

Interviewing

Pre-Interview:

- **Self-Assessment** – Compile a list of personal strengths and past accomplishments to boost your confidence. Identify and evaluate your:
 - Education
 - Experiences
 - Skills
 - Accomplishments
 - Strength/weakness

Note which qualities you do/don't want to convey to the interviewer.

- **Research the Employer** - Gather as much information about the employer as possible.
 - Size of the organization
 - Location of facilities
 - Structure of organization
 - Past, current and potential growth
 - Product line, industry, service, clients, potential markets
 - Training provisions
 - Length of time/type of assignments
 - Recent news items, trends, problems
 - Name of interviewer
 - Prepare a list of well-researched questions for a the interviewer

The more you know the more comfortable you will feel.

- **Practice Interview Techniques** – Mock interviews, role-playing with career services, family and friends.
 - Rehearse how you will describe your qualifications and career aspirations
 - Know what you want to communicate and how you are going to communicate it.
- **Prepare Yourself**
 - Know the name, title and level of responsibility of the recruiter
 - Arrive early (10-15 minutes before the interview)
 - Dress to project an image of confidence and success (wear a suit)
 - Prepare to bring additional materials, such as a transcript, samples of your work, and an updated resume
 - Turn off cell phone

During the Interview:

- **Entrance**
 - Have a positive and cheerful attitude.
 - Be courteous to those you meet and interview with.
 - Give the interviewer a warm greeting with a firm handshake.

- Build rapport; attitude should be one of openness or sensitivity to the interviewer's style and a feeling of mutual responsibility for creating a comfortable atmosphere and establishing a common ground
- Relax, be yourself and think of the interview as an exchange of information between 2 individuals.
- **Components of a strong answer**
 - Back up a statement with a specific example
 - Share the outcome or solution to a specific problem you have experienced in the past that was successful
 - Summarize at the end of the interview to emphasize your strengths
- **Nonverbal Cues**
 - **Positive:**
 - Occasional affirmative nodding of the head
 - Leaning forward
 - Sitting with hands, feet, and arms unfolded
 - Smiling appropriately
 - Sitting erect in the chair
 - Maintaining a pleasant facial expression
 - Firm handshake
 - Appropriate dress, matching the interviewer's organization
 - Good eye contact
 - **Negative:**
 - Inappropriate or lack of facial expression
 - A weak and ineffectual handshake
 - Inappropriate dress
 - Poor body posture, either sitting or walking
 - Lack of eye contact
 - Squirming in the seat or sitting on the edge of the chair
 - Nervous habits (e.g. biting nails) or gestures (e.g. tapping foot on floor)
 - Frowning
- **Nonverbal Behaviors** – In general, nonverbal cues are 50% of the interview. Be aware of posture, eye contact, hand gestures, facial expressions, and active listening.
- **Verbal Behaviors**
 - Use active verbs, concrete examples
 - Be concise and complete
 - Summarize and make transitions
 - Be open and thoughtful
 - Have questions ready to ask – they should reflect the amount of research you have done rather than the lack of knowledge about the employer.

- **Exit**
 - Thank the interviewer
 - Give him/her a firm handshake
 - Walk confidently from the interview

After the Interview:

- **Debrief Yourself**
 - Write down everything you feel you handled right and wrong.
 - Note any information you may need to include in your thank you letter.
 - Use the interview as a learning experience.

- **Write a Thank You Letter**
 - Personalize yourself – try to set yourself apart from other applicants
 - Strengthen or add a point about your qualifications in relation to the position