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# Peer Learning and Leadership Network

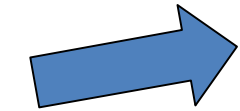
Interviewing

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# Agenda

- Interview Preparation
- Types of Job Interviews
- Answering Interview Questions
- Interview Follow-up

# Interview Preparation

# 1. Research

- Know the company, job and interviewers (if possible)
- Use LinkedIn to research company and interviewers
- Visit company website and be prepared to discuss in your interview
- Tailor your responses to company and job!!

## 2. 30-Second Commercial

- Your answer to “Tell me about yourself”
- Structure:
  - 2-3 relevant strengths/skills
  - 1-2 related accomplishments
  - How you benefit the employer
- Write it down.
- PRACTICE!!

# 3. Practice

- Practice “first impressions”—smile, handshake, etc.
- Answer “common” interview questions out loud.
- Rehearse 30-second commercial.
- Prepare how you will address your disability.
- Video yourself if possible.

# 4. Logistics

- Name, phone numbers, addresses
- Bring necessary documentation
- Plan to arrive 5-10 minutes early
- Develop list of your own questions to ask in interview.





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# Types of Job Interviews



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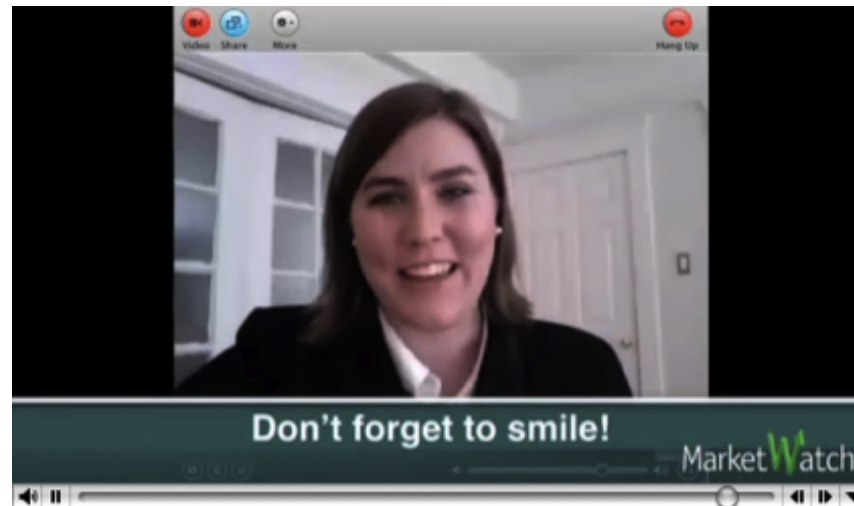
# Screening Interviews

- Usually over the phone.
- Can happen “spur of the moment.”
- Designed to screen you OUT.
- Goal is to make it to the next round. . .



# Video Interview

- Often for screening and/or to talk with a remote interviewer
- Use Skype, G-Chat or some other video-conferencing software



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# Panel Interviews



- Multiple interviewers
- Can interview one candidate or multiple candidates at same time
- Allows employer to screen multiple candidates at once.
- Can be awkward for interviewees.

# Open-Ended Interviews

- This is the “basic” job interview most applicants expect.
- Open-ended questions with no yes/no or right/wrong answers.
- Can have multiple levels



# Behavioral Interviews

- Questions designed to elicit specific skills and examples.
- More focused and probing.
- “Tell me about a time when. . .”
- Often evaluated and scored against a matrix of “acceptable” answers.

# Situational Interview

- Closely related to behavioral interview.
- Provided with specific work situations and asked about how you would handle them.
- Usually involve problem-solving and/or difficult work situations.





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# Answering Interview Questions



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# General Tips

- Listen!
- Focus on the positive
- Provide specific examples
- If you don't understand a question, ask for clarification.
- Sell how your skills, qualifications will benefit the employer
- Focus on being a good “fit”

# First Impressions Count

- Firm handshake
- Eye contact
- SMILE!
- Repeat their name—“It’s nice to meet you, Rachel”
- Open body language—no crossed arms!

# Most Common Questions

- Tell me about yourself.
- Why are you interested in this job?
- Why did you leave your last job?
- Tell me about your experience at. . .
- What experience do you have doing. . . ?
- What do you know about our company?

# More Common Questions

- Tell me about your strengths.
- Tell me about your weaknesses.
- What would your co-workers/former boss say about you?
- What salary range are you looking for?
- What questions do you have for me?
- Why should I hire you?

# Behavioral/Situational Interviews

- Describe:
  - Problem/Situation
  - Actions you took
  - Results of those actions
- Be specific
- Be positive
- Don't "over-explain"

# What to Ask the Interviewer

- What do you think are most important attributes/skills for this position?
- What do you like best about working here?
- How would you describe your company culture?
- Can you describe a typical work day for this position?



# More Questions for Interviewer

- What is the next step in the hiring process?  
(Time frame for hiring)
- What are most immediate challenges faced by this position in first 3 months?
- What are performance expectations?
- Is there anything else you need to know about me before I leave to help you with the decision?

# Interview Follow-up



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# General Tips

- Get business cards from all people interviewed.
- Write individual thank-you notes to all people who interviewed you.
- Alert your references that they may be contacted.
- Call within 7-10 days to follow-up.

# More Tips

- Promptly return all calls and requests for additional information.
- Be patient—employers can take a long time to make a decision.
- Keep following up.
- Keep job hunting.



# Addressing a Disability



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# In the Interview

- Bring up if:
  - Your disability is obvious.
  - You will need accommodations to perform the work.
- Do NOT lead with disability—sell yourself first!
- Know your accommodations.
- Focus on qualifications

# In a Thank You Note

- Mention only if you disclosed during interview.
- Use Thank You to reiterate qualifications and address any lingering concerns the employer may have.
- Emphasize qualifications and your “fit” with the company.



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