Prospective employers are looking to answer one question: “Why should I hire you?”

You must convince the employer that you can fill a particular need or vacancy, and at the same time, you should be trying to decide whether to accept a position if offered.

**PREPARATION**

**Know Yourself**
- Analyze your strengths, weaknesses, background, academic performance, interests, and personal aspirations and values.
- Think about the skills that relate to the job and how you can demonstrate them.
- Be prepared to explain why you are applying for the position and why you think you are qualified for the job.

**Know the Organization**
- Learn what you can about the company, agency, or school district.
- Read company literature and news, and talk to employees and community leaders.
- Find out all you can about the position for which you are applying. Know what questions you want to ask the interviewer.

**Project a Professional Image**
- Dress appropriately for the job and the organization for which you are applying.
- Emphasize the positive, be assertive in answering questions, and show confidence.
- Most important, be yourself and try to relax. Think of the interview as simply a conversation between two people.

**FOUR STAGES OF INTERVIEWING**

**Reception/Acceptance**
- The initial stage during which you meet the interviewer and during which the interviewer usually forms a first impression.

**Information Exchange**
- During this stage the employer might tell you about the organization and/or the job. Questions will be asked to determine if you are qualified for the job and if you will fit into the overall organization.

**Your Turn**
- During this stage, you have the opportunity to ask questions to obtain information that you will need in order to evaluate the employer.
- Ask detailed questions, but **avoid questions regarding salary**. This may be asked at a later time after a job offer has been made.
Closing
- The final stage when the employer indicates the interview is over and during which you find out when and how you will be informed about the outcome.
- If the interviewer does not offer this information, then it is up to you to ask what the next step is in the hiring process.

FOLLOW-UP

A follow-up letter after an interview is an essential part of the process.

While it appears on the surface merely to express your appreciation for the opportunity to talk with the interviewer, it also serves to remind the interviewer of your qualifications and interest in the job or company.

It leaves a very favorable impression and could be the one factor that really makes you stand out from the crowd.

RESOURCES

BigInterview is a tool that allows you to conduct and record virtual mock interviews, review practice interview recordings with structured self-assessment, and share your interview through email with a friend, a faculty member or the Center for Career and Professional Development.

Please Note: Big Interview works best with Internet Explorer.

- The BigInterview Prep Guides provide step by step options for navigation.
  - Fast Track – prepare on a quicker timeframe.
  - Mastery Track – longer timeframe to become an interview guru.
- A webcam and microphone are required. If you don’t have access to a webcam, you may reserve a mock interview station with the Center for Career and Professional Development office, Ulmer 206.
- Choose from pre-designed interviews or customize from a list of questions including
  - General
  - Industry
  - Competency
  - Admissions Interview
  - Government
  - Veterans
- Once complete, students can self-review, or send the video interview to others for feedback.
- Faculty and staff can collaborate with the Center for Career and Professional Development to create custom interviews for students.
Most Common Job Interview Mistakes

- Answering a cell phone or texting during the interview
- Dressing inappropriately
- Appearing disinterested; lack of enthusiasm; appearing unmotivated
- Appearing arrogant; overly aggressive
- Poor eye contact
- Weak interpersonal skills
- Talking too much and saying too little
- Forgetting to do your research
- Speaking negatively about a current or previous employer
- Not providing specific answers
- Not asking good questions
- Failing to translate your skills and experience; not able to “sell self”
- Unable to articulate clear goals or future career direction
- Lacking self-confidence
- Checking the time
- Asking about salary too early; overemphasis on money
- Unrealistic expectations; unwilling to start at the bottom
- Lying; misrepresenting yourself
- Arriving late to interview
- Bringing a cup of coffee or other drink with you
- Chewing gum
- Bringing another person with you
- Not following up after the interview

For further information, please contact the Center for Career & Professional Development.

Ulmer 206 | 570-484-2181 | careerservices@lockhaven.edu