

Effective Interviewing Strategies

Preparation

Know Yourself

- Review your skills in relation to the position. Ask others what your greatest strengths are
- Know your resume/application well. Look at ways your qualifications meet the job description/admissions requirements
- Ask yourself how you are unique from other candidates. Be able to communicate those traits

Know the Employer

- Know the employer's website well
- Google the employer and see what news articles or other relevant information can be found
- Network with current employees or students and ask them about the climate and the culture
- What products/services does the company provide?
- How many employees does the company have?
- How long have they been in business?
- What is the company's mission or philosophy?
- Has the company undergone any downsizing recently? If so, why?

Call or email the hiring manager to ask about the interview details

- Where is the interview?
 - Review directions so you know exactly where you are going
 - Build in traffic for your travel time
 - Where can you park? Do you need to bring money for meters?
- Who is interviewing you? Is it more than one-person?
- How long is the interview? Is there a schedule you can get of the day?

Is it a group interview?

Practice Ahead of Time

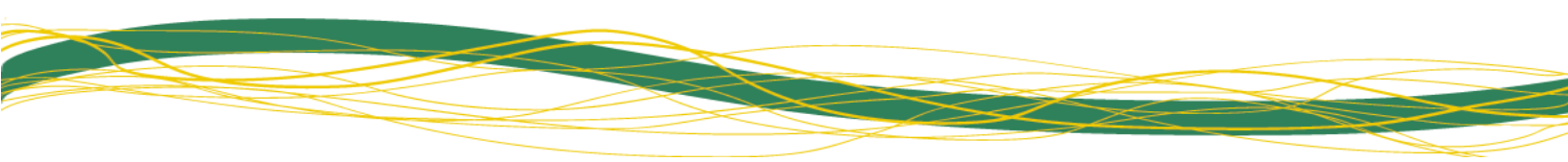
- Familiarize yourself with potential interview questions
 - http://www.quintcareers.com/interview_question_database/
 - Practice, practice, practice with yourself, family, friends and career counselors
 - Verbally practice stories of past work experiences that demonstrate your skills
 - Sign up for a **mock interview!**

Dress

- Know the environment: conservative or casual? Dress a step above the environment
- Suits are usually appropriate, and you have the option of removing your suit jacket
- It is better to be overly conservative with women's lengths of skirts and tops
- Be aware of strong scents, excessive jewelry, etc.
- Bring a briefcase, professional bag and/or portfolio

Interview Day

- Bring your resume and business cards to hand out if the employer wants them
- Arrive about 15 minutes early, and be very nice to everyone you see in the office, bathroom, etc.
- Start with a firm (not too firm) handshake
- Convey a positive attitude!!! Smile! 😊
- Demonstrate your enthusiasm, willingness to learn and desire to be part of a team
- Eye level and eye contact are very important



Questions

****Remember to display your greatest strengths as they relate to the job and how you are unique from other candidates through your answers****

Behavioral Based Questions (Tell me about a time when..../Give me an example of)

- Tell them about a SPECIFIC situation that relates to the question and the targeted skill set
- Tell them briefly using the **STAR** process:
 - **Situation/Task**- what was the situation or task?
 - **Action**- what action steps did you take in the situation?
 - **Result**- what happened after you took action? How did people respond?
 - Remember, the result is always positive, even if the experience was not

Examples of skill sets:

- Problem-Solving
- Adaptability and Resilience
- Interpersonal Skills/Teamwork
- Organization/attention to detail
- Integrity
- Innovation/Creativity
- Decision making
- Communication

Questions for the Employer

- Be prepared to ask 3-5 questions, depending on the amount of time remaining in the interview
- Do NOT ask things that could have been answered by doing your research
- Ask questions that have meaning to you
- You can also turn their questions around on them, such as:
 - What are your company's/program's greatest strengths? Greatest weaknesses?
 - What are the long-range goals of your company/program?

Closing the Interview Well

- Summarize why you are qualified
- State strengths/qualities you may have forgotten to emphasize earlier
- Reiterate your enthusiasm and interest in their program or the position
- Find out what happens next! Get a timeline
- Make sure you have business cards of the person(s) who interviewed you

After the Interview

- After you leave the interview, go to a private place to take notes on the questions the employer asked you
- Within 24 hours of the interview, send a thank you card or email to every person who interviewed you
- Make a follow-up call or email 10-14 days after your interview, conveying your continued interest and checking on their process and timeline of hiring

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