Career Development Center
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS SPRINGFIELD

Interview Prep Guide

Purpose of Interviewing

- Explain to the employer/interviewer how you can make a contribution to their organization.
- Evaluate the opportunity and receive a job offer.

Before the Interview

- Research the company and your interviewer. Know the interviewer's name so you can greet them properly.
- Be punctual; arrive 10 minutes early to have time to fill out any forms or applications that might be required.
- Turn off your cell phone or any devices.
- Greet everyone positively and with a smile. Shake hands (if comfortable) or gesture with everyone who offers. Thank each one by name.
- A note: There is a Professional Clothing Closet for students in the Career Center: Professional Clothing Closet information

During the Interview

- Avoid jargon and slang that the interviewer may not know. Use the interviewer's name during the interview.
- Be open, honest, and flexible and remember to show enthusiasm and confidence.
- If interviewing over a meal, order something simple to eat. Remember to stay focused.
- Keep good eye contact. Sit up straight and be attentive. Keep your feet on the floor and hands somewhat visible.
- Avoid going overboard on hand gestures; leave clicking pens and anything else you might play with at home.

After the Interview

- Remember to thank and shake hands if comfortable with the interviewers after you finish interviewing.
- Send a thank you note as soon after the interview as possible. When writing your thank you letter, mention the names of those you were interviewed by.
- If you interviewed with multiple people, try to send a personalized thank you note to each one. The note for your potential boss should be different than the note for your potential coworker
- If you feel that you need to clarify anything you said, do so in your thank you letter, or in a brief phone call. This may improve your chances of landing the job.

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Create and Use STAR Method to Answer Questions:

Example: **(S) Situation:** Teamwork
(T) Task: Created a marketing plan for a mock company
(A) Action: Collaborated with 3 other team members to develop and outline draft of problems, goals, and objectives. Divided up tasks for each member based on individual strengths and objectives set. Assumed leadership role in project by following up with each team member to motivate and remain on target with content and deadline.
(R) Result: Well-rounded, completed marketing plan; received an A; professor used plan as class example.

Practice. Practice. Practice. Interviewing is a skill you can learn!

Here are several more helpful resources

- Schedule a live **Mock Interview**
- Watch the interview advice clip from **Career Spots**

- Get prepared with **SkillsFirst** and have a **simulated virtual mock interview**:

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