Ace the Interview

Purpose of an Interview:

The interview provides you and the employer an opportunity to determine how well you will fit in with the culture, direction, and requirements of the organization.

Before the Interview:

- Research the position for which you will be interviewing and the organization /employer
- Obtain the interviewer's name and title.
- Confirm the time/date/location of the interview
- Prepare your **"30 Second Commercial"** to answer "Tell me about yourself" during an interview
- Identify your skills that relate to the job
- Review your resume and be able to elaborate on it
- Review frequently asked questions, practice interviewing and request feedback from others to improve your interviewing skills
- Do a mock interview with Career Services!
- Prepare questions to ask the interviewer
- Know the general salary range for the position
- Plan what to wear

During the Interview:

- Arrive early and turn OFF cell phones
- Bring extra copies of your resume
- Relax, be yourself and stay positive
- Follow the lead of the interviewer (don't try to take over the interview)
- Listen closely to the interviewer's questions and ask for clarification if needed
- Be concise in your answers and give concrete answers to back up your claims
- Never slight a former employee or colleague
- Be aware of your posture and body language
- Watch your grammar
- Be sure to clarify any follow-up arrangements

After the Interview:

- Write a thank you letter to the interviewers.
- Evaluate your performance by asking yourself questions such as:
  - How well did I present my qualifications?
  - Did I use clear, concrete examples?
  - What points did I make that seemed to interest the interviewer?
  - How can I improve my next interview?"
- Follow up with a phone call to find out the status of your application if the employer has not contacted you within the time frame stated

The "30 Second Commercial"

It can be used and adapted to various career-related situations such as job interviews, informational interviews, career/job fairs, networking events etc. Preparing your "30 Second Commercial" in advance will help you "sell yourself" in these situations.

Once you have prepared your "30 Second Commercial", you need to practice it until you become comfortable enough that you can sell it. If you can exude confidence in its delivery, the recruiter will find you more convincing. Be careful not to cross the line from professional confidence into arrogance or cockiness, as you don't want to push anyone away.

Example:

"Hello, my name is [name] and I am a [year in program/alumnus] of Barry University majoring in/with a degree in [major or degree]. Recently, I have been working/interning/volunteering with [company or organization] in the [description of department] to gain experience in [skills]. My strongest interests lie in [list interests] so I'm looking for a [type of position] in [type of industry]. I'm particularly interested in [company name] because of [list reasons] and find your company [list research findings, new market openings, business strategies, community involvement, etc.] particularly interesting. Could you tell me about how this will affect employees in [position of interest or other relevant question].

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Interview Questions

Commonly Asked Questions

- Tell me about yourself.
- What are your greatest strengths and weaknesses? Why?
- How do you think a friend or professor who knows you well would describe you?
- What motivates you to put forth your greatest effort?
- What two or three accomplishments have given you the most satisfaction? Why?
- Why did you select Barry University? What led you to choose your field of major study?
- Do your grades fairly describe your academic achievement?
- What have you learned from participation in extracurricular activities?
- Describe your most rewarding college experience?
- What are your long-range career objectives? How do you plan to achieve your career goals?
- Do you have plans for continued study? An advanced degree?
- What do you know about our organization?
- Why did you decide to seek a position with our company?
- What qualifications do you have that make you think you will be successful in this position?
- How does this position fit in with your future career goals?
- In what kind of work environment are you most comfortable?
- Describe the personality type you find most difficult to work with. Why?
- Give me an example of a major problem you have encountered and how you dealt with it?
- Describe a time you had to persuade someone to do something they did not want to do?
- How do you deal with angry people?
- What experience do you have working with diverse groups of people?
- Why should we hire you?
- Give me an example of when communication was a problem. How was it resolved?
- What are your salary requirements?
- Do you have a geographical preference? Why?
- Are you willing to relocate? Travel on business?
- Is there anything else you would like me to know?

How to prepare for these questions:

Use the **STAR** technique!

Situation-state the job/project/organization
Tasks-your goals/objectives
Action-what you did/how you did it
Result-what happened/what did you learn

Example:

Recently, I completed a spring internship at___
My goals were to develop_____.___._____
The actions I took were_____._____._____
As a result, I strengthened_____,_____, skills.

You don't know what the employer is going to **ask,** but you know what you are going to **say**. Have at least 10 STAR examples prepared BEFORE the interview!

Questions to Ask When Interviewing

- Why is this position open?
- How often has this position been filled over the past five years?
- What are the most immediate challenges and objectives facing the individual in this position?
- What are some typical first year assignments?
- What are some of the longer-term objectives you would like to see completed?
- How would you describe the work environment and corporate culture?
- What freedom would I have in determining my work objectives,?
- What kind of support does this position receive in terms of resources ?
- Where could a person go who is successful in this position and within what time frame?
- What would be a typical career path?
- How and is the employee evaluated?
- How would you describe your management style?

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