

# INTERVIEWING

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COLLEGE OF CHARLESTON CAREER CENTER | CAREERCENTER@COFC.EDU

## TYPES OF INTERVIEWS

Many employers choose to conduct screening interviews over the telephone or via video programs (such as Skype), 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 justified.

Since you never know when you might receive an unexpected call from an employer, check your voicemail greeting. Is it professional? Remember, first impressions count!

### **PHONE INTERVIEW TIPS**

- Chose a quiet space with strong cell service. Consider putting a “Do Not Disturb” sign on your door.
- Keep a copy of your resume, your calendar, and employer research material within easy reach of the phone.
- Have a notepad and pen handy to keep notes.
- Have a glass of water handy.
- Turn off call waiting on your phone.
- Stand up during the interview. You will be more alert, and your response time will be improved.
- 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 can't see you.
- Immediately write down the recruiter's name.

### **VIRTUAL INTERVIEW TIPS**

- Turn off your phone and choose a room where you will not have interruptions or distractions.
- Shoot the video in front of a blank wall or a warm one-color background. Clear off table surfaces.
- Look at the camera, not at the screen.
- Practice in advance of your interview so you can get comfortable with this formatting. It can be helpful to practice recording yourself using InterviewStream (available through the Career Center's website) or using your webcam system. It can also be helpful to practice in front of a mirror.
- Avoid patterned clothing, including floral or striped garments.
- Test your audio and video capability prior to the interview. Ensure strong wifi connection.
- Answer questions concisely and enthusiastically.

### **SECOND INTERVIEW**

You may be asked for a second interview after your initial screening interview. If the initial interview was held at a location other than at the company's facility (i.e. the Career Center), 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.

### **PREPARING FOR THE INTERVIEW**

- 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.
- Plan to spend most of one day for this interview.

### **DURING THE SECOND INTERVIEW/SITE VISIT**

- Be professional at all times – from interviews to dinner engagements. These are not social events. Stay away from messy foods and from alcoholic beverages.
- Stay away from ordering the most expensive or least expensive item on the menu if your visit includes a dinner engagement.
- 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 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 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 a date for a follow-up interview, as prior arrangements may have to be made with professors and for travel. The employer will most likely be willing to work with you in arranging suitable dates for your 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 should provide, such as college transcripts.
- Travel arrangements can be handled in a number of ways. You may be asked to make your own arrangements or the organization may coordinate your travel arrangements.
- If the company is making your travel 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 calls to your room, order pay-for-view movies, etc. If you are to be reimbursed for expenses, keep receipts and document the mileage on your personal car.
- Be sure you have clear directions to your hotel and to the location of your interview. Check on parking options if you are driving.
- Take a credit card and/or cash to handle unexpected expenses and incidentals.