

Interview Skills

Career Management Center
Old Dominion University

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When invited to interview

- Express enthusiasm
- Get details
 - When, where, what type, with whom
- Ask if a complete job description is available
- Thank the person contacting you

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Preparation

- Research the employer
- Analyze yourself
- Practice, practice, practice

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Researching the Employer

- Size of organization
- Location of facilities
- Types of clients or customers & primary competitors
- Product lines or services
- History of company's performance, including stocks
- Mission and goals
- Type[s] of training offered
- Relocation/other policies important to you
- Plans for future

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Where to Look

- Web sites
- Annual reports
- Media
- Career Search

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Analyze Yourself

- Analyze your strengths and skills; identify skills which are transferable
- Know your resume
- Prepare several examples of relevant past accomplishments
- Be able to articulate why you are interested in the specific position and the company
- Evaluate problem areas in your background

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Practice, Practice, Practice

- Know the job description: connect your background to the job
- Have a thirty second introduction ready
- Prepare 3-4 key points
- Prepare answers to common Questions
- Practice out loud in front of a mirror
- Do a mock interview

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Your Interview Goals

- To fully understand the job
- To match your skills, experience and knowledge to the critical aspects of the job
- To demonstrate that you are a good "fit"

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Employer's Interview Goals

- To assess your knowledge, skills, abilities
- To evaluate your "fit" with the job and the organization
- To hire the best candidate for the job

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Make a good first impression

- Arrive early
- Use a firm handshake
- Smile, display confidence
- Make good eye contact

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Personal Appearance

- Do:
 - wear a conservative suit
 - clean and polished shoes
 - make sure that socks or hose match suit
 - clean, manicured fingernails
 - neat hair
 - Be aware of nervous habits

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Personal Appearance

- Don't:
 - wear excessive jewelry, cosmetics, or fragrance
 - smoke during or prior to interview
 - draw attention to pierced or tattooed body parts

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What to Bring With You

- Extra copies of your resume
- Copies of transcripts
- List of questions to ask
- List of references
- Notepad and pen
- Business cards
- Portfolio, if appropriate

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Types of interviews

- Phone interview
 - Used to screen in finalists
- One-on-one interview
 - Most “typical” interview
- Panel interview
 - Questions come from each panelist
 - It’s important to acknowledge each person as you answer questions

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Be prepared to answer

- Tell me about yourself – devise a 30 second “commercial”
- Name your strengths/ weaknesses – keep it positive!
- Remember: this is no time to be humble—you must say in simple, clear language what you do well and why you should be hired.
- Sample questions: [Interview Help](#)

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Illegal questions

- Questions must address your skills, experience and knowledge as they relate to the job responsibilities
- Illegal questions relate to: age, marital status, handicap, sexual orientation, national origin, religion
- If you are unclear about how a question relates to the job, ask for clarification

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Behavioral Interviewing

- Past behavior is the best indication of future performance
- Tell me about a time when....
- Give me an example of...
- Formula: situation + action = result

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General Guidelines

- Answer questions from the employer's perspective
- Maintain positive attitude; show enthusiasm
- Keep answers as job-related as possible
- Don't ask about salary/benefits during the first interview
- Never say anything negative about a previous employer or job
- Ask each interviewer for a business card at the end of the interview

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Questions to Ask Employer

- Is this a new position? If not why is the last person leave?
- What attracted you to this organization?
- Where does this position fit into the organizational structure?
- What makes someone successful in this position?
- Additional questions: [Interview Help](#)

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Closing and Follow-up

- Summarize qualifications and express enthusiasm for the position
- Ask about post-interview procedures
- Follow up with a thank you note
- Do a personal debriefing and evaluate your performance

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How else can I get assistance?

- Email cybercoach@odu.edu for career assistance from a distance
- Alternate seminar formats
 - Webinars
 - Self-paced seminars
- [Chat live](#) with a cyber coach

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Career Management Center

QUESTIONS?

<http://www.odu.edu/cmc>

Call 683-4388 for an appointment with
your College Liaison or stop in the
Cyber Career Center to see a Career
Assistant

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