TYPES OF INTERVIEWS

Many employers choose to conduct screening interviews over the telephone or virtually (Zoom, Teams, Skype, etc.), especially when the company is located in a different geographic area than you. These interviews may be used to determine if a face-to-face interview is justifiable. Since you never know when you might receive an unexpected phone call from an employer, check your voicemail greeting. Is it professional? Remember, first impressions count!

PHONE INTERVIEW TIPS

- Choose a quiet space with strong cell service. Consider putting a “Do Not Disturb” sign on your door.
- Avoid using speakerphone so that you can hear each other more clearly.
- Keep a copy of your resume, your calendar, and employer research material within easy access.
- Have a notepad and pen nearby to take notes. Immediately write down the employer’s name(s).
- Have a glass of water handy.
- Turn off notifications on your phone. (“Do Not Disturb”)
- Dress the part! This will encourage you to speak more professionally and it can help boost your confidence.
- Smile! Your composure comes through even when the caller cannot see you.

VIRTUAL INTERVIEW TIPS

- Turn off your phone and choose a room where you will not have interruptions or distractions.
- Sit in front of a blank wall with a warm one-color background. Clear off table surfaces aside from a notepad/pen.
- Look at the camera, not the screen.
- Practice in advance so you can get comfortable with this formatting. It can be helpful to practice recording yourself using Big Interview (available through the Career Center’s website) or using your own recording device. It can also be helpful to practice in front of a mirror.
- Dress the part! While they can typically only see from your shoulders up, dress to impress to set your mindset.
- Test your audio and video capability prior to the interview. Ensure a strong internet connection.
- Answer questions clearly, concisely, and enthusiastically.

SECOND INTERVIEW

You may be asked for a second interview after your initial screening interview (if applicable). If the initial interview was held at a location other than at the company’s facility, you may be asked to visit the company’s offices for this subsequent interview. The follow-up interview will allow for a more in-depth conversation with the employer and often with additional members of the organization. An invitation for a follow-up interview suggests that the employer is very interested in considering you for employment. In preparation, you will be expected to expand upon the areas you discussed in your first interview, and you will have more opportunities to ask questions. Be prepared to do so. Some employers will have you stay the whole day to shadow, deliver a presentation, etc., so be prepared – this is something the employer would arrange ahead of the interview.
DURING THE SECOND INTERVIEW/SITE VISIT

- Be professional at all times – from interviews to dinner engagements. These are not social events and the interview lasts from when you walk in the door until when you exit. Avoid messy foods and alcoholic beverages if attending a dinner as a part of the interview.
- Stay away from ordering the most expensive or least expensive thing on the menu if your visit includes dinner.
- You may be asked to take a test on anything from your basic skills to your personality.
- You should view the second interview as an opportunity to evaluate the company and decide if this is an organization you would want to work for.

AFTER THE INTERVIEW

- If you are asked for feedback about your experiences in the second interview, be positive and constructive if you are interested in the position.
- After the interview, review and record your recollections. This will be helpful if you are interviewing with a number of companies and want to compare them on several points.
- Write a thank-you letter (or email) to each person with whom you spent a portion of the day.

TRAVELING FOR AN INTERVIEW

- Be sure to check your schedule regarding classes, tests, and so forth before confirming date for any type of interview. The employer will most likely be willing to work with you in arranging suitable dates for the interview.
- The company contact person should provide you with an itinerary of what will be involved in the second interview/site visit. It is acceptable to request an itinerary, information on how to dress, and items you may need to provide, such as college transcripts.
- Travel arrangements can be handled in a number of ways. You may be asked to make your own arrangements, but typically the organization will coordinate your traveling plans.
- If the company is making your traveling arrangements, verify what expenses will be prepaid and what expenses will be reimbursed. If the employer is paying for your hotel expenses, be considerate of this, and do not charge personal requests to your room (room service, pay-for-view movies, etc.). If you are to be reimbursed for expenses, keep receipts and document the mileage on your personal car if applicable.
- Be sure you have clear directions to the location of your interview. Check on parking options if you are driving. Always give yourself plenty of time – it’s better to sit in the parking lot and wait, rather than being late.
- Take a credit card and/or cash to handle unexpected expenses and incidentals.