Before the Interview

Accepting the Interview
- Write down the date, time, and place of the interview.
- Write down the interviewer’s name and title, if given.

Clean and Neat
- Be freshly showered and shampooed.
- Women—Wear a clean, pressed suit—either pants or skirt. Skirts should be no shorter than 1” above the knee. Wear polished dress shoes, flats or heels no more than two inches high. Hair should be neatly arranged.
- Men—Wear a clean, pressed suit and tie. Long pants and shined black or brown dress shoes. Black socks with a suit jacket and vest if desired.
- Remember that anything could detract a recruiter from paying attention to your qualifications (i.e. facial hair, jewelry, heavy colognes). When in doubt, be conservative!

Make a Good First Impression
- Be on time—Plan to arrive 10-15 minutes before your interview begins. Practice the route if in doubt.
- Maintain eye contact with the interviewer during your greeting and throughout the interview.
- Extend a firm handshake and use appropriate salutation (Mr./Ms./Dr.).
- Turn off your cell phone or put on silent.

Prepare Materials
- Professional portfolio to carry documents and take notes (a nicely bound notebook or folder could work as well).
- Extra copies of your resume.
- Reference list.
- Any requested documentation.
- A writing utensil.
- Samples of work.

The Interview

STAR Technique
Considering this technique can help you organize responses to behavioral questions.

Situation- What was the SITUATION?
Task- What TASK(S) did you identify that had to be completed?
Action- What ACTION did you take?
Result- What was the RESULT of your actions?

Common Interview Questions

Tell me about yourself.
- Keep your answer to one or two minutes.
- Give a short overview of yourself—general goals, skills, and background.
- Focus on the skills, experiences and education you have relevant to THIS specific position within this organization.
- Express why you’re interested in this position.

Be honest about your accomplishments and abilities—plan to discuss:
- Skills and abilities
- Relevant college classwork
- Sports, clubs, and activities
- Leadership roles, on and off campus
- Previous relevant work experience

What are your strengths and weaknesses?
- Strengths: Relate skills to the position description (give an example of your strength in action).
- Weaknesses: List a weakness you are working to improve and does not directly disqualify you from the position (employers want to see that you are self-aware and taking steps to better yourself).
Interview How-To Guide Book

Why are you interested in our organization?
What interests you about this job?
- Share an informed interest and passion: know the organization's mission, products, size, reputation, history, and how your role will support/impact the organization.
- Talk about how you can contribute to the company goals.

Where do you see yourself in five years?
- Demonstrate how this position fits into your short and long-term goals.
- Be realistic: research the structure of the organization and identify where entry-level employees progress.
- Before sharing graduate school plans, research whether the employer supports further education. (Typically, educational benefits are to be discussed after an offer of employment has been made).

What experiences have prepared you to succeed in this position?
- Relate your experiences (work, volunteer, research, student activities) to the requirements of this position.
- Share specific examples which apply to your desired position.

Questions to Ask the Interviewer
- What specific skills or qualities are especially important for me to be successful in this position?
- What characteristics do the achievers in this company seem to share?
- What kind of assignments might I expect the first six months on the job?
- What products (or services) are in the development stage now?
- What are your growth projections for the next year?
- What are some opportunities for improvement in your organization?
- What do you (the interviewer) like best about your job/company?
- When can I expect to receive a follow up from my interview today?
- Could I have your contact details or business card?

After the Interview
- Send a prompt thank-you note for the interview; email is appropriate as well as a hand-written card.
- Follow up regarding your status in the process if the employer has not contacted you within the agreed upon time frame (you can initiate contact and ask if a hiring decision has been made).
- Continue applying for additional opportunities.
- Evaluate your interviewing performance to learn from your experience.
- Don't Give Up!
Skype, Zoom, and Video Interviews

Practice Makes Perfect
Your first video calls are bound to feel awkward as you figure out where to look, what to do with your hands, or how loudly to speak. Do a practice interview with a friend. Record yourself and get a better idea about how you come across on video. Practice until you get comfortable and are happy with what you see.

Prepare Your Surroundings
Find a quiet businesslike setting to conduct your call. A cluttered background can be distracting. Keep away from personal items and aim for a neutral background. Also, make sure everyone knows you are in an interview to help avoid interruptions or excessive background noise. The Career Center has private rooms, which can be used for interviews. Contact the Career Center and ask to reserve a room.

Look the Part
Experts say that 90% of the cues we give off are non-verbal. Do research on what the company might want to see in an employee. It’s always better to look clean and professional. Even if your bottom half isn’t showing, dress it up to ensure you have a totally professional mindset.

Smile!
At an in-person interview, smiling comes naturally upon arrival and initial meeting. When you are not interacting with a person, it might be easy to let your face slip into other unconscious expressions. Don’t be nervous and try to get yourself to smile before the interview so it comes a little easier than forcing yourself to smile at a computer.

Stay Present
Periodic clues that you are still interested in what the employer is saying is a good idea. Avoid typing or using your computer for other things. That typing noise can come through loud and clear sometimes and will scream “not listening.”

Clear Up Tech Problems
Tech problems can lead to miscommunications. If there is a problem that persists, bring it up. Asking to reconnect shows the employer that you are a problem-solver.

Phone Interview
Tips to help you prepare for your next phone interview and land an interview face-to-face.

Take Advantage
The employer can’t see you, and as much as that can be a set back in communication of body language or facial expression, it also gives you the chance to have notes in front of you. Print out a copy of your resume to have in front of you, make a list of questions you want to ask, take notes, or use the internet for last-minute research.

Give Yourself Time
An interview during a lunch break is always a bad idea. The more of a time restriction you put on the interview, the more stressful the interview will likely be. Remember, the longer your interview takes, the better you’re doing. Give yourself a minimum of 30 minutes free to avoid having to cut off the conversation.

Control Your Environment
Make sure to make or take the call in an environment where you will not be distracted or interrupted. Use a landline or ensure you have enough reception. Consider reserving a Career Center interview room for your interview.

Phone Etiquette
To avoid an awkward start to the interview, make sure to answer the phone with your name. This will help you start the interview off confidently. Remember to smile while talking. Smiling brings energy to your voice and will help get enthusiasm across. Also, if there is a distraction, be honest about it. Being intentional is better than seeming disinterested.

Mute Button
Another way to take advantage of a phone interview is to make effective use of the mute button. Whether it is a sip of water, a quick moment to use the computer, or time to deal with a situation outside the interview, muting can be very helpful. However, it is a good idea to test your mute button to see if the person on the other line gets an indication if it has been activated.

Say Thank You
Send a thank-you note within a few hours after the interview. This helps to bring closure and an extra reminder to the employer about your interests and qualities. The goal of a phone interview is to achieve an interview face-to-face. If an immediate e-mail is not possible, save your notes to keep the points you want to make fresh in your mind.
Interview Faux Pas to Avoid

1. Poor personal appearance
2. Lack of interest and enthusiasm
3. Over-emphasis on money
4. Condemnation of past employers
5. Failure to look at interviewer while conversing
6. Limp, fishy handshake
7. Unwillingness to go where sent
8. Lateness to interview
9. Failure to express appreciation for interviewer's time
10. Asks no questions about the job
11. Indefinite response to questions
12. Overbearing, over-aggressive, conceited "know-it-all" complex
13. Inability to express oneself clearly
14. Lack of planning for career: no purpose or goals
15. Lack of confidence, uneasiness
16. Failure to participate in activities
17. Unwillingness to start at bottom
18. Excuses, evasiveness
19. Untruthfulness
20. Lack of manners, courtesy
21. Lack of maturity
22. Lack of vitality
23. Indecision
24. Merely shopping around

Last Thoughts on Interviewing

- Be proactive throughout the interview process
- Be prepared—come to the Career Center to help prepare you for an interview/s
- Create a network of relationships with your professors, peers, and professionals
- Whenever you meet someone new always try to leave a good first impression, because you can never make a second first impression
- Ask questions and ask for support when you need or want a second opinion
- Reach out to the Career Center for support because no student is alone in their search for a career—take advantage of your resources!
Thank you for reading!

YOU'RE HIRED

The Career Center wishes you the best with your job interviews & job search!

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