10 Things You Should Know Before an Interview

1. The organization and the job -- do your research! (Organizational culture, history, current events, future prospects)
2. How you will add value to the organization and why you're interested in them/this position
3. Everything on your resume so you can explain and discuss (challenges, best parts, what you would do differently)
4. The technical fundamentals of what's needed for the job. This could mean going back and relearning equations or giving yourself a refresher on specific pieces of knowledge
5. How to answer the "Tell me about yourself" question (start with your elevator pitch, but make it specific for this job -- see page 6 for more about writing an elevator pitch)
6. Your strengths and weaknesses -- be sure to describe how you're improving your weaknesses
7. Your 6 best stories so you can answer any behavioral interview question (see following page)
8. The 5 things you want to make sure to tell the interviewer before the end of the interview. Base this on the job description, which will allow you to decide which formative experiences and notable skills to share
9. Questions you want to ask the employer so you can better assess your fit with the organization/position
10. How you'll think quickly and respond if someone asks a bizarre question, e.g., If you were an animal, which one would you be? What three items would you bring to a deserted island? (Note: In many cases, your answers to these questions are less important than how you respond, i.e., keeping cool under pressure)

Interview Formats

Interviewing is a skill. The more you practice, the better you'll do!

LAUNCH YOUR PLAN

Now that you've explored career options, identified your skills, and developed your marketing materials, you're ready to launch into interviews. This section will help you get familiar with types of interviews, including questions to expect and questions to ask, as well as how to negotiate job offers.

In Person
- Arrive 15 minutes early and dress appropriately for the interview (tips for interview dress are available on the Career Center website)
- Use the opportunity to convey that you are prepared, interested in and able to do the job
- Smile, listen actively, and control verbal fillers (e.g., um, like, you know)
- If interviewing with several people at one time, be sure to make eye contact with each person, not just the person asking the question(s)
- No phones (double check that yours is turned off)

Phone
- Dress as if you have an in-person interview (you'll sit taller; remember why you're on the phone and feel like you're in interview mode)
- Smile (you can hear a smile in a person's voice!)
- Articulate, enunciate, speak clearly and slowly, and convey enthusiasm with your voice
- Plan for a quiet environment in which to take the call (with no possibility for interruptions) and make sure your phone is fully charged!
- Allow for silences; don't worry about filling every spare second with talking

Video/Virtual
- In addition to the phone hints:
  - Plan for extra time to set up technology: have a back-up plan if something malfunctions
  - Ensure that the background the employer sees (e.g., the wall behind you) looks professional and is not cluttered

Other types of interviews ...
- Case - Interviewer provides a challenging business scenario and the applicant must provide analysis and propose a solution. Often used by Consulting and Finance industries.
- Technical - Questions are specific to the job for which you are applying. They can be brain teasers, problem solving or checking to make sure you know first principles and equations from your field.

YOUR TRANSFERABLE SKILLS CHECKLIST

You have more skills than you think! When you identify them, you can highlight them in your resume and cover letters and use them to tell stories in interviews. Check off the skills that you have developed.

Communication
- Listen actively
- Present effectively to groups at all levels
- Edit and proofread documents
- Write reports, manuscripts, processes
- Teach new skills
- Express ideas verbally
- Translate written material

Leadership
- Explain goals, processes, culture
- Facilitate meetings and discussions
- Forecast spending and create budget
- Delegate tasks and direct others' work
- Make decisions and recommendations
- Recruit and/or train new members
- Build relationships with stakeholders

Technical
- Evaluate quantitative or qualitative data
- Model processes digitally
- Build prototypes
- Develop frameworks and ensure quality
- Run experiments and trials
- Collect data through fieldwork
- Keep up to date in specialized area

Professionalism
- Adapt easily to changing situations
- Learn new skills quickly
- Demonstrate integrity & ethical behavior
- Produce high-quality work/meet deadlines
- Demonstrate respect for all
- Take responsibility for mistakes

Coaching & Consulting
- Mentor, coach, or guide people
- Motivate & inspire others to do their best
- Set high standards for yourself and others
- Coordinate activities of various groups
- Demonstrate knowledge and expertise
- Provide constructive feedback in writing and in person

Project Management
- Set goals and achievable objectives
- Organize information, projects and resources
- Plan projects
- Prioritize and schedule tasks and/or events
- Monitor progress or status of project
- Practice continuous improvement
- Collect and review all documentation

Research & Analysis
- Recognize and/or identify problems
- Analyze problems or issues
- Research by gathering information/data
- Synthesize info from many sources
- Interpret underlying info from themes
- Evaluate options to reach conclusion
- Prepare materials for view

Research
- Collect and review all documentation
- Synthesize and interpret
- Design and conduct research
- Present findings

Critical Thinking & Problem Solving
- Brainstorm ideas and possibilities
- Apply logic to issues and problems
- Compare and contrast possibilities
- Use both facts & intuition as needed
- Anticipate possible obstacles
- "Think outside the box"

Creative/Innovation
- Create prose/artwork/music/Graphics
- Design exhibits/concepts/lesson plans
- Direct groups of people
- Invent new products or processes
- Perform in play/dance/television
- Choreograph dances or plays

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Don't forget: Everyone you meet, from the moment you enter a potential employer's building -- or even parking lot! -- could be evaluating your candidacy for a job.

Top 5 skill areas to use in my LinkedIn profile and documents:

1. 
2. 
3. 
4. 
5.