



# Transition Newsletter

April 2026

A bit of preparation for something that will **change your life** is beyond worth it.

## Nailing the Job Interview!

You found a job you like and applied. Now you have an interview. That's great! These tips can help you feel prepared and confident.

### Read the Job Description

The job description tells you what the employer is looking for and explains the tasks and skills needed for the job. Reading it can help you prepare answers. For example, if it says "work with a team," you can share a time you worked with others during a school project.

### Practice Interview Questions

You may not know the exact questions, but you can practice common ones.

- Tell me about yourself.
- Why do you want to work here?
- Why should we hire you?
- What is your greatest strength?
- What is your greatest weakness?
- What is your biggest achievement?
- Tell me about a difficult situation at work and how you handled it.



Practicing your answers helps you feel more confident. You can also do a **mock interview** to practice.

### Dress Nicely

Your clothes are one of the first things the interviewer sees. Choose clothes that are clean, neat, and in good condition—button-up shirt or polo with black or khaki pants. Avoid wearing shorts, tank tops, or clothes with stains or rips. Sometimes an employer may interview you **when you drop off your application**, so dressing nicely can help.

### Make a Good First Impression

1. Show up 5-10 minutes early for the interview.
2. Smile and say hello.
3. Introduce yourself.
4. Shake hands if the interviewer offers.
5. Speak clearly.
6. Make eye contact if you can.

The interviewer may ask about your skills, your personality, and your past work experience. Take your time when answering. It's okay to pause and think. You can also bring a **notebook with questions** about the job.

### Follow Up After the Interview

After the interview, send a short thank-you message via email or thank-you card. Example message: "Thank you for meeting with me today. I enjoyed learning about the job and I'm excited about the opportunity."



### RESOURCE HIGHLIGHT



**Big Interview** is an online training tool through the SD Department of Labor and Regulation (DLR) that teaches you how to prepare for job interviews. It includes short lessons, tips from experts, and videos that show good and bad interview examples. You can also practice answering real interview questions using mock interviews tailored to your career interests. This helps you build confidence and improve your interview skills before meeting with an employer.

Register for a free account: [southdakota-works.biginterview.com](https://southdakota-works.biginterview.com)

*This is informational only. DHS is neither supporting nor endorsing this website. Please determine for yourself if you wish to use it and proceed accordingly.*

contact me



Name:

Phone:

Email:

DHS.SD.GOV



## Questions to Ask at an Interview

Asking questions during your interview shows you're interested in the job and helps you learn more about the company.

- What does a typical day look like for someone in this role?
- What skills are most important for this job?
- How would you describe the company culture? (Is it friendly, supportive?)
- How does the company help employees who need extra support or accommodations?
- How often do you check in with employees to give feedback?
- What's the next step in the hiring process?

These questions help you learn more about the job and how they support employees. Make sure to ask the ones that are important to you!



## Develop an Elevator Pitch

Present yourself in a confident way by having an elevator pitch ready to go when you approach a business. An elevator pitch is a verbal summary of who you are, what you want to do, and what you can bring to their company. Here's an example script to get you started with developing your own elevator pitch:

**Make sure you practice your pitch to exert confidence!**

"Hi, my name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I'm a \_\_\_\_\_(year in school) at \_\_\_\_\_(high school) in \_\_\_\_\_(town and state). I am interested in pursuing work in the \_\_\_\_ industry/field and have done \_\_\_\_ (extracurricular activities, organization, volunteering) which helped me determine this career path will be a good fit. I developed these skills by \_\_\_\_\_ (participating in an internship, working a particular job, etc.)"

## Want help finding a summer job?

Having a summer job is a great way to grow your skills and belief in what you are capable of, which sets you up for a positive start to the new school year next fall! If you are interested in exploring summer employment opportunities, please reach out and I can talk to you about available services and supports. The sooner, the better!

- **Earn responsibility.** You are used to getting direction from parents and teachers, but having a boss is a whole new dynamic. Being exposed to new duties, working with others, and accepting feedback will help you develop into a responsible young adult.
- **Establish strong work habits.** Summer jobs give you the opportunity to explore and establish your work ethic, motivation, and determination. You will learn time management, commitment and how to deal with consequences. All of which are valuable lessons as you move into adulthood.
- **Gain independence.** Having a summer job is a great way for you to become more independent, both financially and otherwise. Earning your own money gives you a sense of spending freedom, which presents an opportunity to learn good saving habits.
- **Build confidence.** Being responsible for something, feeling more independent, having your own money - all these things will make you feel better about yourself.