



eBook

Preparing for the Interview

*A Practical Resource for
Beginning and Experienced Educational Assistants*



Section 1: Introduction

Introduction

The purpose of this *eBook* is to provide guidance to Educational Assistants (EAs) seeking a position in a school or other setting and to help more experienced EAs moving to another setting to navigate the most common process for staff selection — the dreaded interview!

How this eBook is Organized

This *eBook* includes the following sections:

Section 2: General Preparation: Confirming Who You are as an Educational Assistant

- Clarifying Your Beliefs about You and the Profession

Section 3: Specific Preparation: You as a Staff Member in the Organization to which You are Applying

- Doing Your Homework: Before the Interview
- The Three Ps

Section 4: What to Expect in the Interview

- Types of Interviews (In-Person and Virtual)
- The Nature of Behavioural Questions
- The Standard Questions: Samples and Indicators
- Issues of the Day: The Pandemic and the Inclusive Classroom

Section 5: Some Helpful Hints in Preparing for the Interview Questions

- Index Cards/Phone Cards: Reviewing Possible Questions and Responses
- The Use of a Mirror (Real or Otherwise)
- Simulated Interviews (Bendel Can Help!)
- Don't Be Surprised at What the Interviewers are Doing

Section 6: Missteps: What Not to Do

Section 7: Overcoming Your Nerves and Showing Confidence

Section 8: The Question of a Professional Portfolio: To Show or Not

Section 9: Concluding Remarks - and Best Wishes

Appendix A Checklist - Preparing for an Interview

Appendix B EA Sample Job Description

Appendix C EA Sample Interview Questions/Indicators

Appendix D EA Sample Case Study

Appendix E Online Resources (Handbooks, Publications, Recruitment, Education)

Section 2: General Preparation: Confirming Who You Are as an EA

*“To thine own self be true,
And it must follow as the night the day,
Thou cans’t not then be false to any man.”
(Polonius to Laertes, Hamlet, I.iii.78-80.)*

“Do you have a philosophy of education?” If you’re like most of us at the beginning of our careers, the most truthful answer is likely “No.” Well, don’t be alarmed. We won’t be telling you that you need to have one — if you see a “philosophy of education” as an integrated system of beliefs based on experience, research and good old-fashioned instinct. What you’ll need to have, however, is some idea of what your beliefs are about some key questions that we’re going to pose to you.

Finding out about yourself as an Educational Assistant (EA) is the first place you should start when preparing for an interview. There are several reasons why Bendel Services says you should start here:

- This is the time in your career to begin clarifying your beliefs which, no doubt, will change over time — and for the next few years in the classroom you won’t have much time to do this kind of thinking!
- In the immediate future, these beliefs should help you when you answer an interview question of any sort because they will give you a reference point, a context, for any question thrown your way.
- Finally, if you can internalize these beliefs and demonstrate them in all your responses, you’ll come across as a thoughtful EA who has really done some soul-searching and comes across as an EA who will be capable of looking at a larger, more integrated picture of the task at hand.

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