

## **Job Interview**

By

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Subject: 75 year old female

**1. Please tell me your earliest work history.**

I started working in a factory when I was seventeen years old. I was the oldest of twelve children. When I was five I started helping my mother with the babies. It seems every baby she had was spoiled. They always wanted to be where she was so when mommy was doing chores I would sit by her and rock the babies. So, all my childhood days and young adult years I was helping with the children. Mommy had twelve children all approximately two years apart. So, I didn't get to go to school much. Factory work was all I felt I could do. I left Pineville, Kentucky at the age of seventeen and moved to Loveland, Ohio. I got a job at Solo, a small factory. The company made things for the service men that were fighting in WWII. One item was a repair kit to help repair kit to help repair the soldier's shoes and another was called heat in a can and they used that to warm their rations without smoke so the enemy could not see them.

**2. What were your duties at this job?**

My job was taking the shoe kit and heat in a can from the assembly line and packing them in big boxes to be shipped. I felt very good about what I was doing. I felt I was helping fight the enemy.

**3. Where were you employed the longest and what was your job duties and job satisfaction?**

Several years after I was married and had five children I went to work for Clifton Shirt Company in 1962. I would work up to a few weeks before the babies were born then I'd take a leave of absence. Then I would return to work when they were about four months old. Thank God I didn't have to leave my children with strangers. My mother lived close by and she babysat for me while I worked. She would say she was repaying me for the times I took care of my siblings. I worked at Clifton over 39 years. I was a sewing machine operator. I worked on different parts of the shirts. I liked my job very much. I loved working with the people and we got along very well. While working there I was treated fairly by the company. We had floor bosses who were women and they were not very fair. They would try to get employees angry at each other by carrying tales and lying. But, the employees found out what they were doing and they quit paying attention to them. They were reported to the company several times and they were called on the carpet. No one respected them. But, I couldn't have worked for a better company than Clifton Shirt Co. owned by the Levy Brothers.

**4. What were the other employees like?**

At one time in the 70's and the early 80's Clifton employed over 100 employees. They were doing very well we worked a lot of overtime. It was all piece work which means the more shirts we got out the more money we made. There were women that worked there than men. The men worked in the cutting room and shipping. The women worked in the sewing room and most were married with

families.

**5. Were you satisfied with your job?**

I was satisfied with my job, for several reasons. One, I liked sewing, two, it was only about ten minutes to work, so if my children needed me I could be home quickly, and third since it was such a short distance I didn't have to pay a lot for gasoline.

**6. What was it like balancing a family and work? What was the biggest challenge in doing this?**

In balancing a family and work it wasn't easy. Since my children were ages two to thirteen the older ones helped a lot. My husband helped too. The biggest challenge in doing this was seeing that they had a good breakfast before I left for work and a good dinner in the evening. Also, every Sunday we had a big family dinner. It was hard keeping the laundry done since it was the 50's and 60's. You had to iron everything. I made sure they had clean ironed clothes to wear to school everyday. Since my husband didn't make a lot of money either it was hard making ends meet. But, by the grace of God we raised five wonderful children.

**7. How did your children feel about your working?**

My children would have preferred me not to work, but they understood I had to work in order to provide them things they needed. They never complained and helped when they could. I have great children.

**8. What expectations did you have from your employer and did they meet them?**

I expected to be treated with respect and fairly. I worked hard for Clifton and long hours. I knew they depended on me to be there everyday to work. I worked a lot of days when I needed to be home because I was sick. In return when I'd ask the superintendent to be off a few days to go on a trip they would let me off.

**9. Did your company have a union and how did you feel about them?**

Yes, we had a union and they are good in a way, but in others they are not. I've seen workers just do enough work to get by with no matter how important it was to get the work through the line because they had the union to protect them. If I had a choice I would rather work at a nonunion place as long as the company is fair. Unions used to do good things. My dad was a coal miner and I was raised in the mining camp. The coal miners fought hard for a union and many died on the picket line for what they believed in. They had a good leader in the 1930's. The union leaders were different then. They stood firm when they were fighting for better things for the workers.

**10. Did you feel loyalty towards your company and do you think your employer was loyal to you?**

Yes, I felt loyal to my company. I worked for Clifton for over 39 years. I was never called on the carpet for anything. I was complimented many times for the way I did my work. Even when I retired in 1992, I continued to work full time because they needed me on the job I was doing. I was a fast worker

also I didn't make many major mistakes. Denver Marshall was a company man but he was good to the employees. The company started losing customers in the late 1980's because of imported shirts from over seas. They couldn't beat the competition. So, they started looking for buyers for Clifton. When employees knew we were going to lose our job some started leaving and getting jobs elsewhere. That cut down on the quality of the product because they would hire girls without any knowledge of sewing and he would try to train them. We were asked to take a cut in wages in order to keep the factory going, but we had lost so many customers it didn't help. That's when I felt the company became very unfair. They would keep telling us we weren't going to lose our jobs, but they started laying employees off. They way they did it was they would come around and tell us when you get your table cleared go home and don't come back. They would do this to people that had been there for 50 years. They would receive nothing but one weeks pay not even a thank you for loyalty or an apology. That hurt a lot, we knew we were going to lose our jobs, but we expected better goodbyes than we got. They sent most of our work to Mexico to be done until a company in Oklahoma bought them out. That's when I think the leaders did the employees bad. Yes, I am angry over this.

**11. What were typical jobs for females and what were jobs for the men?**

Typical jobs females did were sewing machine operators. They worked on all parts of the shirt. Some girls worked in laundry cleaning threads and inspecting them. The men worked in the cutting room cutting out shirts and bringing parts to the women for sewing.

**12. Did you feel that the men had more or less obligation than the women?**

More obligations, the men did the heavy lifting and kept the work flowing from the cutting room to the girls at the machines.

**13. If you could have been anything you wanted to be what would it have been and what kept you from being it?**

When I was growing up I thought I would like to have been a writer. But, mom and dad had problems and divorced. I had to drop out of high school and never got to finish. I married young and started a family, but I always had the desire to write. I'd love to write the story of my life. I think it would be interesting. the way I faced my trials and disappointments it may help someone else. But, I I wouldn't trade the life I've had and still have for all the tea in China. I have a wonderful family 5 children , 4 sons and one daughter, 11 grand children (my two granddaughters are wonderful, loving, and hard working.) And my grandsons I'm proud of too, and also great-grandchildren. So, even with all of the trials and hard work I've had to do, I still have had a good life. I feel like God has been with me through it all giving me grace to get through all the bad times and grace to enjoy the good times, so I have no complaints. Only thanks be to God for all the things good and bad for God turned bad situations into good. So, how could ones life be bad if you felt God holding you up. I hope my family can look back on things I've told them about my life and They will say " Mom had a good life for she had God by her side."