

## OFFICE OF CAREER SERVICES

### INTERVIEW TYPES

**Screening Interview:** The screening interview does just that — screen out candidates whose qualifications don't meet the job specifications. The first interview is typically conducted by a human resources professional and will probably focus more on your resume and qualifications than anything else. Screening interviews may be conducted in person, by telephone, or by video conferencing (see Telephone Interview and Video or Skype Interview sections).

- Articulate your skills and what you accomplished at each previous job experience.

**Second Interview:** Second round interviews are often more difficult to prepare for because their purpose is more subtle — to determine which candidates will best "fit" with the company. Second interviews may be comprised of behavioral and competency-based questions (see Behavioral Interview and Competency-based Interview sections).

- Ask questions about the work environment.
- This stage may also include reference checks and testing.

**Case Study Interview:** Consulting firms and certain financial institutions may include a case study or word problem based on a real-life or simulated consulting situation as part of their interview process. In this instance, the interviewer will present you with a case study and ask how you would approach and solve the dilemma at hand. The interviewer is simply trying to determine your analytical abilities through this interview method, so try not to get flustered!

- You can usually ask relevant questions in your efforts.
- There are a number of online and hardcopy resources available through the Office of Career Services to help you prepare for these types of interviews.
- It is also imperative to be part of a student study group and practice cases together since these interviews are very demanding.

**Behavioral Interview:** In these interviews, the interviewer will ask you to talk about a real situation you've encountered and your response to that situation. A sample question could include, "Tell me of an incident when you failed," instead of a hypothetical question such as "How you would handle a mistake or failure?" The employer assumes this will be a good indicator of how you would handle situations in the future.

- Stay calm and answer the question as completely as you can, using the SAR formula as your guide:

**S** – What was the **situation** or problem that you were presented with?

**A** – What **action** did you take? (Specifically highlight the skills used.)

**R** – What were the **results** of your actions? (Be specific and quantify results when possible.)

**Stress Interview:** In a stress interview, the interviewer purposely tries to make you uncomfortable to see how you react in stressful situations. This method is used primarily by investment banks. The interviewer may seem antagonistic or may, for example, repeatedly and quickly ask you to solve a series of math problems. The trick here is to stay calm and not get defensive. Again, answer the question the best you can.

**Telephone Interview:** Some employers prefer to prescreen applicants by conducting telephone interviews as a way to filter out unqualified applicants. Doing well in a telephone interview is critical because it's the gateway to being granted a face-to-face interview. Therefore, the process should not be taken lightly.

- If possible, stand during the interviewing process. Compared to sitting, standing will immediately make you more alert and engaged with the conversation.
- Keep in mind you have to work harder to convey your personality and enthusiasm over the telephone. Look in the mirror while you are talking – smile and be animated. These positive expressions will translate to the interviewer over the telephone.
- Take deep breaths minutes before the interview. You want to convey calm and confidence, not nervousness. If you catch yourself speaking too quickly, slow down your words to a moderated pace.
- Have a glass of water conveniently nearby in case your throat gets dry.
- Avoid the “uptalk”. Be sure to modulate your voice but avoid speaking in a tone where your intonation rises as if you're ending the statement with a question. This will be viewed by the interviewer as a lack of self-confidence, not to mention annoying.
- Do not interrupt the interviewer while he or she is speaking. If it does happen, apologize and let him/her continue.
- Keep your answers clear and concise while elaborating on answers when necessary.
- Have your notes prepared for the interview. Jot down helpful information during the interview in order to ask questions.
- When the interview has concluded, thank the interviewer for his or her time.
- Hang up after the interviewer has terminated the call.
- Follow up and send a thank you note within 24 hours, which reiterates your interest in the position.

**Video or Skype Interview:** In the interest of time and money, more and more companies are using webcam interviews to recruit candidates. Following are some preparation tips:

- Find a quiet area. Some microphones are sensitive to background noise.
- Make sure there isn't a bright light behind you. It will darken your face.
- When answering a question, look directly into the camera. This will ensure “eye contact.”
- Be aware of what's behind you. Make sure the background area is clean and neat.
- Framing: Sit tall but not too close to the camera.
- The first three buttons on your shirt should be visible.
- Practice with friends to check your color, sound, and facial expressions.
- Have your resume ready as an email attachment.
- Dress professionally.
- Leave enough time to prepare equipment.

**Competency-based Interview:** Organizations such as the United Nations and World Health Organization (WHO) have undergone Human Resource Management (HRM) reforms to establish guidelines that will ensure their success in meeting new challenges and demands. For every position, they have identified essential core competencies in order to hire and maintain staff members who have the skills that will contribute to the success of the organization.

For each competency, they have identified effective behaviors as well as example interview questions. Below are some core competencies for a specific position in the WHO along with examples of related interview questions. Although these competencies are tailored to this organization, they can be used as a model to assist you in the interview process in any organization that uses this interview method. Similar line of questioning can be found in behavioral interviews.

- **Building and Promoting Partnerships Across the Organization and Beyond – Management Competency**

*Example of first-level questions:*

- Tell me about a time when your personal networks played a part in your ability to deliver results for the organization.
- Tell me about a time when you achieved something significant through the local government.

- **Driving the Organization to a Successful Future – Leadership Competency**

*Example of first-level questions:*

- Tell me about a time when you influenced outside organizations and bodies to further the mission of your organization.
- Tell me about a time when you managed the media for your organization.