INTERVIEWING BASICS – MAKE A GREAT IMPRESSION

What is an Interview?
The interview is an opportunity for candidates and employers to mutually evaluate the match between a candidate’s qualifications and goals and the organization’s needs. This may be your only chance to talk with the employer before they make a hiring decision, so first impressions are important. Prepare to make a great first impression!

Before the Interview:
- Think about your goals. What type(s) of jobs are you seeking? To which kind(s) of companies are you going to apply?
- Think about your skills, experience, and education. Can you provide examples that would demonstrate these skills and abilities?
- Prepare your resume and ask individuals to be references for you (former employers, advisors, faculty members).
- Have appropriate interview attire. Know the difference between professional attire and business casual.
- Research the company and position. Do you know others that work there? At minimum, know what services they provide or products they manufacture.
- Review interview questions so you know what kinds of questions to expect.
- Prepare some questions for the employer. What do you want to know about the company? The position? Training?

During the Interview:
- Treat each person you meet with courtesy and respect.
- Use a firm, confident handshake.
- Carry yourself well. Use good posture and maintain eye contact with the interviewer. Don’t fidget. Avoid non-words (ex: “um”).
- Answer the questions asked by the employer completely yet concisely. Provide specific examples to help strengthen your answers.
- Think about each question briefly before answering.
- If you are asked a question you don’t understand, ask the interviewer to clarify the question.
- If you are asked a question and can’t think of an example/answer, ask for a moment to think about the question, or ask if you can re-visit that question.
- At the end of the interview, most employers will ask if you have questions for them. Ask the questions you have prepared for the interviewer.
- Before leaving, thank the employer for their time. Ask for a business card if you do not have their name or contact information.

After the Interview:
- Write a Thank You letter to the employer. Not only does this show courtesy for their time, but also your sincere interest in the position.

Evaluating Your Performance:
Employers will be evaluating you based upon a variety of factors, including appearance, preparation, skill, previous Experience, expression, direction/goals, maturity, sincerity, personality and overall impression – to name a few.
Common Interview Questions
Each employer will ask different questions based upon the position and the qualifications for the position. Here is a sampling of common interview questions:

- Tell me about yourself
- Why are you interested in this position?
- Why did you decide to major in _________?
- Why does the field of _________ interest you?
- Tell me about what type of job you’re interested in and what kind of responsibilities you expect.
- What do you know about our company?
- Tell me about your relevant past work experience.
- How do you think these jobs have prepared you for your future career?
- Tell me three strengths that you have and why you consider them strengths.
- Tell me about a weakness you have. What is an area in which you need to improve?
- What would your friends/former employers say about you?
- Tell me about a time you assumed a leadership role.
- Tell me about a time you had to deal with a challenging customer. How did you handle the situation?
- Describe a situation in which you and a co-worker disagreed. How did you settle the situation?
- What would you consider your greatest accomplishment to date?
- What is the greatest challenge you’ve faced and how have you handled it?
- What kind of work interests you the most?
- How strong are your reading/math/communication skills?
- Were there subjects in school that you found particularly difficult? Excelled in?
- How do you determine success?
- Where do you see yourself 5 or 10 years from now?
- Tell me about your previous school/work attendance record. How many days have you missed?
- Why should I hire you instead of any of the other well-qualified candidates?
- If you were offered the position, when could you start?
- What are your salary expectations?
- Do you have any questions for us?

Questions You May Want to Ask an Interviewer
Questions for an employer demonstrates you are genuinely interested in the position:

- I read the position description on your website; could you provide me with some more information about the responsibilities of this position?
- On your website, I read about _________. Could you tell me more about that?
- What type of training or orientation would I receive if hired for this position?
- What might a typical workday be like?
- How many people work in this department?
- With whom would I be working?
- How will my work be evaluated?
- Are there any new projects anticipated for the company in the near future?
- What types of career paths have others in this position followed?
- Why do you like working here?
- When will I be notified about your decision?

Additional interview question samples are available on the Career Services website at www.uwgb.edu/careers