

Instructional Technology Interview

● Introduction of the interviewee

The interviewee is Dr. Yang. She is an associate professor in the major of computer science. She works in Zhengzhou University in China. Zhengzhou is in Henan province. The university is one of China's key universities of "211 Project". She is in the School of Information Engineering of Zhengzhou University. She graduated from Zhengzhou University more than twenty years ago. When she got her bachelor degree, she was given the position of a lecturer in her school because of her outstanding in her undergraduate learning. She got her doctor degree in Beijing Jiaotong University.

● Contents of the interview

As a student in the major, the purpose of the interview is to know what the field can help us and others do and what kinds of career we can achieve in the future when we graduate. The direct experience of interviewee can help us well know the development of the position in reality. Being qualified to the position, what should we do? Especially, when we are still in the college, we need to know the meanings of our major and what we should prepare ourselves in order to find the proper job and have further development. Based on the objectives, I raised 21 questions for my interviewee.

These questions are based on six parts of contents.

The first is about the basic information of the interviewee's position. These questions are following, from question 1 to 5.

1. What is your occupation?
2. Where are you working?
3. When do you get the job?
4. How do you get your job?
5. Can you describe the detailed content of your job?

The second part of the questions is description of interviewee's major, for at the beginning of the interview I cannot make sure the interviewee's major is just the Instructional Technology. And I also think the interviewee is better in the major of a different from Instructional Technology, but have close connection with our major. These questions are following, from 6 to 7.

6. What is your major when you are an undergraduate and graduate student? Are the majors the same? If not, why did you choose the different one?
7. What is the impact of your major(s) on your recent position?

The third part is the impact of Instructional Technology on the interviewee's position, no matter the interviewee's major is Instructional Technology or not. These questions are following, from 8 to 10.

8. What can instructional technology do for you in your opinion?
9. Do you think your job is close to instructional technology? Please give the reasons.
10. What is the impact of instruction and technology on your job?

The fourth part is about the qualification of the position. From the direct experience of the

interview I want to know whether the knowledge we learnt from the college is qualified for the reality career. Before qualification for the position, how long will we achieve the necessary knowledge for the position and what should we do in order to be qualified? The difficult problems may be encountered by the interview. These problems are the obstacles people faced in the career and hinder the qualification of their positions. These questions are following, from 11 to 14.

11. Do you think you are qualified for your position? No matter whether or not, please give the explanation.
12. How long do you think you are qualified for the position since you graduated?
13. How can you become qualified for your position?
14. What are the most difficult or complex problems you have encountered since you get the job? Can you solve these problems now? What is the core solution?

The fifth part is about the satisfaction of the interviewee's position and the expectation of development of the career. These problems will help us know the happiness of professional development. Maybe someone likes to change their jobs, but I wonder what about our major and whether the career is worth of sticking on it. When we are in the positions, will we find the job extremely boring without any creation and useless for others and can we be replaced by other relevant majors easily? That is my concern. So questions from No.15 to No.17 are designed as follows.

15. Are you satisfied with your recent position? No matter whether or not, please give the explanation.
16. Is your job part-time or full-time? If it's a part-time job, what do you want to do next?
17. What is your plan of your further professional development?

The sixth part is expecting to get the advice from the interviewee about our major. The advice is about the preservice training of employees and the preparation the students should do in the university. And I also wonder in their opinion, as professional instructors or designers, what their suggestions of the major of Instructional Technology.

18. What do you think is the most important knowledge or experience we should learn in the university in order to seek a job related to the major of Instructional Technology?
19. Do you think it is necessary to attend training lessons before working when we graduate?
20. Is it necessary to improve the existing courses in the college or universities in your opinion?
21. What is your opinion on the future development of Instructional Technology?

● Format and effects of the interview

According to my background, I want to find a job of my major in China. I have already got some knowledge of the employment situation of Instructional Technology. The common situation is our major can compete with the major of Computer Science especially in the field of education. The graduates from Instructional Technology and Computer Science can both find jobs in the

K12 education teaching the course of Instructional Technology and in the college teaching courses relevant to technology. Therefore, I plan to interview a person whose major is relevant to Instructional Technology. I contacted a friend in Henan Province to find an interviewee, for I don't want to interview someone I know. He introduced Dr. Yang to me. We communicated through the email and some instant messaging software. However, from the result and the answers she provided, I don't think she is well familiar with our major. Detailed results are in the following part.

- A report of the interview

According to the above analysis, the questions I designed can be divided to six parts. The replies to my questions are as follows.

	Reply
Questions 1-5	1. I am a professor.
	2. I work for Zhengzhou University.
	3. I have been worked in the university for more than 20 years.
	4. I was offered the position because of my outstanding performance during the period of my undergraduate.
	5. I teach classes and carry out research work.

Analysis:

From the replies, I know she is an experienced teacher in the university, for she has already worked for more than twenty years. She was not experienced the hard working for looking for a suitable position. Now her work is mainly about the courses teaching, do some research and publishing papers on Computer Science. From the web site of her school, (<http://www5.zzu.edu.cn/ie/szdw/bdsd/4a44c05f46a9290d0146c2986add0edc.html>), she has already published 15 papers and 7 papers were collected by SCI and EI.

	Reply
Questions 6, 7	6. My major is computer science both in my undergraduate and graduate study.
	7. My major has close relationship to my current work.

Analysis:

Dr. Yang's major is Computer Science. Her bachelor, master and doctor degrees are all Computer Science. She worked in the School of Information Engineering of Zhengzhou University. From web site of (<http://www5.zzu.edu.cn/ie/szdw/bdsd/4a44c05f46a9290d0146c2986add0edc.html>), her research interest concerns data mining, machine learning, and biological information mining. The research is different from Instructional Technology.

	Reply
Questions 8-10	8. I think it should provide more convenience and higher efficiency for people to achieve knowledge.
	9. I am a teacher so it is close to instructional technology.
	10. It provides great convenience for my teaching work and also makes it more normal, effective and efficient.

Analysis:

From the replies, I think she is not well known of Instructional Technology. She thought technology can bring convenience, effectiveness and efficiency. In her mind, instructional technology may be the combination of instruction and technology. So she answered I am a teacher, which implied as a teacher it is close to instruction. And technology is another thing. It is completely different from what I thought originally.

Questions 11-14	Reply
	11. Yes. I am a warm-hearted, responsible and diligent person. I love my work and my students.
	12. It takes me about one year.
	13. I continued to learn after graduation.
	14. The most difficult problem for me is that, as a teacher, you cannot think every student as you expected. The feasible solution is being patient.

Analysis:

The part of questions focuses on the qualification and difficulties for the position. She considers herself qualified for her position. For her major is the same as the position and she studied and worked in the same school, she quickly grows qualified for her position. For the further development, she must keep on studying after graduation. She got her master and doctor degrees after she has the job. She tried her best to work and study at the same time. She thought the most difficult problem is the communication with students, so she said she must be patient. The communication skills must be trained before graduation and continue to learn in the real working situation.

Questions 15-17	Reply
	15. Yes.
	16. Full-time job.
	17. Research ability is important for a professor in a university, therefore being familiar with the state-of-the-art contributions and in keeping with it are necessary for me.

Analysis:

She is obviously satisfied with her position and she doesn't want to change her job once more. It is her full-time job and she is enjoyable. For her further development, she needs not only to continue to study, but also strengths the research abilities and is familiar with the advanced academic achievement in Computer Science. I think it is also the same situation for us.

Questions 18-21	Reply
	18. I think the information technology is the most important at present
	19. Yes, of course.
	20. Yes, especially for some quickly developed subject, such as computer science, etc.
	21. Computer science is different from Instructional Technology. I have no idea about the major.

Analysis:

I also want her to give some advice to us. She obviously didn't well know our major. However, she admitted information technology is important and from the common terms, she thought it was necessary to improve existing courses to suit for the future application fields. It proves my original thoughts are incorrect again. Computer Science is different from Instructional Technology. The two majors cannot be replaced by each other, although there may be some positions which both provide opportunities for the two majors.

- Results of the interview

In fact, the answers from Dr. Yang to my questions disappointed me a bit. She is not so happy to answer my question. Maybe in her mind this is not relevant to my major and she didn't want to talk more about her ideas. However, it can prove my original opinion is incorrect. Firstly, Computer Science and Instructional Technology are two completely different majors. People of Computer Science don't understand the major of Instructional Technology. Maybe there is something similar, but the truth is they are completely different. However, the result must be proved by many surveys. It implied that when we search for a position, we must show our advantages that the relevant major doesn't have and explain the differences between our major and others when necessary, in order to let the interviewer well know our major and consider we are the suitable employees.

Secondly, she didn't experience the process of finding a job. In the 1990s of China, each of the undergraduate students is given a job when they graduate. However, the situation is different at present. There are many graduates in July and August each year, but the jobs are limited. The competition is so fiercely that you must equip yourself more skills than others since you enter the university. Dr. Yang's smooth entry to the position also implied we must do our best during our university study. Therefore, it is not difficult to understand why there are so many students to cover more courses and attend the examinations of many different certifications.

Thirdly, many people including her have focused on the development of technology. She also realized the convenience technology brought to education, although what she means about technology is not the truth of technology in our understanding. She thinks many majors should be improved to keep pace with the development. This is true in our major. Every major has its unique research direction. Its further development needs innovation.

Fourthly, from her relies, I agree with her opinion on the communication skills. As a teacher, the interaction with students is vital. It is the problem on the pedagogy and methodology. It implies that as instructors, designers, or trainers, it is necessary to cover the pedagogical and methodological knowledge and the communication with your future students, customers and users may be the most complicated problem.

However, the result must be proved by many research cases. It is meaningful and useful for us to carry out the relevant survey to well prepare us for future employment.