

# TIPS FOR A WINNING JOB INTERVIEW

A job interview is your opportunity to sell your background and skill sets to prospective employers, so it is important that your first impression is a lasting impression that shows you are the right fit for the job.

## BEFORE THE INTERVIEW



### RESEARCH THE EMPLOYER.

The Internet is an invaluable tool for learning about an organization's company culture and history. Try talking with contacts inside the organization if you know anyone.



### CREATE A PROFILE.

Create a profile of the position for which you are interviewing. What qualifications does this position require? What are the duties for this position? How do your skills fulfill the requirements/translate to this job?



### PREPARE FOR QUESTIONS.

Formulate answers to commonly asked interview questions BEFORE you interview. Know how to identify and respond to each question. In addition, compile a list of questions you will ask.



### COMPILE RELEVANT INFORMATION.

Some organizations will ask you to fill out an application in addition to providing your resume. Gather past addresses, phone numbers, salary history, supervisors, etc. Take extra copies of your resume and a pen and notepad for taking notes. If appropriate, take your portfolio.



### PRACTICE INTERVIEWING.

It is essential to rehearse prior to a successful interview. SXU's Career Services simulates scenarios through practice interviews, where a staff member will provide constructive feedback to help develop your interviewing skills. To schedule a mock/practice interview, inquire at the Career Services Office, the module behind Pacelli Hall. You can also rehearse with friends or in front of a mirror.

## TYPES OF QUESTIONS YOU'LL BE ASKED

### BEHAVIORAL

These are questions about your past to help determine your skill level and cultural fit for the organization. A good way to answer these questions is to use the STAR Method: What was the Situation? What Task or Action did you take to solve the problem or handle the situation? What was your Result?

### TRADITIONAL

These are questions centered around your resume or past school and work experience. May include "Tell me about yourself."

### ILLEGAL

Any question about your national origin, ethnicity, marital status, age, sexual orientation or whether you have children or a physical disability are illegal interview questions that should not be asked of you.

# DURING THE INTERVIEW

## MAKING THE FIRST IMPRESSION

- Arrive at least 10 minutes early. Account for possible rush hour traffic.
- Introduce yourself to the receptionist and indicate who you are there to see. Remember the interview starts the moment you enter the door and doesn't end until you leave.
- Know how to pronounce the interviewer's name. Repeat his/her name when you greet him/her.

## HOW TO DRESS

- Dress in a manner that is professionally appropriate to the position for which you are interviewing. For men, this usually means a tie and jacket; for women, a pant or skirt suit.
- Keep jewelry and cologne to a minimum.

## YOUR ATTITUDE

- Show confidence, interest, assertiveness, and enthusiasm. Do not be arrogant, aggressive, or immature.
- Be yourself. Smile, relax, and be friendly, polite and respectful at all times.
- Be honest in all your answers.
- Allow the interviewer to lead the interview.

## BE ATTENTIVE

- When introduced to others, remember their names.
- Pay attention. Don't ask questions about information that was already addressed in the interview.
- Ask for a business card at the close of the interview to ensure that you have proper contact information.

## NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION

- Shake hands firmly with the interviewer and anyone else to whom you are introduced.
- Make eye contact when speaking to someone.
- Be aware of your posture at all times – stand tall, sit up straight, and lean slightly forward in your chair during the interview. Cross your legs at your ankles when sitting.

## NEGOTIATING SALARY

- The employer should be the one to introduce this topic. It generally will be discussed during the second interview or at the time of a job offer.

# AFTER THE INTERVIEW

- Thank interviewers for their time and shake hands firmly with a smile.
- It is appropriate to ask what the next step is and when you may be hearing from them.
- Send a thank-you letter within 24 hours reiterating your interest in the position to everyone with whom you interviewed.
- Follow-up promptly by providing any credentials, references, transcripts, or samples of the work that might have been requested by the interviewer.

## CONNECT WITH US



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For more information or to schedule an appointment with Career Services, call (773) 298-3131, email [careerservices@sxu.edu](mailto:careerservices@sxu.edu), or visit Career Services in the Warde Academic Center, Room L-208.



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