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## Preparing for the Internship Interview



The interview is the single most important factor in landing an internship. Preparation is definitely the key to successful interviewing. Find out what the position entails, what the company/organization provides, and what value you can bring to the company/organization. You can greatly increase your chances of interview success by researching and practicing beforehand.

- **Demonstrating a positive attitude.** An enthusiastic candidate who seems eager to learn, gets along with others, and goes the extra mile will always be in demand.
- **Indicate clear learning goals.** Do you want to learn more about interpersonal communication, organizational types and cultures, a specific industry, one or more job functions, or career-related skills? A combination of all five? Be able to discuss relevant activities that would help you meet your internship goals.

**TIP: Research the organization. Researching an employer is VITAL to your internship- search success. Visit the company's/organization's website, contact the company/organization directly, and use the reference materials and databases available at the campus or public library. Read local newspapers and journals, annual reports, recruitment literature, brochures and directories. Contact anyone you know in the business, read current or recent articles. Also, do not forget to visit your Career Services office for assistance.**

### FOLLOWING ARE COMMONLY ASKED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS:

1. Why do you want an internship with this particular organization?
2. What are your career goals?
3. We have several candidates for this internship position; why should we choose you?
4. Who was your least favorite professor? Why?
5. How would you handle conflicts between your school schedule and a surprise, rush job here?
6. Tell me about your role in extracurricular activities? How many hours do you spend weekly on these commitments?
7. Is your grade point average reflective of your true ability? Why? Why not?
8. You may hear things at this site that must remain confidential. Can you give me an example of situations where you had to observe strict confidentiality?

**TIP: Avoid talking too much or too little – answering just “yes” or “no.” Do not speak negatively about other supervisors, professors, or peers. Be able to cite examples of situations where you demonstrated skills or positive personal attributes.**

## **FOLLOWING ARE QUESTIONS TO ASK THE INTERVIEWER:**

1. How would you describe a typical day on the job?
2. What are some of the tasks and projects in which I will be involved?
3. What are your expectations of an intern who works for your organization?
4. What is the dress code of your organization?
5. Will I have the opportunity to meet regularly with my internship supervisor?
6. What type of training or orientation will I receive?
7. How many hours per week will you want me to work?
8. Will I be covered by workers' compensation if I am injured at my internship site?

**TIP: As a general rule, avoid bringing up the subject of salary, benefits and reimbursement. In those cases, however, where remuneration of some type has a direct bearing on whether you can accept the internship, it is helpful to introduce and clarify financial matters up front so you and your internship supervisor are on the same wavelength about this important subject before you proceed any further.**

**TIP: Formal dress may not be normal workplace attire for a particular internship site; nevertheless, you should dress in professional business attire at your interview to show you are prepared to take your internship seriously. As an intern, your everyday attire should follow the dress code of your internship site. Arrive early: at least 15 minutes before the interview; give yourself time to relax and collect your thoughts. Appear confident and relaxed during the interview. Be aware of your body language; pay close attention to the motion of your hands and maintain eye contact. Use good diction and correct grammar; do not use slang.**

**TIP: Displaying samples of your work in a well-organized portfolio is very effective when you interview for internships and jobs. Be sure to keep copies of writing samples, design examples, and lesson plans. You may include your resume, letters of reference, and evaluations from internships, co-ops or student teaching experiences.**

Make sure you ask the interviewer for a business card or his/her contact information and e-mail address and follow-up. After your internship interview, take the time to write a prompt thank-you letter to the key person who interviewed you. This letter should be typewritten. This extra effort shows your appreciation for your interviewer's time, reiterates your interest, and reminds the interviewer why you are a good candidate for the position.