Interviewing to Win
FACTS ... about Interviewing

- Single most important aspect of job hunt
- 90% of interviewers make their selection within the first 5-8 minutes of interview
- 65-75% of hiring decisions are based on nonverbal communication
- Most common reason for elimination before interview begins – INAPPROPRIATE DRESS

Sources:  Dress for Success – John Malloy
          Interview Magic – Susan Whitcomb
INTERVIEWING OVERVIEW

- Before the Interview
- Types of Interviews
- Interview Day
- After the Interview
- Questions – Employer & Candidate
BEFORE THE INTERVIEW

- Know yourself – What do you have to offer to an employer? Use your résumé as a guide
- Education/Training
- Experience – PAID & UNPAID
  - Include full/part-time, seasonal, temporary, volunteer, internship, clinical, practicum, field experience

  BE SURE TO INCLUDE ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE
  - Special class projects/papers/research/presentations

  What specific skills did you learn from each experience and what did the team rely on you for? Be able to discuss strengths/ weaknesses from the employer’s view

- Personality/Natural Gifts/Aptitude
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SKILLS</th>
<th>PERSONAL QUALITIES</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>Patient</td>
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<tr>
<td>(verbal &amp; written)</td>
<td>Honest</td>
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<tr>
<td>Honesty/Integrity</td>
<td>Reliable</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
<td>Self-starter</td>
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<tr>
<td>Motivation/Initiative</td>
<td>Resourceful</td>
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<td>Strong Work Ethic</td>
<td>Diplomatic</td>
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<td>Teamwork</td>
<td>Risk taker</td>
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<tr>
<td>Computer</td>
<td>Creative</td>
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<td>Analytical</td>
<td>Adaptable</td>
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<tr>
<td>Flexibility</td>
<td>Persistent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Detail-oriented</td>
<td>Open-minded</td>
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Job Outlook 2009
Research the Organization

- What does the company do? Produce? Who are the customers?
- Philosophy/Goals/Missions?
- Financial Health?
- How do others in the industry compare?
- How do YOU fit in?

Information can be found...
- Career Services – Link to Hoover’s database
- Organization homepage
- Library – Reference Department
- Chamber of Commerce
- Ask employer for info at time of interview invitation
Interview Attire

• Dress smart – Conservative & Classic!
• Navy or Charcoal grey suit
• Skirted suit for women still safest bet
• White blouse/shirt, long-sleeved
• WOMEN-neutral color hose, shoe color=skirt color
• MEN-sock color matches shoes/no shins showing
• Extras – Minimal jewelry and scents
• Keep employer in mind
Men’s Interview

- Wear a good quality tie, belt, and shoes
- Understated colors, quality fabrics, good fit
Women’s Interview

- Knee-length skirt or pants
- Closed-toe/low heel shoes
BE INTERVIEW READY!

- Be ready for a full interview the moment you send your first résumé
- Prepare your message takers!
- Are all messages/homepage/Facebook appropriate?
- Anything on the internet must be considered public information
- Keep job search folder (by the phone)
  - Résumé, reference list, notes on each employer - including contact name, generic questions, calendar, key sales points, paper/pen
Rehearse

- Practice out loud – mirror, tape recorder, Career Services practice interviews
- Anticipate questions – general and those specific to your field
- Importance of body language – convey confidence and poise
- Topics of conversation – local & national news
- Remember that an interview involves give and take – avoid short “yes” or “no” answers
STAR Technique

- **SITUATION** – My sorority decided to raise $ for a homeless shelter
- **TASK** – I chaired the publicity committee
- **ACTION** – I chaired a committee of 8 students and alumni; Wrote press releases for local media; Oversaw development of theme posters & brochures; Presented program to student organizations
- **RESULT** – Our group had a successful fundraiser and donated $1500 to the homeless shelter
TYPES OF INTERVIEWS

Be prepared for anything

PHONE INTERVIEW
Keep your folder by phone, relax, dress in interview attire, be positive & energetic

TRADITIONAL
Often a panel or group, asking common interview questions. (See handout)

SITUATIONAL
“What would you do if ...?”

BEHAVIORAL – Very popular
“Describe a time when you worked with an uncooperative customer.”
INTERVIEW DAY

• Arrive early
• Be courteous to everyone
• Take nice padfolio with extra copy of résumé, reference list, transcripts, portfolio
• Anticipate problems
  • Grooming items
  • Money
  • Notes (employer phone #, directions)
SMILE Technique

Open the Interview with the SMILE Technique

- Shake Hands and Smile
- Make Eye Contact
- Introduce Yourself
- Learn and Use Names
- Engage in Small Talk
  - Stick with positives; show you are sociable/likable. Employers hire people they like!

- Be aware of your nonverbal communications: facial expressions, posture, body space
Interview Format

- Upside-down triangle – broad to specific
  - Tell me about yourself.
  - What is one of your greatest accomplishments?
  - Give me an example of how you’ve used Excel.
    - Prepare situations to illustrate some of your different skills and accomplishments. (STAR)

- Take the opportunity for a final sell
  - If the employer asks, “Is there anything else you would like to share with us?” have a response prepared.

- Have questions for the interviewer.
Interview Questions

- Tell me about yourself.
  - Key sales points – not personal info
- Strengths & Weaknesses
  - Weaknesses – things you have been working on
  - Finish with a positive after being asked a negative
- Mistake? Conflict? Why left last job?
  - Remain positive, honest, and demonstrate initiative. Show what you’ve learned. Never speak negatively about former employer/co-workers.
- What are your salary expectations?
  - Research market. Try not to be first to mention a number. If forced, give a range. Benefits are a huge piece of salary.

Career Services Books – Hundreds of ?’s and ways to answer
Questions from Candidate

- What type of person are you looking for?
- Describe a typical day on the job.
- What are some upcoming special projects?
- What kind of training will I receive and who will train me?
- What is your timeline for making a decision? If I haven’t heard from you by ____, may I call you?
AFTER THE INTERVIEW

- Follow through is **KEY**!
- Notes to yourself - ?’s, impressions, company info, business cards, evaluate self
- Quality Thank-You Letter – mail (or email) immediately
Dear (Mr./Ms./Mrs. Person’s Name):

Thank you for the opportunity to interview yesterday for the (name of position). I appreciated your hospitality and enjoyed meeting you and the members of your staff.

The interview confirmed my initial positive impression of (name of company) and reinforced my strong interest in being associated with such a(n) (adjective) organization. I was particularly pleased to learn (name something gleaned from interview). My prior experience in (type of experience), plus my training in (refer to training), would enable me to become a strong contributing member of your (name of team).

Please let me know if there is any information that I can provide that will help you in your decision-making. If I do not hear from you prior, as you suggested during the interview, I will call you next (day), to see how your selection process is progressing.

Sincerely,

(signature)

Your Name