Successful Interviewing

THE CAREER CENTER AT UCR
HTTP://CAREERS.UCR.EDU
951.827.3631
AGENDA

- Purpose of an Interview
- Before the Interview
- During the Interview
- After the Interview
- Interview Stream Demonstration
PURPOSE OF AN INTERVIEW

- A good resume gets you an interview
- A good interview gets you a job
- They’re not just interviewing you
- You’re interviewing them

Why do they interview you, anyway?
BEFORE THE INTERVIEW

PREPARATION:

- Interview Logistics
- Good First Impressions
- Research Position & Company
- Success Stories
- Answers to Typical Questions
- Questions for the Employer
- References
INTERVIEW LOGISTICS

- Time
- Type
- Interviewer(s)
- Location
GOOD FIRST IMPRESSIONS

- Dark or muted colors are more professional
- Women wear stockings, men dark socks
- Avoid heavy perfume or cologne
- Clean hands, nails, and brushed teeth
- Conservative hair style (and facial hair)
- Have you checked your virtual presence lately?
RESEARCH POSITION & COMPANY

- Review the position description
- Research the company
  - Company Website
  - Riley Guide, Hoovers
  - Career Insider, glassdoor.com
  - CNN money, Google Finance, Business Week
BEFORE THE INTERVIEW

• STAR Stories (3-5)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Situation or Task</th>
<th>Describe a specific event or situation. Give enough detail for the interviewer to understand. Draw from campus, work, or community experiences.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Action</td>
<td>Describe the action you took. If you are describing a group project, focus on your role.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Results</td>
<td>What did you accomplish? What did you learn?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

• Responses to typical questions
• 2-3 Questions for employer
• Practice!
DURING THE INTERVIEW

- **ARRIVE EARLY!** (But not too early)
  Fashionably late is just plain late!
- Leave cell phone in the car
- Interview begins in the parking lot
  - be courteous
- Bring extra copies of resume
- Take cues from interviewer
DURING THE INTERVIEW, cont.

- Firm handshake
- Sit when asked to do so
- Make effective eye contact – smile!
- Express confidence in your abilities
  - what would you bring to the organization?
- Tie your background to the position
- Speak clearly with enthusiasm

**BE HONEST**

**THINK POSITIVE**

**PRACTICE ACTIVE LISTENING**

**BE CAREFUL NOT TO CRITICIZE**
THE QUESTIONS...and how to answer them

“Where do you see yourself in 5 years?”

- Demonstrate the importance of the job offer as part of your career progression
- Focus on achievable objectives and what you are doing to reach those objectives

The wrong answer:
Anything about marriage, kids, and going back to school.
THE QUESTIONS... No. 2

“Why do you want to work for our organization?”

- Where you work should be important to you
- Remember your homework here
- Let them know that you know about their achievements and challenges
- Don’t overdo it

The wrong answer:

“Well, I have all these student loans...”
“What is your greatest weakness?”

Reframe the question:
- Not what are your “weaknesses”, but what are your “limitations”
- Make your strengths your limitations
- How would you improve your limitations?

The wrong answers:
- “I sometimes get behind in tasks.”
- “I don’t have much experience.”
“What is your greatest strength?”

Frame your answer in two ways:

- *How you see your talents and abilities*
- *How will you be an asset to the organization*

The wrong answer:
“*I’m a quick learner.*”
THE QUESTIONS...No. 5

“Tell us a little bit about yourself?”

- What makes you different from others?
- How organized and concise are you?
- What brought you to this career?
- Why do you want to work with this organization?

The wrong answers:
Anything that is overlong.
Sentimental, idealistic responses.
“What questions do you have for us?”

Always have questions. Ask about:

- *The culture of the organization*
- *Professional Development*
- *Expectations*
- *What the next step is*

The wrong answer.
- Anything about salary, benefits or bonuses.
- No questions.
EXITING THE INTERVIEW

- Ask about the next step (if not already mentioned)
- Ask for business cards if not offered
- Shake everyone’s hand, call them by name if possible and thank them for their time
- RELAX…you’re done!
AFTER THE INTERVIEW

- **DO** send a thank you note (email, card)
- **DO** follow-up if the date that they said they would get back to you has passed
- How often depends on the industry
- Always be professional

*Exception:*
*If the employer stated to not contact them, do not contact them*
Accepting an Offer

- Be enthusiastic
- Find out the details
- Find out how much time they can give you
- If you feel this is the right job, it is okay to accept the offer over the phone
Declining An Offer

- Respond promptly and courteously
- Remain positive
- Don’t burn any bridges!
What to Say When You Don’t Get the Job

- Many companies do not inform you of their decision if they are not hiring you
- *Remain professional*
- Situational: ask them what could have made you a stronger candidate
- Don’t burn any bridges!
Additional Career Center workshops to help you with your career success:

- Beginning and Advanced Resume Writing
- Internship Orientations
- Job Search Skills
- Conversation Skills
- Special Seminars with Employer Presenters
CAREER CENTER

Veitch Student Center (Health Center Bldg)
Mon - Fri 8am - 5pm
Wed 9am - 5pm

http://careers.ucr.edu
(951) 827-3631

Drop-In Hours:
Mon - Thu 10am - 3pm
Fri 10am - 12pm