

# Take a Peek at a Recruiter's Checklist

No interviewer asks a random collection of questions. Almost every recruiter you meet with is trying to rate you in five to 10 areas and the questions you're asked are designed to evaluate your aptitude in each category. Because most firms agree on what characteristics are desirable in an entry-level hire, most rating forms are pretty similar. By studying the checklist, you'll learn what to expect in job interviews and what employers are looking for in candidates.

1. **INTELLIGENCE/ANALYTICAL ABILITY:** When interviewing, analytical ability is seen less as a skill than a state of mind. Do you enjoy solving problems? Most importantly, when presented with an analytical challenge, do you take the time to define the parameters, understand the goal and work step-by-step toward a conclusion? Recruiters ask analytical questions not just to get an answer, but also to see how your mind works. Your thought processes will reveal your analytical abilities.
2. **CREATIVITY and FLEXIBILITY:** Creative, flexible people are able to approach problems in new and unusual ways. They don't fear the status quo, but always look for ways to make things better.
3. **COMMUNICATION SKILLS:** These skills are perhaps the most important to getting and keeping a job. Communication skills cover the gamut from clear speaking and writing to clear thinking, and clear thought certainly can be in short supply during an interview. Because so many candidates have trouble spitting out grammatically correct, well-enunciated sentences, those who do can't help but earn a good rating.
4. **WORK EXPERIENCE and TECHNICAL SKILLS:** Your résumé should satisfy these concerns but recruiters often feel the need to confirm abilities in person. Use your résumé to structure a description of your responsibilities at each of your previous jobs. After a brief overview, focus on one or two projects of interest.
5. **LEADERSHIP/TEAM PLAYING ABILITY:** Are you a leader and a team player? Convincing recruiters that you can be both presents a tough challenge. Most candidates who fail at this task forget one fact: True team players won't let on easily that they're leaders. Boasting, even if it's substantiated, is not a team-playing quality.
6. **INITIATIVE and ENTREPRENEURSHIP:** Are you prepared to take the ball and run with it? Investigation can unearth examples of your initiative. Did you spend a semester abroad, conduct independent study, choose and interdisciplinary major or spend a summer self-employed? These activities are worth mentioning in your interview.
7. **ENERGY and STAMINA:** All employers seek these qualities, although they're more important in some jobs than others. You want to appear busy but organized, hard working, but content.
8. **MATURITY:** Without sacrificing your enthusiasm or sense of humor, behave in a manner befitting a full-grown adult. Do you have a healthy conception of your worth as an employee and otherwise? These are the issues that recruiters address when rating you in this area.
9. **INTEREST IN THE POSITION:** Your interest in the industry, the company and the job is of great concern to recruiters. Most interviewers will spend more time and ask more questions on this topic than on any other. Surprisingly though, many candidates perform badly in this area. You'll succeed only if you follow two simple steps: a. State your interest candidly. b. Prove your interest, by having done the necessary background research and by asking appropriate questions.
10. **PERSONAL QUALITIES and PERSONALITY:** Personal qualities refer to such peripheral factors as how you dress, how you behave at meals and whether the interviewer considers you a trustworthy, well-adjusted person. Personality addresses whether you'd be likely to improve the atmosphere of the office.