

UNIVERSITY CAREER SERVICES

Interview Preparation

DO NOT BRING: Cell Phone (or turn it off), food, gum, friends or family members

What To Wear

Know the culture of the organization for which you are interviewing and dress accordingly.

- If in doubt, wear an ironed business suit
- Wear Dress shoes with dress socks
- Keep jewelry and/or makeup simple
- Hair and facial hair should be tidy and neat
- Dresses and blouses should not be low cut
- Avoid strong perfumes and cologne
- Dress conservatively so that dress/skirt hems are at or right above the knee at the shortest

A muted interview outfit allows the interviewer to truly focus on you, your answers, and accomplishments!

Sample Interview Questions

- Tell me about yourself.
- What interests you about our company – why do you want to work here?
- Why do you want to pursue a career in this field?
- Tell me about a time you made a mistake and what you learned.
- What are your long-term career goals? How do you plan on achieving them?
- Describe a time when you anticipated potential problems and developed preventative measures.
- What do you consider to be your greatest strengths and weaknesses? (*When talking about weaknesses, be honest and mention how you are working to improve the weakness.*)
- Describe a time you were faced with a stressful situation that demonstrated your coping skills.
- Give me an example of a time when you set a goal and were able to meet or achieve it.
- Tell me about a time when you had to use your skills to influence someone's opinion.
- What motivates you to go the extra mile on a project or job?
- What qualifications do you have that make you successful in this career?
- What is your typical way of dealing with conflict? Give me an example.
- How well do you adapt to new situations?
- Give me an example of when you showed initiative and took the lead.
- What are two or three things that are most important to you in your job?
- How do you manage multiple tasks at once?

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The STAR Method

An effective method for answering behavioral questions is the S-T-A-R method, where you “tell your story” by using this outline:

- **Situation/Task (S/T)** – Describe the situation you were in or the task that you needed to accomplish. Be specific.
- **Action (A)** – Describe the actions you took to resolve the situation or to accomplish the task.
- **Result/Outcome (R)** – Share the results of your efforts – what you accomplished or learned. Quantify your results if possible.

The more practice, the better you will be. Scheduling an Interviewing or Mock Interview appointment through University Career Services is a great way to identify areas where you could improve!

Questions to Ask the Employer

These questions should deal with four topics:

- The Position
- The Company/Organization
- The Work Industry
- The Individual Interviewer

Think of about 5 questions because some will probably be answered during the interview.

- What are the next steps in the hiring process?
- Describe a typical day on the job for someone in this position.
- What do you enjoy about working for this company/organization?
- What do you see as the most challenging/rewarding aspects of this position?
- Are there advancement opportunities available with your company?
- Does your company encourage professional development and continuing education?
- What type of training or orientation is offered to new employees?
- What goals or expectations do you have for the individual in this position?
- Describe the work environment and/or company culture.

Do Not ask about salary. Salary is discussed when you are offered the job.

Remember!

Be sure to send a thank you letter or email for the interview, within 24 hours.