Interviewing
American Style
Overview

- Purpose of an interview
- What employers expect
- Proper dress / attire
- Parts of an interview
- Practice
Goals of an Interview

- To highlight your **skills**, **strengths**, and **abilities** and learn more about the position and organization.

- To determine if you are the **right person** for a particular job **AND** if the job is the **right fit** for you!

- The employer wants to know, **"Why should I hire YOU"**?

- You must know your **selling points** and be ready to communicate their **value** in relation to the position you are seeking.

*Knowing what to expect and how to conduct yourself in an interview greatly enhances your chances of receiving internship, coop, or job offers.*
Parts of an Interview

1. Preparation
2. The Introduction
3. Questions & Answers (Q&A)
4. The Closing
PART 1: Preparation

get ready

✔ Dress for Success
✔ Know Yourself
✔ Know the Career Field and Organization

**TIP:** Greater preparation ensures greater success.
You can never prepare too much!
PROFESSIONAL APPEARANCE

Professional Dress
Shirt / Tie
Shoes / Socks
Jewelry
Hair / Fingernails
Make-Up
Additional Items

Turn off your cell phone!
Proper Attire

AVOID!

Women’s Attire

DO’S

DON’T’S
Men’s Attire

Proper Attire

AVOID! AVOID! AVOID!
Making the best 1st impression
Now that You’re Dressed For Success….

FOCUS ON INTRODUCING YOUR STRENGTHS AND INTEREST IN THE POSITION/COMPANY
Know Yourself and Your Strengths

Be ready to discuss your interests, strengths and achievements.

- Academics
- College / Community Activities
- Experience – Paid and Volunteer
- Match to the Position / Organization

How do the above relate to your career interests?
Identify Your Strengths

- What are your 5 greatest strengths?
- What sets you apart from the competition?
- How would you describe yourself?
- How would others describe you?
- Why should the employer hire YOU?

**Examples:** creative, detail oriented, punctual, communication, analytical, leader, team player, flexible, perform under stress, collaborative, dependable, etc.

**TIP:** Although it may feel a bit uncomfortable, during an interview you must really *sell* yourself! This takes practice!
Know the Career Field and Organization

Career Research:
- Demonstrate genuine interest in the position you are seeking (or it will be difficult to convince the employer of your desire and match to the opportunity!)
- Thoroughly research the career field related to the position of interest.
- Use online resources including Vault.com, WetFeet.com, and Vocational Biographies.

Organization Research:
- Learn as much as you can about the employer. You do not have to be a leading expert on the organization, but know what the employer does, primary products or services, basic industry information, why the organization interests you, and how you can contribute. Thoroughly review the employer homepage; use MyVisaJobs.com, Google, Glass Door, www.linkedin.com, Hoovers, and other online tools.
1. Punctuality
2. Confirm the **format** of your interview: Phone Screen, Individual, Group, (multiple candidates), Panel (multiple interviewers), Mini Multiple Sequential, Case, Lunch
3. You will provide extra resumes on resume quality paper
4. Self promotion

**TIP:** There is no “uniform” interview style – you must be flexible, engaging, and remember to BE YOURSELF!
PART 2: The Introduction

The Introduction:
- Employers typically form a lasting impression within the first few minutes. Begin the interview with:
  - a firm handshake and good eye contact
  - a warm smile and confident introduction
  - a sense of enthusiasm and confidence!

- Be ready to answer an opening question:
  - “Tell me about yourself”

**TIP:** Remember that it is normal to feel some nervousness – practice helps! Remember to smile!
Your Introduction Statement

“Tell me about yourself”

I am pursuing my ____ degree in _____.

I am excited about this opportunity because_______.

My academic/work experiences have provided me with _____ skills and the opportunity to apply them ________.

These skills/experiences will allow me to do _____ for your company.

I am drawn to this company/industry because it_______.

• **Tips** on how to further develop your elevator pitch/60 second commercial!
PART 3: Q+A (Question + Answer)

Q+A:

- This part makes up the bulk of the interview. The interviewer asks specific questions about your background and your goals, often referring to your resume or application.

- Most interviewers ask **behavioral questions**, seeking specific examples that describe how you have demonstrated a particular skill or competency, especially those that relate to the position [more on this later].

- **TIP**: Avoid both one-word responses and long, rambling details. Be **concise**, but be sure to use **specific examples that illustrate your strengths, competencies, interests and career research (steps that have led to your interest)**.

- **TIP**: Don't expect the interviewer to do all of the work – be an active participant!
Typical Interview Questions

- Why are you interested in this position/co.?
- Why do you want to work here?
- What do you know about the company?
- What are your strengths / weaknesses?
- What are your salary requirements?
- What is your greatest achievement?
- How has your education prepared you for your career?
- List 3 things a co-worker might say about you.
- Where do you see yourself in 5 years?
- Why should we hire you?
Behavioral Interview Questions

Tell me about a time when you...

- Failed, missed a deadline, etc. (example)
- Disagreed with your manager/co-worker (example)
- Had to use strong organization skills
- Had to use conflict management skills (example)
- Worked on a team project
- Took a leadership role

**Tips** & overview on how to prepare
S.T.A.R. Method

- **Situation**
  - Give an example of a situation you were involved in that resulted in a positive outcome

- **Task**
  - What did you do? What task were you given?

- **Action**
  - What action did you take to complete the task/overcome the situation or challenge?

- **Result**
  - What was the outcome? What did you contribute? Quantify your answers when possible!

*See before and after examples*
PART 4: The Closing

Ask Questions Such As:

- Is there anything more I can tell you about my skills and experience, or anything I can clarify about my qualifications?
- I have read that ______ is planning ______. How do you see that having an impact on the work of the team?
- Can you tell me what kind of training a new member of this design team can expect?
- I’m especially interested in______. Would that be something I would have a chance to do or learn?

Why Asking Questions Is Important:

- The interviewer will expect you to demonstrate your interest and enthusiasm in the position by asking questions.
- Ask questions that reflect your knowledge of the position and research of the career field, company and/or industry.
- Review the organization’s website to develop a few pertinent questions. Think about the aspects of the position and organization you want to know more about.
- Keep questions positive and save questions such as salary for a second interview or at the time of the job offer.
PART 4: The Closing- Continued

The Goodbye:

- **Summarize** your interests, strengths, skills, why you want the position, and how you can contribute to the position/organization. In other words, *if you really want the position, show it!*

- Inquire about the **next step** in the interview process and the anticipated timeframe for a hiring decision.

- Don't forget to close the interview with another **firm handshake**. Enthusiasm counts!
WHAT NEXT?

After the Interview:

- Within 24 hours, **write a thank you note (email)**
  
- Use this opportunity wisely:
  - Was there a response you could improve on?
  - This is an opportunity to add, enrich, reinforce your interest and qualifications!
PRACTICE!

- Use Interview Stream accessible via the NU Career Services website: [http://neu.interviewstream.com/](http://neu.interviewstream.com/)

- **The Do’s and Don’t’s of Interviewing**

- Read our “**Successful Interviewing**” guide for tips! Located on the website.

- Make an appointment with a Career Counselor to review and practice interview strategies and questions.

- Review sample interview questions and practice with a friend, tape recorder, or even in front of a mirror!

- Exploratory and informational interviews with family friends, alumni and other professionals can also be helpful in developing your presentation/communication skills.
Tips to Remember

- Maintain good eye contact = confidence and honesty!
- Give a professional and polite handshake, with a firm grip and a warm smile.
- Sit when you are asked. Do not slouch in your chair!
- Smile naturally whenever the opportunity allows.
- Leaning forward in your seat when making an important point shows energy and enthusiasm!
- Avoid nervous gestures such as foot tapping, repetitious hand or foot movements, playing with a pencil/pen, rapidly nodding your head, biting your lip, twisting your hair, etc.
- When carrying a binder or briefcase, practice carrying it in your left hand in order to free your right hand for shaking the recruiter’s hand.
- Avoid filler words, i.e., “umm”, “ahh”, “you know”, “so” or modifying words such as “sort of”, “kind of”, “just”, etc.
- Avoid nervous laughter, giggling, or clearing your throat repetitively.
- When describing yourself with characteristics, use **specific examples** of how you have shown these characteristics. For example, “I am a hard worker, as you can see from my resume; I worked a 20 hour week internship while carrying a full course schedule.”
- Do not interrupt the interviewer or appear anxious for him/her to finish a question/statement.
- Keep your voice tone varied and strong to avoid a monotone.