

# Ace the Interview

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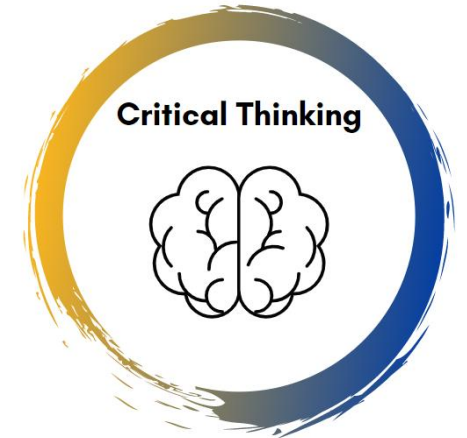
# Agenda

- **Prepare for the Interview**
- **Commonly Asked Questions**
- **During the Interview**
- **After the Interview**
- **Questions**

**What story do you want to tell?**



# **NACE CAREER READINESS COMPETENCIES**



*Obtaining **requisite competencies** that broadly prepare college graduates for a **successful transition** into the workplace.*



# What You'll Learn Today

At the end of this workshop, you will be able to...



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**Explain what is important when preparing for an interview**



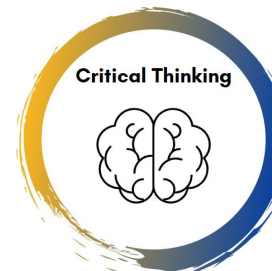
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**Identify types of interviewing, commonly asked questions, and how to answer them effectively**



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**Understand your role in the process and how to navigate (before the interview, during the interview, and after the interview)**



# What is an interview for?

## PURPOSE

**1**

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**Market  
Yourself**

**2**

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**Find out more  
about the  
organization**

**3**

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**Determine  
good fit for you  
and the  
employer**

# The First Impression

It begins far before you actually interview!



**Career Fair or  
Networking**



**Email**



**Application  
Materials**



**Phone Call**

**Once you are invited...**



- ✓ Smile
- ✓ Check Schedule
- ✓ Respond Promptly
- ✓ Be Courteous





# Types of Interviews & Interview Logistics

## In Person Interview

- **Verify the time and location**
- **Ask for clarification (if needed)**
  - **Will this be a panel or individual interview?**
  - **Who will I be meeting with during the interview?**
  - **Should I prepare any materials or a presentation for this interview?**





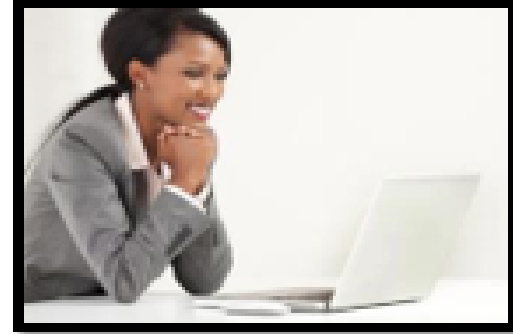
## Virtual Interview

- Find a space without interruption and a good internet connection
- Access the link/platform ahead of time
- Dress the part
- Ask for clarification (if needed)
  - What is the web conferencing system that will be used?
  - What time zone will this interview take place?
  - Should I prepare any materials for this interview?



## ➤ Virtual Interview

- **Test your technology:** make sure your internet connection is stable and that your camera and microphone work properly
- **Create a professional virtual background:** Use a plain background (test virtual backgrounds if needed)
- **Choose a suitable room:** Position yourself in a quiet and well-lit area, preferably facing a natural light.
- **Use notes strategically :** Avoid reading from them directly
- **Dress professionally**
- **Be mindful of body language:** Maintain eye contact; Smile when appropriate and nod to show engagement.



# Group Interview

- Focus on interactivity & inclusivity
- Speak with purpose
- Listening is key
- How do you work in a team setting?
- What unique ideas do you have?



## **Meal**

**Follow the interviewer's Lead**

**Maintain conversation**

**Follow etiquette rules**

**Less formal environment**



# Dress for Success

- Dark or muted colors are more professional
- Closed-toe shoes, dark socks if appropriate
- Avoid heavy perfume or cologne
- Clean hands, nails, and brushed teeth
- Grooming (hair & facial)
- Visit R' Professional Career Closet
- Have you checked your virtual presence lately?







# Do Your Research

**Review the position description**

**Research the company/organization**

**Ask current/former employees about their experiences**

**Prepare 3-5 questions for your interviewer**

# Interview Question Styles

Different interviews include different types of questions

- **Tell me how your background prepares you to do the job?**
- **Could you tell me about a time when you worked on a group project?**
- **How would you respond to a dissatisfied customer?**
- **What new feature would you add to MS Word if you were hired?**

**Straightforward**

**Behavioral Based**

**Situational**

**Technical**

**Reflect on past actions and provide real examples for your answer**

# Behavioral Questions

- **Problem-solving & Critical thinking:** "Tell me about a time when you had to find a creative solution to a complex problem at work"
- **Time Management:** "Can you provide an example of a time when you had to handle multiple projects or tasks with competing deadlines? (How do you prioritize your tasks and manage your time?)"
- **Teamwork and Collaboration:** "Tell me about a time when you had to work in a team to complete the project before the deadline."
- **Adaptability and Flexibility:** "Describe a time when you had to quickly adjust to new environment, unexpected changes or shifting priorities. How did you handle it?"
- **Communication and Interpersonal Skills:** "Tell me about a challenging conversation you had to have with a coworker or client. How did you approach it, and what was the outcome?"
- **Initiative and Proactivity:** "How have you shown initiative?"

# Behavioral Questions

Be a STAR



<u>S</u> ituation or <u>T</u> ask	Describe a specific event or situation. Give enough detail for the interviewer to understand. Draw from campus, work, or community experiences.
<u>A</u> ction	Describe the action you took. If you are describing a group project, focus on your role.
<u>R</u> esults	What did you accomplish? What did you learn?

- **Past actions are more indicative of future success than hypothetical situations**
- **Prepare 3-5 STAR examples**



**Let's  
Practice!**



S T A R





**Interview Question 1:**

Tell me about a time when you worked effectively under pressure.  
How did you ensure that you were successful?

**Interview Question 2:**

Describe a time when you worked with a group to achieve a goal.

**Interview Question 3:**

Walk me through a time when you made a mistake. What would you have done differently?



**1**

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**Divide into groups of 3. Person 1 will be the interviewer and will ask questions first**

**2**

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**Person 2 will be the interviewee first**

**3**

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**Person 3 will observe and give feedback**

**4**

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**Then switch, so that each person takes on each role**

# Other Common Questions

Tell us a little bit about yourself and why this position interests you?

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



Why do you want to work for our organization?

- *Where you work should be important to you (values)*
- *Recall your company research*
- *Let them know that you know about their achievements and challenges*

What is your greatest weakness/opportunity?

- *Identify a weakness that does not contradict a core competency needed for the job*
- *Explain at least 2 specific ways you have overcome/managed the weakness and provide evidence*

## Practice Virtually Using

1. **STANDOUT**<sup>®</sup>

2. Schedule an **interview** practice or Mock Interview Critique appointment with your career specialist.

[STANDOUT](#)  
[TUTORIAL](#)

# Arriving at the Interview

## In-Person

- Arrive early (10-15 minutes so you are not rushed)
- Leave cell phone in the car or shut off before going into interview
- Interview begins in the parking lot — be courteous
- Bring extra copies of resume
- Take cues from interviewer

## Virtual or Phone

- Check the Zoom/virtual link early and make sure you have the link, password, internet connection ready to go
- Put cell phone or any other distractions away before the interview
- Have a copy of resume, CL, & job description in front of you
- Take cues from interviewer

# During the Interview

- **Sit, taking cue from interviewer (in-person)**
- **Be mindful of time**
- **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**





# Closing the Interview

- **Your time to ask questions!**
- **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!**



# ➤ Last question: Do you have any questions for us?

**Prepare 2-3 questions to** demonstrate your interest in the role

- **Research the company and job description**
- **Personalize your questions:** Avoid asking simple questions that could be answered easily by a quick online search. “What qualities or skills are you looking for in an ideal candidate for this position?”
- **Ask about the team and culture:** Inquire about the work environment, team dynamics, and company culture to assess if it aligns with your own values and working style.
- **Avoid asking about compensation and benefits**

# After the Interview

- Send a thank you note (email, card)
- Be specific with what you appreciated about them in the interview
- Follow-up if the date that they said they would get back to you has passed
- Always be professional



*Exception:*

*If the employer stated to not contact them, do not contact them*

# When an offer has been made...

## Accepting the Offer:

- Be enthusiastic
- Find out the details
- Find out how much time they can give you
- Always deliberate before accepting

## Declining the Offer:

- Remain positive
- Don't burn any bridges!
- Respond promptly and courteously – don't ghost the employer!



# Salary Negotiation

## Should I negotiate?

- Am I completely entry-level?
- Is the job in a field that doesn't allow for negotiation?
- Is the offer reasonable?

## How do I negotiate salary?

- Maintain professionalism
- Present an appropriate salary range for the position
- Consider cost of living and other factors
- View the *What's My Worth? Salary Negotiation* workshop



## 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!





# On-Campus Interviews

- **Students are encouraged to participate!**
- **Employers interview UCR talent on campus**
- **Chance to interview for multiple internship and full-time positions**

## Filters

### Job type

Full-Time

Part-Time

Internship

On-Campus

Job

Co-Op

Experiential Learning


Fellowship

Graduate School

Volunteer

Work study

Interviewing on campus



**What questions do  
you have?**

## location

ENTRANCE IS BETWEEN UNIVERSITY LECTURE HALL  
AND SKYE HALL, UNDERNEATH THE UCR BOOKSTORE

## hours

MONDAY - FRIDAY: 8 AM TO 5 PM  
EXCEPT WEDNESDAY: 9 AM TO 5 PM



## drop-in hours

SPECIFIC TIMES ARE LOCATED ON WEBSITE HOME PAGE  
(SCROLL DOWN TO SEE)



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