

The Professional Interview----

Gaining the Inside Track

Presented by:

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Allen Yarnell Center for Student Success

Three Divisions

- Academic Assistance / Advising
 - Financial Advising
 - Career Coaching



Academic Advising / Student Success

1. **“Success Coaching” / Learning Strategies**
2. **Workshops / Classes**
3. **Tutoring (Receiving / Provider)**
1:1 \$10.00 for 5 Hours
Group: Downstairs in the library



Financial Advising

1. **NOT the Office of Financial Aid**
2. **How to understand YOUR debt / options for consolidating / loan forgiveness**
 1. **The cost of living----managing your financial realities**
 1. **The good, bad and ugly of credit cards**
 2. **1:1 coaching / workshops**



Career Coaching

1. **Resume /CV development / Cover Letters**
2. **Mock Interviews**
3. **Job Searches / Part time and full time**
4. **Finding Internships**
5. **Utilizing “Hireabobcat.com” / other job search sites**

1. Career Fairs



A Little About Me

- 4-6th grade teacher
- union president
- elementary principal
- middle school principal
- high school principal
- superintendent of schools
- adjunct university instructor
- retired??????
- MSU career coach



Our Focus Today: Acing the Interview

Part 1: The core purposes of interviews

Part 2: Before the Interview—doing your research

Part 3: The day arrives

Part 4: The interview—opening and closing

Part 5: Common and behavioral questions

Part 6: Phone and video interviews

Part 7: Final tips



Core Purposes of Interviews

1. To determine if you match the organizational culture and mission
2. To see if you have the requisite skills, demeanor, values and experience?
3. To watch how you handle pressure
4. To measure your enthusiasm and confidence
5. To see if they like you



Pre-Interview Research

- ✧ Skills & experience valued / The position posting
- ✧ Key players in the organization
- ✧ News / recent events / achievements
- ✧ Mission and values
- ✧ Clients / products services
- ✧ The person(s) interviewing you
- ✧ Inside perspectives (Glassdoor)



Pre-Interview Prep

- Think through your core message
- Prepare to link your education, experience, research, etc., to this position
- Consider short stories / examples which explain your chosen academic / career path, your personal character, ability to handle and learn from challenges and disappointments.
- Know where you are going



The Day Arrives

- Get some sleep / use eye drops
- Shower / shampoo brush / deodorant / shave
- Check your clothes / empty pockets
- Avoid-----perfumes, cologne, excessive make-up and jewelry, bright colors or patterns
- Bring ---money for parking, portfolio (if appropriate), several copies of resume / CV, a note pad / simple professional folder



“The Interview”

- Arrive 10 minutes early
- Go to the restroom / check your outfit / get powerful!
- Project confidence, professionalism, enthusiasm / but not arrogance or bubbling over
- Show respect and courtesy to everyone you meet
- Follow the interviewer’s lead / mirroring
- What about panel interviews?



Your Task

- To create a competitive edge (market position)
- To highlight your unique qualities and to mitigate potential weaknesses
- To persuade through verbal and potentially writing skills.



Body Language

- Use a firm handshake
- Good eye contact
- Maintain a strong posture – no slouching, fidgeting, nervous laughs
- Facial Expressions – appropriate? Do you appear engaged and interested?
- Smile and be yourself!



Verbal Skills

- Are you believable? Sincere?
- Show empathy
- Use examples. Are your examples appropriate?
- Did you answer the question? You can always ask the interviewer if you did.
- A good interview is 50/50 talking time



Verbal Communication Cont..

- Promote your core message.
- Paint a picture about you as an employee and a person. Be proud of your “Montana grit”.
- Have at least two stories that tell your story and demonstrate your knowledge, skills, abilities.
- Show/explain how you fit within the organizational culture. Discuss how your research, education experience makes you a great match.



Answering Questions

- Listen to the entire question asked by the interviewer.
- Do not start your response until the interviewer has finished speaking.
- Replay the question in your mind to ensure that you are answering their question appropriately and on-target.
- Think about your response prior to answering the question. (1-2 seconds to develop the best response).
- Once you have decided on your response, vocalize your answer. Again, with confidence and sincerity.



Answering Questions

- Prepare for all potential questions----- especially the first and last question.
 - “Tell us about you and why you think you are a good fit for this job.”
 - “Is there anything else you want to share with us and do you have any questions for us?”



2 Types of Questions

Common: *Can you work weekends?*

Behavioral: *How would you manage conflicting directives?*



Common Questions

Tell us about your research?

Why did you decide to become a astronaut?

Would you rather be part of a team or work independently?

What do you hope to be doing in 5 years?

In graduate school what courses did you find difficult?

Which did you most enjoy?

When would you be available to start work?

How would your professors describe you?



Behavioral Questions

- Tell us about a serious problem you faced and solved.
- Are you an honest person? What is your evidence?
- Tell us about a professor or a boss you really did not like.
- Tell about a time you broke the rules.
- How do stay positive when stressed? Share an example.
- How would you handle a disagreement with your supervisor?



Salary Questions

- ✓ Do your homework / know the range / know what it costs to live where the job is
- ✓ Avoid a specific answer
- ✓ Don't undersell yourself- make your case
- ✓ But----if you really want the job no matter what, talk about future salary increases based on your excellent performance



After the Interview

- Write handwritten thank you notes.
- Inquire regarding the progress of the candidate search.
- Ask if they need any other information from you.
- If you don't get the job, ask if they would be able to provide you any feedback regarding your interview and/or resume.



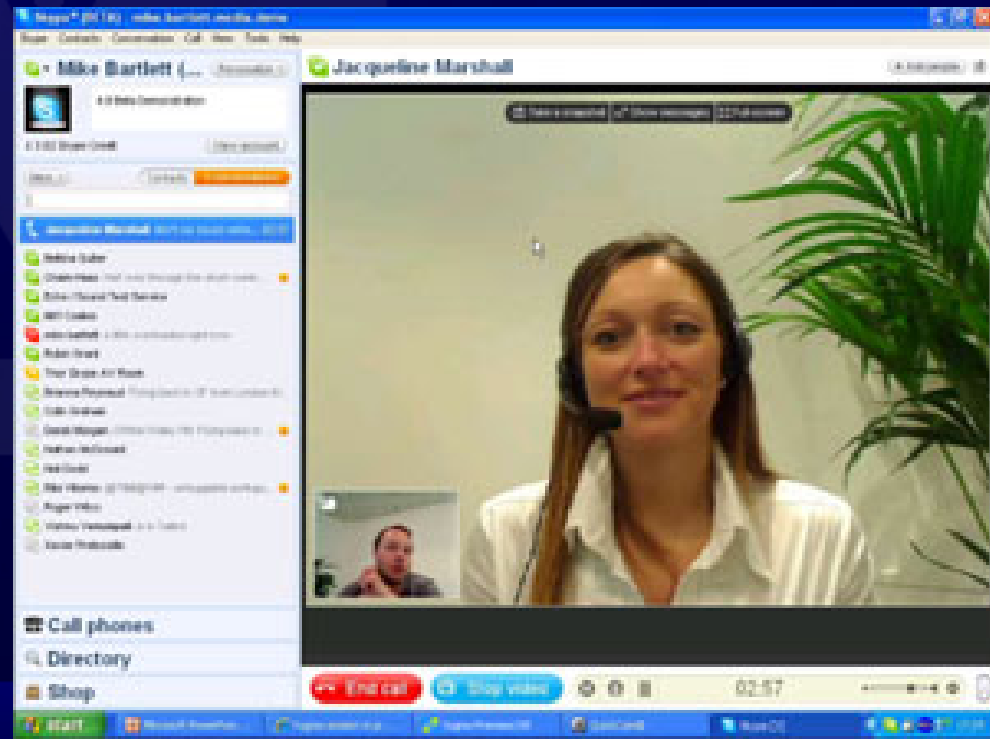
Video / Interview Tips

- Check the visual / background / lighting / volume / etc.
- Be comfortable---but still prepared



Look Into The Camera

- Minimize or cover the side screen of yourself
- Look into the camera as if you are looking into your interviewer's eyes



Head and Shoulders No Knees and Toes

- Make sure the camera is capturing your head, shoulders and hands
- Employers need to see your body language
- Sit further back into your chair / or have camera back a few feet from you
- Practice with a friend



Phone Only Interview?

- Use the speaker phone---as long it works well
- Utilize your basic interview skills
- Smile-----it comes through on the phone
- Take some notes / have some notes----- including core message reminder



Final Tips

- First impressions matter
- Confidence matters---fake it!
- Recommended mindset – “I’m here eager to explore this position”, which is different than “I’m here eager to get the job”
- Research, Prepare and Practice-----but don’t overdo research, preparation and practice as you need to be authentic
- Schedule a mock interview with a career coach at the AYCSS



Questions / Comments?

Thank you-----Best of Luck to
Each of You!

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