GO GET THAT JOB!

Tips and Tools for Interviewing

www.csuchico.edu/careers
Bottom-Line on Interviewing

- How can you fix their problem?
- Can you do the job?
- Will you love the job?
- Can the organization tolerate working with you?

**OTHER THOUGHTS:**

- Interviewing is a “two way street,” the organization is interviewing you, and you are interviewing the organization.
- The overall attitude you must convey to the interviewer is a POSITIVE ATTITUDE.
- You and your skills must = Them and their needs.
Research the Organization

Get information from:

- The department or organizations’ website
- News articles
- University Org Charts
- Former/current employees or others who know the organization
- Go talk with those involved in the organization if possible
Things you should know

- If the organization is public or private, for profit or not-for-profit
- What services (products) the organization provides
- What the organization looks for in an employee
- The growth potential
- Ultimately how your skills will enhance their operation
Practice, Practice, Practice

- Take a look at “Common Interview Questions”
  http://www.csuchico.edu/careers/students-alumni/job-search-tools/sample-questions.shtml#behavioral
- Practice with friends, colleagues, relatives
- Make a list of examples of your “Successful Situations” to prepare for behavioral interviewing
  http://www.csuchico.edu/careers/students-alumni/job-search-tools/interviewing.shtml
What is Behavioral Interviewing?

- Follows the theory that there is a very high likelihood that the way a person has acted in the past is the way they will act in the future.

- Think of examples of your past accomplishments that you will talk about in your interview.
Describe your “STAR” moments

- **Situation**: describe the situation
- **Task**: explain your task
- **Action**: and what actions you took
- **Result**: tell the results you achieved
“Give me an example of when you went an extra mile to help a customer.”

- **Situation:** In the shoe store where I worked, a customer needed a particular shoe style for a special event in one week. We did not have her size.

- **Task:** I needed to find the shoe for her, so before she left I asked the customer for her name and phone number in case I was able to find it for her. I did not make her any promises, in case I couldn’t come through.

- **Action:** I called around to our other stores to locate the shoe in her size; once I found it, I put it on hold in her name. Then I called the customer to let her know I had found her shoe, and I offered to arrange to have it shipped to her.

- **Result:** The customer decided to pick up the shoes since the other store was near her home. The next month she returned to our store, thanked me and purchased another pair of shoes. She commented on what a satisfied customer she was.
Top 5 Skills/Qualities Employers Seek

- Communication Skills (oral and written)
- Honesty/Integrity
- Teamwork Skills (works well with others)
- Interpersonal Skills (relates well to others)
- Strong work ethic

Source: National Association of Colleges & Employers Job Outlook Survey
Examples of other situations you may want to practice describing

- A time when you juggled multiple tasks
- An experience where you had to overcome a conflict with a team member or co-worker
- A time you convinced another person to agree with your point of view
- A problem you had to solve using your creativity (or analytical skills, leadership skills, etc.)
- Other situations as determined by your organizational research
More Questions

- Tell me about yourself?
- Why should we hire you?
- Why did you choose this department?
- Why do you choose to work at Chico State?
- Why did you leave your last job?

- Never be Negative!
Prepare Items to Bring

- A few copies of your resume; nice paper
- Copies of letters of recommendation, if you have them
- Copies of projects or papers if applicable
- A professional notebook, with paper/pen
Dress Appropriately

- Match the attire to the workplace
- It is better to be slightly over dressed than under dressed
- Always be neat, clean, and make sure clothing is well pressed
- Dress conservative; keep jewelry, make-up, cologne etc. to a minimum
Show Up on Time

- When you’re late, you’re telling the employer you will be late to work, late to meetings and late on assignments
- Employers have heard all excuses, so even if true, they don’t work!
- Plan for contingencies...be early
- Enter your interview location 10-15 minutes before your interview time
- Remember, everyone is evaluating you!
Critical: Positive Impression

- Be polite to everyone you meet (e.g. the receptionist). Interviewers are not the only decision makers
- Don’t assume people really know you and your skills
- Don’t be too comfortable or let down your guard
- Over sell, even if you know everyone in the room
- Firm handshake, smile, and make eye contact
- Have your materials organized
- Be ready to interview as soon as you are called into the interview
Be Yourself and Take Note of Body Language

- Answer questions truthfully, especially when they know you
- Sit comfortably; be careful of bad habits, e.g. twisting hair, tapping fingers, clicking pen, etc.
- Watch interviewer’s (panel) body language
- Be positive and happy to be in the interview
Be Prepared to Ask Questions

- Demonstrate that you have done your research
- Ask things that will help you decide if you want to work there
- Ask clarifying questions, be inquisitive
- Make the interview a good conversation
- Ask about the next step in the interview process
Follow Up After the Interview

- Write a thank you note promptly (email, letter or notecard)
- Call or contact the interviewer per their instructions
- Be politely persistent if it’s within their instructions...things can move very slow on a college campus
Evaluate Job Offers

- Are you a good fit?
- Will you be happy?
- Will it get you to where you may ultimately like to go?
- Be aware of timelines and ask for extensions if necessary
- Consider all options (organizational culture, location, pay, advancement potential, etc.).
Remember, have fun...

- Research the organization
- Practice, Practice, Practice
- Prepare for behavioral interviewing
- Describe your S-T-A-R moments
- Interview like you know no one on the panel
- Don’t assume ANYTHING
- Make a good first impression and dress appropriately
- Make it a good two-way conversation
- Ask clarifying questions, be inquisitive
- Be yourself and have fun (you get to talk about yourself)
- Ask questions
- Follow up after the interview
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