

# Internship and Job Interview Preparation

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# Before the Interview

- Research the company: know its values
- Know the job description very well; research what others have done in similar positions (LinkedIn)
- Dress in business professional attire (including for mock interview: blazer or suit jacket, button-down shirt or blouse)
- Know your audience (look up your interviewer/s on LinkedIn; don't send connection requests...until you're hired)
- When you prepare your answers for your interview, remember to keep them short
- Bring a notepad and pen in a padfolio with at least 5 printed copies of your resume; ask at the beginning of the interview if they mind if you take notes



1. Research the company and review the job description before the interview.



2. Identify your top skills and experiences relevant to position.



3. Complete a practice/mock interview prior to the actual interview.



4. Dress for interview success.



5. Bring copies of your resume/references to the interview.



6. Arrive 10-15 minutes before interview, turn off cell phone, go alone.



7. Be specific and provide examples in your responses.



8. Ask 2-3 questions when they ask for questions at the end.



9. Collect business cards of the individual(s) who interviewed you.



10. Send a thank-you note within 24 hours of interview.

# During the Interview

- All of your body language and answers should show that you are enthusiastic, curious and confident:
  - **Enthusiasm:** Smile, verbalize your passion for this industry and role, verbalize your passion by speaking in an energized and caring way about your past experiences that have prepared you for the role you're interviewing for
  - **Curious:** ask questions, admit when you don't have a certain technical skill that they're asking for, but that you are a quick learner and give an example of how you have learned quickly in the past
  - **Confident:** sit up straight, make direct eye contact, don't break eye contact like looking at the floor when you're thinking of an answer, speak clearly, use your hands when you speak

# Answer Questions with Examples/Stories

- When your interviewer asks you questions, apply this journalism saying: “**show, don’t tell.**” Don’t just tell them you’re organized; give an example of a project you were organized on in the past.
- By answering with examples, you are showing the interviewer what it would be like to work with you. They are learning tangible ways you have worked in the past, opposed to trying to understand you in the abstract way that would be presented if you only told them what skills you have instead of show them how you’ve applied these skills to be a successful team member in the past.
- Use the **STAR** model to tell stories: **Situation, Task, Action, Result.** In class today I shared this example: I hosted an event, the Women in STEM Conference, last month (Situation). I had two weeks to turn the event from an in-person event to a virtual event with maintaining the same value it would have had if it was in person (Task). I decided to pair students with industry professionals who they could do a virtual networking session with so they could still network with conference attendees (Action). According to the post-event survey, students were very satisfied with the industry connections they made and some will even continue their connection as a mentorship. Mostly alumni were the industry professionals, so it was a positive experience for alumni to be involved with campus for the first time since graduating.

# Interview Questions

- While there's no way to know what questions you'll be asked in the interview, be prepared for the following topics that interviewers will likely form their questions around, and be prepared with stories for each topic:
  - **Innovation/Creativity:** How you work through challenges and come up with new/beneficial solutions
  - **Ability to Excel:** What your technical and soft skills are, and are they enough for you to succeed in the role (if you don't have all the technical skills or experience they're asking for, make sure to emphasize you're a quick learner)
  - **Team Player:** How well you work on a team; how you do you interact with others and deal with conflict and challenges
  - **Self-Awareness:** Who you are, your experience, why you feel you're a good fit for this role, how you describe your work ethic and experience in relation to the new role, potentially what you'd like to do in the future (they like knowing you're goal-oriented and driven)

# Practice Mock Interview and Mock Interview Questions

1. Tell me about a time when you faced a problem on a project. Who was involved and how did you handle it?
2. Give two examples of how your previous experience has trained you for this role.
3. What are your top three greatest strengths and what unique skill would you bring to the team?
4. What attracts you to this industry and why do you want this role?
5. What is your favorite project, task or experiment that you've worked on at school, in an internship or in a job? What did you love about it and what did you contribute?

# Questions You Can Ask the Interviewer/s

- Come prepared to the interview with 2-3 questions prepared that you will ask your interviewers when they are finished asking you questions:
  - What are the most challenging and rewarding parts of your work?
  - What do you value most through all your years with the company?
  - What types of soft skills will help people succeed in this field?
  - If the interviewer/s don't tell you what the next steps/hiring timeframe are, you can ask
  - Google search and ask others (such as in your informational interview) what types of questions to ask at the end of an interview
  - You will need to ask your mock interviewer one question—be prepared!

# After the Interview

- Send a thank you email or written card within 24 hours of the interview to every person who interviewed you
- It should be 1-2 short paragraphs, thanking them in a very straightforward way and stating that you appreciated one of their questions (state which question) and/or an insight they shared (state the insight)
- In the interview, ask everyone for their business cards so you have their email; if not, remember their names