

# **DEVELOPING YOUR INTERVIEWING SKILLS**

## **Professional Development Workshop Series**

Career Development  
and Internships Office (CDIO)

[careers@northpark.edu](mailto:careers@northpark.edu)

x5575

## **Top 20 Tips and Techniques**

1. Research the organization's mission statement and values before the interview. Don't ask questions in the interview that you could find the answer to online, such as the size of the organization or the office locations—you'll look unprepared.
2. Dress professionally in clean, ironed clothes without too much perfume, makeup, jewelry or trendy items—stay classic and formal.
3. Use a firm handshake.
4. Be friendly, but professional. You are there to impress the interviewer with your qualifications, so focus on that over personal details.
5. Prepare and practice answers to standard questions—you will be glad you did when you ace the question!
6. Arrive 5-10 minutes early for your interview. If you arrive 15 minutes early, your interviewer may feel pressured to hurry and meet you.
7. Bring copies of your resume and references printed on resume paper with you to the interview.
8. Turn your cell phone off.
9. Do not ask about salary or benefits; the interviewer should always be the first one to bring this up.
10. Make sure to prepare questions ahead of time to ask the interviewer when it's your turn.
11. Maintain eye contact and be yourself.
12. Practice interviewing with your roommate, friend, or family member before hand—how many times you practice is related to how badly you want the position!
13. Don't fidget, tap your foot, or play with your hair—you should appear confident.
14. Explain how your experience prepares you to help the organization—make it about them, not just about you.
15. Know the details on your resume—you should know them by heart but if not, memorize!
16. Be able to explain why you want that job with that organization, not “just because”.
17. Know how this role fits into where you want to be in 5 years, to show the employer you plan to stick around.
18. Sit up straight and lean forward slightly to show interest.
19. Take notes—you will be amazed at how little you can remember afterwards due to adrenaline and nerves.
20. Be yourself—they are interested in you! Trust in that and be genuine.

### **Questions to be prepared to answer in an interview:**

- Tell me about yourself.
- What are your strengths?
- What is your biggest weakness?
- Do you prefer to work alone or with others?
- What sets you apart from other candidates?
- What are your salary requirements?
- Why should I hire you?
- How would you like to see your career progress here?
- Why are you interested in this position?
- Why are you looking to change positions?
- What research have you done about our organization?
- What do you like most/least about your current job?
- How would your manager/coworkers/classmates describe you?
- Name 5 words that describe you.
- What motivates you?
- What 2 or 3 things are most important to you in your job?
- Why did you choose your major?
- Describe the significance of your extracurricular activities.
- What accomplishments have given you the most satisfaction?
- What are your hobbies?
- What is your learning style?
- Tell me about a time you failed and how you handled it.
- How do you handle conflict?
- Where do you see yourself in 5 years?
- How do you define success?
- Are you willing to travel? How much?
- Are you willing to relocate?
- Why did you attend the college you did?
- What changes would you make to your college?
- What criteria are you using to evaluate the organization for which you hope to work?
- How would you describe the ideal job for you following graduation?
- In what kind of work environment are you most comfortable?
- How do you work under pressure?

### **Questions to consider asking in an interview:**

- What would I be expected to accomplish in the first 3 months, 6 months, 1 year?
- How would you describe your company culture?
- What is your vision for your department over the next two to three years?
- What major challenges are you currently facing as a manager?
- What makes your organization better than your competitors?
- What are the areas where your competitors are better than your organization?
- Who do you consider your customers to be?
- What can you tell me about the colleagues in the organization I would be working with?
- What are the most important skills and attributes you are looking for in filling this position?
- What would my primary responsibilities be?
- What is the organization's plan for the next five years, and how does this department or division fit in?
- What specific skills from the person you hire would make your life easier?
- What are some of the skills and abilities you see as necessary for someone to succeed in this job?
- What are the most important areas for improvement in the department I hope to join?
- What are the attributes of the job that you'd like to see improved?
- What is your company's policy on attending seminars, workshops, and training opportunities?
- What attracted you to working for this organization?
- What have you liked most about working here?
- How will my leadership responsibilities and performance be measured? By whom?
- (If this a new position) What made you decide to open up this position?
- How would you describe your management style?
- What are the most important traits you look for in a direct report?
- How do you like your direct reports to communicate with you?
- What personal qualities or characteristics do you most value?
- How would you describe the experience of working here?
- What are a couple of misconceptions people have about the organization?
- Why did the person held this job previously leave it?
- From all I can see, I'd really like to work here, and I believe I can be a great addition to your team. What's the next step in the selection process?