

Effective Interviewing 101

Preparation – Writing:

- Write out your Elevator Pitch (*including your Educational Background, Professional Background, Job Objective, & Relevant Accomplishments*) to answer the notorious “Tell me about yourself...”
- Develop accomplishment stories from your background by using the STAR format: Situation, Tasks, Actions & Results! (See *Interview Advice – STAR Behavioral*)
- Read through the lists of Interview Questions and write out as many answers as possible

Preparation – Research:

- Research the Company’s Objective, Organizational Structure, Product or Service, Stability, and Philosophy most likely on the Company’s website
- Their website may also include an Annual Report, Letters from the Chairman & Balance Sheets
- Use your network, Linked In and the GSM Alumni Database to obtain more information on who will be interviewing you

Preparation – Analysis:

- Compare the job description to your accomplishments on your resume
- Analyze the job qualifications in the posting and highlight the ones that correspond with your experience
- Revisit your Elevator Pitch to focus to *this job opening*
- Revisit your STAR Accomplishment stories and choose the appropriate ones for this job opening
- Relate YOUR ABILITIES to the EMPLOYER’S NEEDS, to convince them to hire you

Preparation – Rehearsal:

- Practice your Elevator Pitch, STAR Accomplishment Stories and other interview question answers out loud until you have each one polished.
- Practice out loud in front of a mirror.
- Ask a family member or a friend to allow you practice your answers in front of them
- Use InterviewStream to practice using your webcam

Preparation – Leave Behinds & Logistics:

- Purchase a folder that you can leave behind in the interview and fill with extra copies of your resume and cover letter. Include any items that show examples of your past work (a short presentation or excel summary sheet with graphs and charts of a project). Include letters of Recommendation. You can also include a brief (or detailed) Business Plan you have created for how you will tackle this job if hired.
- Prepare a list of questions you want to ask them.
- Purchase thank you cards, and have one pre-addressed, stamped and in your car to write out immediately after the interview and put into the mail.
- Decide what you are going to wear and map out exactly where you will be going and how long it will take to get there and aim to be early just in case! If early, you can read through all your interview answers while waiting.

During the Interview – Building Rapport

- Use eye contact and a firm hand shake upon meeting
- Mirror the demeanor of the interviewer, but in an authentic way for your personality
- Have a positive, can-do, problem solving attitude

- You need to believe you are the best person for the job and be able to articulate why
- Beware of your non-verbal communications: Tone & Speed of Voice, Facial Expressions, Body Language, Posture, Habits
- Pause briefly after being asked a question to quickly think how you want to answer the question
- Use humor if/when totally appropriate to the situation

Closing the Interview

- Break out the “Leave Behind” folder and show them your portfolio of work, letters of rec, business plan, etc.
- Ask any questions from your list that haven’t yet been addressed and any new questions that have come to mind
- Close the deal by reiterating interest, letting them know you think you would be great for this job
- Establish follow-up procedure and timeframes
- Thank them sincerely letting them know it was very nice meeting them and you look forward to seeing them again!

After the Interview

- Write out the thank you note in your car and drop it in the mail.
- As soon after the interview as possible, jot down your notes on how you feel you did and what you would like to improve upon (specific answers to questions, your non-verbal communication, your close, etc.)
- Follow up with an email if you haven’t heard from them in a week, to thank them again and that you are still very interested in the job.