor? How did you resolve it? Again saying that no, I am a very nice guy. I just say yes to the boss all the time. I never had conflict. This is a very negative thing to tell.

Yes, there was a conflict with my boss. When was it? The boss proposed an idea. I said it is going to fail or it has this limitation. The boss was angry at that time. How did you resolve it? I gave it sometime, I asserted, I insisted on it. I provided more facts. Two days later, he called me and he was very thankful about it. Then, the conflict was resolved. Then, he resorted to just getting back to what I told him. So, there is never a situation where there is no conflict between boss and the worker. What are your goals in life?

Now, goals for career and goals in life, if it could be integrated, it is better. That is why; they are asking for this. How do you plan to achieve those goals? So, it is better, first you think of goals and also you have some concrete plan towards achieving those goals. If I were to ask one of your professors to describe you, what would he or she say? This is another important thing, which many students ignore because many students till they reach that final year, they think that they can just freak about.

Then, they can bunk classes. They can do anything. They can annoy the professor, but when they have to give two, three names as referees and let say two of them happen to be the professor's names, is there a professor or at least one professor who will say something good about this person? Honestly, professors are forgiving. So, they will

forgive your limitations, but despite that, will they be able to say some good thing about you? So, ask yourself honestly, are you conducting yourself in such a manner that at least out of five hundred professors, there is one professor who will say something positive, good about you, whose name you give as a referee, who can be referred at a later stage.

Think about that. Then, what were your favorite classes? Why? Now, your favorite classes will also tell so much about you. If you are an engineering person, if you have something in, let say a favorite subject as psychology, it also is highlighting that you are more interested in understanding the intricacies of human beings. May be, you may be better equipped than the people who have just done courses only related to engineering and avoider, let say humanity subjects. So, that also tells you. But, also think about why you are attracted towards it. Another tricky question is why your GPA is not higher or why your marks are very low or why are your marks inconsistent? One day, one time, one semester, it is too high; another semester, it is too low. What happened?

Now, except health reasons, there is no way you can justify this, especially if you are inconsistent. So, you have to, if you say that no, I was admitted in bed and I was treated for this, so I could not pay attention. I was absent for many days. It is fine, acceptable, but if you do not have any other justification, so you should be honest about it. You can say that, sir, that time I was completely interested in robotics. I lost myself in that club. I did not pay enough attention. I knew, I understood that I was making a mistake. In the next semester, I made amendments.

You can see that, that semester, I was low. Next semester, I was having the highest one. So, that is how I compensated. So, you can prove that you get distracted sometimes, but also, you have the capability to come back. So, highlight that aspect. How has your education prepared for your career? This already I told you. Try to show that you are able to integrate education with career. If there is a gap, try to just compensate for the gap by giving honest and succinct answer. Are you willing to travel? How much? So, there are people who do not want to take a job that involves travelling.

There are people who do not want to move away from their home. Then, there are people who enjoy travelling, who want to travel all the time, who cannot stay at home. What type are you? Then, there are moderate people who will enjoy travelling. Most of us are like that, that occasionally, so once in a month, once in a while, once in the vacation, you

enjoy travelling, so much of travelling, but not as a routine affair. So, you just be frank about it, how much do you enjoy this? Accordingly, the post will determine whether you should be given that job or not. Then, for instance, even you can be very clear about what mode of transports suites you. For example, if you have fear for flying on flight, you better tell them.

You can say that I cannot travel on flight. I get some allergy. I will vomit. Then, I cannot work properly. So, they can just think of putting in a place where there is no need to travel on flight. Is money important to you, another tricky question? The answer is yes and no. Money is important of course, but that is not everything. That is not the only thing for which you have come for this job. So, that is what you need to ascertain. Yes, of course, it is important to fulfill my basic needs, but that is not the reason for which I have applied for this job. I have applied for this job because of the challenge, because of the career opportunities that it is providing, not just for the money part.

So, be careful about it. Then, what kind of salary are you looking for, another tricky question? Now, you can say sky is the limit, but what kind of impression are you giving? Are you really suited for that kind of job, money that you are demanding that the job can give you? Suppose you are demanding something that the person at the exit level that is at the retirement level is getting and you are just at the entry level. You are demanding so much. Can they really afford? More than that, are you really equipped with such wonderful talents that you will be able to get that much money? You will give them ten times more in terms of other workers.

If you really have the potential, demand it. If not, be honest about yourself. Then, it is better to say in certain cases where norms have been decided in terms of pay scale, it is better to say that I am happy with the pay scale that goes with my job position. I will be happy. Then, since I have done this or that, if I can be given additional increments, I may be happier, but still, I will be content with the pay scale. That is a good answer. In case of package, just be careful. Do not over estimate yourself and demand so much. At the same time, do not underestimate yourself. Do not sell yourself at a low rate also.

You should have correct assessment about yourself. You can do the homework before going there. That is why; I said know your company, know yourself, know how much the company can offer you the maximum, and know how much you can push yourself to

reach that maximum level. Negotiate at a point. Reconcile your mind. Be ready with the answer.

Now, with this note, let me conclude this lecture. We will continue with more questions and answers in relation to preparing for the interview. Slowly, I will take you to the interview room as such and the norm, etiquette, which are required to perform and succeed in a interview situation. So, till then, bye. Then, we will meet in the next lecture.

Thank you so much.

Keep reflecting on these questions. Be ready with the answers. All the best till then.