

Interviewing for success.

You have been selected to interview with the firms you applied to. This presentation will cover how to have a successful interview with the goal to get a second interview or a job offer.

Here is our timeline. We're going to talk about the weeks prior, the day prior to your interview, the morning of your interview, 15 minutes prior to your interview, the first 20 seconds of your interview and the first five minutes. Then we'll discuss the next step, the last 20 minutes, the departure from your interview, the next 24 hours and the next 10 days.

Our first section will cover the weeks prior to your interview, the day prior to your interview, the morning of your interview and 15 minutes prior to your interview. The weeks prior you should spend your time thinking about your experiences, strengths, weaknesses and skills particularly in relation to the position you are about to interview for. You need to know your weaknesses and how you overcome them or how you're working on them. You need to think about how you plan to communicate these experiences, strengths and skills in the most effective way. Practice talking about situations where you use the skills, strengths and experiences. Are you someone who gets nervous? Think about how you will overcome that. Research the company, which includes doing a general web search to see about any news or press releases, thoroughly review the company's web page so you know their business, check LinkedIn to see if the company's on LinkedIn to give you more information, check with people you know to see what they know about the organization including faculty and Career Services and Internships staff. Understand the purpose of interviewing and make sure to write up a list of questions they will ask you based on the information they want in the job description. Research typical interview questions and practice answering those questions. You can call Career Services and Internships to do a mock interview or use interview streaming online interviewing system on Career Services and Internships website.

The morning of your interview make sure you review your notes on everything and make a quick check of news and the company's web page. Make sure you are courteous to everyone you encounter. The week before make sure you know where the interview location is and make sure you allow enough time to arrive at least 15 minutes early. Arriving on time is late to an interview. Make sure you remember who you're meeting with, the right time of the interview and where you should park. Make sure you give yourself time to get the appropriate attire for the interview. The accounting firms expect the students to be dressed in business professional: suits for men and women. Be prepared to know what the salary ranges for full time positions in case they bring up salary information in the interview. There are many sites to do this research including the USI graduate survey on USI's web page.

You're starting your interview so let's talk about the first 20 seconds, the first five minutes and the interview time itself. The first 20 seconds are first impressions and can have lasting impressions and set the stage for the entire interview. Make sure you have a firm handshake and make direct eye contact with the interviewer. Answer the question and don't make the interviewer play go fish with your answers. Your answers need to have a situation backing up all of your claims. Understand behavior-based interviewing techniques where employers use your past behaviors to predict your future success. Prove you can handle the job by offering examples of related experiences. Be concise yet detailed enough so they can see you doing what you are telling them. If they are asking more and more maybe you are providing enough information. Don't be negative about past employers. Always be positive. Understand that your answer to one question may lead to the next. Make sure you have good eye contact and body language that supports what you're saying. Show your enthusiasm for the position you are interviewing for. A tip to help you answer behavior-based questions is using what we call the STAR method. A good answer includes telling about the situation you faced, the task you were assigned or took on and the actions you took to handle or complete the task and finally the results you achieved.

Now the conclusion of your interview which includes the last 20 minutes and your departure. At some point of the interview the interviewer will ask you if you have any questions. Even if they have answered most of your questions you always want to ask more questions. Let's start with some that you should not ask such as: how much does this job pay? How many vacation days will I get? Can you describe the benefits plan? Is there much overtime here? So, did I get the job? Here are some questions that you should be asking. What qualities does it take to be successful in your organization? If I'm hired what are some of the projects I might be able to work on? Please describe the performance evaluation process. What do new associates like the most about working with this firm? If the interviewer doesn't tell you the next step in the interview process you should ask him: what is the next step in the interview process? Or ask them when they plan to make a decision. If you have the answer to these questions then you will know how to follow up and when. Your concluding remarks after your questions have been answered you want to thank them for their time. Let them know you can do the job and would like the job and ask for their continued consideration.

The interview process isn't over when you leave. You still have the next 24 hours and the next seven to ten days in the process. Send the interviewer a thank you note. Interviewers do expect thank you notes. Most of them are okay with either hand written or one sent via email and email is quicker but a handwritten does stand out more. In the thank you note you will again thank them for their time in the interviewing process and reiterate again your continued interest in

the position. During this time if it is appropriate you can follow up with them. You can follow up by an email message or phone call. If the interviewer says they won't be making a decision for two weeks then don't call until after that time frame, not before.

Hopefully after viewing this presentation you will feel confident to interview with success. For more information about interviewing set up an appointment with a career coordinator or schedule a mock interview through Career Services and Internships. Good luck!