

During the Interview

Now that you are prepared for your interview it is time to execute! The following tips will help you effectively communicate your qualifications and experiences in your interview.

 **Professionalism:** Beyond your physical appearance, verbal and nonverbal communication can contribute to a professional image.

- Sixty percent of communication is nonverbal:
 - Be sensitive to your nonverbal behaviors: handshake, eye contact, posture, tone, nervous habits.
 - Be sensitive to the interviewer's nonverbal behavior and respond to it.
- Be aware of the tone of the interview (the interviewer may be trying to see how you react to stress).
- Convey enthusiasm about the position. Keep a positive attitude and show your interviewer you are interested in the company and position.
- Avoid speaking negatively about yourself or others, including organizations you have engaged with in the past
- Politely ask for clarification of a question which you do not fully understand.
- Know and use the interviewer's name. It's always safest to use Ms. or Mr., unless they advise you to call them by their first name.
- Spend some time thinking and preparing about questions you would like to ask based on the research you did. This is a great way to show enthusiasm for the opportunity. Write them down in your pad folio beforehand.

 **Interview Basics:** If you have done your research on yourself, the company, the industry, and how to interview, now you need to focus on the delivery of the information during the interview.

- Stress the positive points about yourself in a confident, factual and honest manner. Be concise and specific when representing yourself.
- Have a strong introduction that begins to highlight your skills and how you developed them. Be able to “walk the interviewer through your resume”.
- Convert opinion into fact by preparing specific examples of your accomplishments as illustrations of your skills/abilities/traits.
- Take time to reflect in a quiet manner, if necessary, before answering (process your thoughts).

 **How to Ask Good Questions:** Are recruiters just being polite when they ask if you have any questions for them? NO. Employers are interested in candidates who ask well-prepared and intelligent questions that reflect the candidate's knowledge of the company. If you ask a good question during an interview, this signals that you will ask good questions on the job too

1. **Know yourself, the company, and the industry.** By doing an assessment of yourself – what you want in a job in terms of title, responsibilities, career development, company culture, and so on – you will understand what your deal breaker issues are when choosing a job. Areas in which you might want to dig deeper, as the interviews progress, include: company culture; positive current events taking place within the company; and how others in your position have developed in their careers – broadly or more vertically, etc. As you ask questions, try to get at what you cannot find in the company's published recruiting materials or elsewhere in your company and industry research.
2. **Know your audience.** When you interview for a job or internship, the person interviewing you may hold one of several different positions within the company. A large company may have HR recruiters conduct first round interviews with students, whereas a smaller company may have department employees or managers conduct interviews. It is important to know who is interviewing you so that you can tailor your questions accordingly. For example, you would not want to ask a specific accounting related question (that only an accountant would know) to your interviewer if they are an HR recruiter.



3. **Consider what stage you are at in the process.** Earlier in the process, you will want to ask more general questions about the company's strategy and priorities and how you can fit into them, company culture, career development opportunities, and so on. Later, you will want to drill down to more specific details in these areas.
4. **Develop a core list of questions.** You will want to create at least three general questions you can use with all the companies with which you are interviewing. Beyond those, you should tailor questions to each company based on what you know about the company or have experienced with the company to date. Of course, based on the natural conversational flow of your interviews and what, specifically, you have been discussing with the recruiter, there will be some unscripted questions that will come to mind. Where possible, ask questions that shine a light on your knowledge, insights, and thoughtfulness about the industry, the company, its people, its culture, and/or specific ways you will be able to add value in the job.
5. **Stay positive and know what not to ask.** You want to be sure your interview maintains a positive tone. Avoid asking questions that highlight failures of the company or any negative aspects or news. You never want to put the interviewer on the defensive about their company. Additionally, avoid putting the interviewer on the spot by asking for immediate feedback, such as "do you see any concerns in regards to my qualifications for this position? This makes some recruiters feel uncomfortable.

Other Important Tips:

- Do not ask about compensation in your interview. Only ask about pay once you have received an offer.
- Feel free to bring a list of questions with you to the interview and to reference those when it is time for you to ask questions. They should be typed or neatly written in your pad folio, and this is the only time you should open your pad folio during the interview. This shows that you have planned ahead and you are prepared to ask questions. Though you can reference your prepared questions, you should not take notes while your interviewer is speaking.
- Be sure to ask questions that you actually want to know the answer to and actively listen to the answers! Employers can tell if you are just asking them questions for the sake of asking questions.
- Always inquire about the next steps in the process (i.e. is there a second round interview? When can you expect to hear back from the employer? Can you get a business card?).