

Get the Inside Scoop:
APPLYING TO BE A VOA OFFICER
Part 2: The Interview

WHAT SHOULD I DO?

Before the Interview

“Find out the format of the interview. Is it in person, or on the phone? About how many questions will there be, and how long do you have to answer? Will you be asked to give an opening and closing statement?”

“If the interview is a phone conference, make sure you have the resources needed to make the process smooth. Will you need access to a computer while on the phone? Will you need to call in at a specific time, or are they going to let you know when to join? Do you have the conference call number easily accessible? Technical difficulties can look unprofessional, so try to be prepared as best as possible.”

“Practice is key. Look over plenty of example questions, and make sure you are comfortable answering the basics.”

“Be sure to practice speaking; if your interview is on a phone conference, your manner of speaking is of the utmost importance. Talking in front of a mirror or recording yourself and listening back to it are great ways to notice any quirks in your speech.”

“Ask family members or friends to ask practice questions; this will keep you on your feet, as you won’t know what questions to anticipate next.”

“You should have knowledge of the position that you are applying for. What are their responsibilities? Are there any events you would be required to go to? What are the big current events happening in Scouting/Venturing as a whole, or in your region/area/council in particular?”

“Be comfortable discussing your own strengths and weaknesses. It can look tacky if you are unable to talk about your own shortcomings and failures, and likewise being unable to discuss your own successes.”

“Think about some of your stories and past experiences that you would like to highlight. Giving specific examples while answering questions can really strengthen your case.”

During the Interview

“If the interview is in-person, dress for success. Make sure your uniform is clean, non-wrinkled, and all the patches are correctly placed. Don’t go overboard, but it is fine to wear some of the award medals that you are most proud of.”

"If it is a phone conference, eliminate any and all background noise. Make sure you are sitting in a quiet room where you will have no interruptions or distractions, and have good cell phone service."

"Don't rely on reading directly off note sheets or your computer screen. Even on a phone conference, people will notice if you sound scripted. It is totally fine to have a bulleted outline of some of your goals you want to discuss; however, to avoid reading word-for-word, write only a few key words and not full sentences."

"Speak slowly and clearly. It may be tempting to start talking faster when you have lots of adrenaline and nervous energy, but make a conscious effort to be easily intelligible."

"Don't be afraid to ask for a question to be repeated. This can ensure you are answering the correct question, and shows you are paying attention. And bonus, it gives you more time to come up with your answer!"

"Pausing to gather your thoughts is much better than spewing out a made-up answer. Counting to three in your head before answering, or saying "that's a great question", can give you time to formulate a plan of attack for answering the question. This looks much more professional than rambling."

"Using proper terminology will demonstrate that you are a well-versed and qualified candidate. Remember, '*Venturing crew*' NOT 'Venture crew', '*Venturer*' NOT 'Venture Scout', and '*VenturingFest*' NOT 'VentureFest'."

"Many candidates will have similar experiences; work to show how you are different."

"Don't be over confident or cocky. Anything could happen, so stay humble."

SAMPLE QUESTIONS

Previous Experience Questions

- What leadership positions have you held before?
- What activities have you helped to organize/run? What was your position in the organization/running of these activities?
- Give us an example of an important goal you have made in the past year and how you succeeded in achieving said goal.
- What was your favorite moment in Venturing? Why was it your favorite/what did it teach you?
- Please tell us about your current role in Venturing.
- What's the biggest challenge you have overcome in Scouting? What made it so difficult?
- What goals have you achieved in your past Venturing positions?
- Describe one time that you failed at something in Venturing, and explain what you learned from it.
- What is the hardest task you have ever accomplished? What made it so difficult?

Personality Questions

- What are your 3 biggest strengths and weaknesses?
- Rate yourself on a scale of 1-10 with how effective you are at communication, and explain why.
- Do you work better on a team, with a partner, or alone?
- What are some things on your bucket list?
- If you could put three things into a box that are close to you, either tangible or intangible, what would those items be?
- What is your favorite thing to do in your free time?
- What is your favorite animal and why?
- As you approach college, what field of study are you looking into pursuing, and what do you find most interesting about it?
- What would an ideal job for you consist of?

Your Thoughts on <Insert Venturing Topic>

- What one thing do you consider the most important component of Venturing?
- Why is Venturing important to you?
- In less than 30 seconds, describe how Venturing has changed your life.

- Where do you think Venturing is headed in the future?
- Which leadership skills do you feel are most important for Venturing?
- What is the most important training program in the Venturing program? Why?
- What qualities make a good advisor?
- What qualities make a good vice president?
- What steps are important in mentoring new officers?
- Why should somebody who has already earned their Eagle Scout rank join Venturing?
- Do you consider awards to be an important part of the Venturing program?
- Do you consider uniforms to be an important part of the Venturing program?

What Would You Do?

- How can you, as a <council/area/region/national> officer, influence other Venturers to become better leaders?
- If you had the chance to do a major overhaul of the Venturing program, what change would you make?
- How do you personally recruit people into Venturing?
- How would you help a council to start a VOA?
- If you could do one thing to improve Venturing in your <council/area/region>, what would you do and why?
- Let's assume you have a big exam coming up on Monday, however you don't feel prepared for it. The area Venturing conference is also this weekend, and you are scheduled to teach a class. What do you do?
- What are some new ways to promote attendance at Venturing events?
- As getting the word out about Venturing has become more important to grow membership, what is one suggestion to help get new youth involved in Venturing?
- How would you best manage working with your vice presidents?
- How would you deal with an officer, advisor, or committee member that wasn't being active in the VOA?
- Do you believe there is value to the <area/region/national> VOA working to start council VOAs? If so, how do you plan on contributing to this, or if not, how would you instead focus your resources on other issues?
- If I had never heard of Venturing and you were trying to get me to join, how would you describe the program in less than 30 seconds?
- How would you describe a constructive working relationship with your advisor? What would you do to develop and maintain that relationship?

Questions About the Position

- A lot of travel can be required for an <area/region/national> officer; if you are chosen, will you be able to make it to every event?
- Which is your greatest skill that you can bring to the <council/area/region/national> VOA?
- How do you feel this job will be different from your previous leadership experiences?
- How will you balance your other aspects of life with your position?
- Convince us that we should pick you for this job. Include some of your plans to improve the <council/area/region/nation>, and how you would go about doing these things?
- Utilizing e-mail, Skype, Facebook, and other social networking sites is crucial for a Venturing officer. Please describe how you plan to utilize these (or other sites) if selected for a position.
- If selected, what will you do differently than the current officer?
- If you were selected for this position, what would some of your goals include and how would you go about accomplishing them?
- What makes you different from any other candidate?
- As an officer, it is important to be aware of things happening in Venturing outside of just your home council or area. Please describe one major region or national initiative or project that occurred this year, and how you see it bettering the Venturing program.
- What would you do if you were not selected?
- Why are you the best candidate for this position?
- Tell us about two of your goals for the <council/area/region/national> VOA, and the specific steps you will take to achieve these goals.
- How do you think your previous leadership positions have helped prepare you for this position?
- As <area/region/national> president, you would be responsible for overseeing x number of <councils/areas/regions>; how do you plan on utilizing these officers as well as your VPs?
- As <area/region/national> president, you will have to travel, manage school, family, and other activities. How do you plan to manage your time and prioritize your responsibilities, and do you know of any other drawback that will limit your commitment to this position?