



JSG CAREER CENTER WORKSHOP

SUCCESSFUL INTERVIEWING SKILLS

Always Remember & Never Forget...

- Make a list of **your skills and traits** that match the employer's requirements
- **Practice!**
- **Arrive** 5 minutes early
- Look your **professional** best
- **Smile** and let them get to know you

Interview Tip 1: Plan Ahead

- Do your **homework**
- Research the company
 - Major Products & Services
 - Size of the organization
 - Number of Employees
 - Annual Sales or Profits
 - Mission Statement
 - Key People
 - Current Trends and Development

Interview Tip 1 (cont'd)

- **Research the position**
 - Know what a “geophysicist” or “geologist” does in an oil company or environmental company or for the “state” regulatory agencies
- **Review your work experiences**
 - **Match** them to a job description
- **Have your facts ready**
 - Know what **salary** to expect, but don't ask

Interview Tip 1 (cont'd)

- Be ready to **support** past career accomplishments with specific information
- Have some **questions** ready for the interviewer

Interview Tip 2: Role Play

- Begin **role playing** (rehearsing)
- Use the questions provided in this workshop
- **Write down** answers - make your presentation concise
- What does your new employer **want to know**?

Interview Tip 3: Eye Contact

- Maintain **eye contact** with your interviewer or interviewers
- Show you want the job with your **interest**
- Be aware of your **posture** and body language
 - No distracting mannerisms (jiggling legs, swinging feet, hair twirling)

Interview Tip 4: Be Positive

- **Avoid** negative comments about previous employers or others
- **Think** a moment before you answer questions
- **Speak** clearly and at a good pace
- Stress your strengths
- Be **honest**

Interview Tip 4 (cont'd)

- Turn a **weakness** into a **strength**
 - You want to improve yourself...
 - You learn quickly...
 - "I really need to work on my leadership skills. I am a good worker and totally competent, but sometimes I lack the confidence to stand up and take a leadership position."

Interview Tip 5: Adapt

- **Listen and adapt** to the style of the interviewer(s)
- **Pay attention** to details of dress, body language, and general decorum which will provide helpful clues to assist you in tailoring your presentation
- “good ‘ol boy” routine to formal style

Interview Tip 6: Relate

- Try to **relate** your answers to the interviewer and his or her company
- **Focus** on your achievements that are **relevant** to the position
- Know and use “**buzz words & phrases**”
 - Oil & Gas Geology (stratigraphy, basins, logs)
 - Geophysics (seismic techniques, interpretation)
 - Environmental (regulations, consulting firms)
 - Other

Interview Tip 7: Encourage

- **Encourage** the interviewer to share information about his or her company
- Ask **meaningful** questions when indicated
 - Details of job responsibilities
 - Training Program
 - Travel

Interview Tip 8: Dress

- **Appearance** – You only have one chance to make a good impression
- **Dress** in Good Taste
 - Classic colors and styles
 - Conservative dress and demeanor
- Personal **Hygiene**
 - NO perfume or cologne
 - YES to soap and deodorant

Interview Tip 8 (cont'd)

- **Women** – conservative, classic style
 - Protect your credibility as a scientist and a professional
- **Men** – neat appearance
 - Facial hair; long hair
 - Pressed slacks & button down shirts
- **Everyone**
 - NO t-shirts or flip-flops

Interview Tip 8 (cont'd)

- Power Colors
 - Red – competitive, confident, energetic, passionate
 - Purple – regal, directed, noble, intuitive
 - Blue – organized, discerning
 - White – elegant, confident
 - Black, Navy & Gray – strong willed, authoritative, sophisticated, independent

Traits on Which You Will Be Judged

- **Personal Characteristics**
 - Grooming, manners, eye contact?
 - Self-expression – forceful or vague?
 - Maturity – balance, value judgments, decisions?
 - Personality – Shy, overbearing, warm, arrogant, good attitude?

Traits on Which You Will Be Judged

- Professional Characteristics
 - **Enthusiasm & Interest** – employer, job, industry, need experience, money?
 - **Career Goals** – What do you want to do in your professional life?
 - **Experience** – academic achievement, skills, accomplishments, extracurricular activities?

Typical Interview Questions

- Tell me about yourself?
 - try to hold your response to 2 minutes
- What do you know about our company?
- Why are you interested in our company?
- Why should we hire you?
- Why do you want to work in the ___ industry?

Typical Interview Questions

- Describe a **situation** in which you were successful.
- What do you think it takes to be successful in this career?
- What **motivates** you?
- What has been your most **significant** [academic, personal, professional] **accomplishment**?

Typical Interview Questions

- What is your greatest **strength**?
- What is your greatest **weakness**?
- What **accomplishments** have given you the most satisfaction in your life?
- How does this assignment fit into your overall **career plan**?
- Do you have any plans for **further education**?
- Why is **your GPA** not higher?

Typical Interview Questions

- How do you work under **deadlines or pressure**?
- How do you handle **stress**?
- What **position** do you expect to have in 2 to 5 years?
- **Do you have any questions for me?**

Questions for the Interviewer

- What **advancement opportunities** are available for the person who is successful in this position, and within what time frame?
- What **qualities and skills** are you most hoping to find in the person you hire?
- What would be my **first priorities** on the job?

Questions for the Interviewer

- What **attributes** are most needed to succeed in this job?
- Are there opportunities for **travel**?
- **Salary** - Let them bring up the subject of money
 - Postpone that discussion until you have more information about the position



Interviewing Styles

- **Behavioral** – Questions that use your past experiences to predict future behaviors
- Prepare **examples** of how your experiences have allowed you to develop specific skills and how these could benefit the employer



How to Answer Questions

The 'STAR' Approach

S: Situation – describe the situation

T: Task or problem – what dilemma or problem did you face?

A: Action – what action did you take?

R: Result – what was the result of your action?



Questions to Avoid

- Age? Date of Birth?
- **Marital Status** or Family Status (often alludes to sexual orientation)
- Disabilities
- **Personal**
- National Origin & Citizenship
- **Arrest Record**
- Military Service

Questions to Avoid

- Race
- Color
- Religion
- Affiliations
- They can ask:
 - Are you authorized to work in the U.S.?
 - Can you perform the job duties as explained to you?



Final Words

- Be Prepared
- Practice your handshake
- Check out a leather portfolio from the JSG Career Center
 - Copy of your transcript
 - Resume – laser printed
- Arrive 5 minutes early