

Alumni Career Webinar: Interviewing Success

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Interview Goals

- Yours:
 - Successfully communicate your fit for the position
 - Determine if this is the best job and company for you
 - Get the job!
- Theirs:
 - Determine if you're the best candidate for the job in terms of overall skills and fit for the company
 - Sell the company to candidates

Preparation, Part I

- Know the company
 - Research: website, online news, business articles, GlassDoor, Hoovers, RIT Library, industry specific sites, LinkedIn and Twitter company pages
 - Who do you know? LinkedIn contacts or RIT alumni at company, professional association contacts
 - What to know: mission, products/services, trends (industry & company), organizational structure, competition, recent news, what key skills are they looking for
 - Research decision maker and interviewer

Preparation, Part II

- Know yourself – *back to your brand*
 - Determine skills (relevant & transferable), strengths, qualifications, experience
 - Know your resume in depth
 - Have examples that demonstrate success & accomplishments
 - Be able to explain employment gaps
 - Show you've kept up with technology for your field

Selling Yourself

- What is your value proposition / brand – what differentiates you from the competition?
 - From self-assessment – strengths, weaknesses, interests, attributes, skills, qualifications
 - Career objectives and goals
- Make the match between your qualifications and the company's needs
 - Technical requirements of the job
 - Other skills: communication, teamwork, leadership, analytical, problem solving, creativity

Practice

- Increase your confidence
- With Career Services Coordinator, industry contact (alumnus/a, LinkedIn, Professional Assn, Handshake mentor network)

Types of Interviews

- Screening
- On-site – expenses, arrangements
- Telephone
- Virtual (Skype, Facetime)
- Group/panel
- Video recorded interviews

New Trends

- Soft skills assessments
- Casual environments
- Job auditions
- Virtual reality assessments

Group Interviews

- Prepare – all possible questions, relevant stories, quantifiable answers
- Ask for input – engage the panel, start a dialog
- Articulate what you hear
- Apply what you hear

Behavioral Interviews

- Past behavior predicts future behavior
- Company is seeking key qualities
- Examples:
 - “Tell me about a time you worked with a difficult client and your strategy for success.”
 - “Give an example that shows how you take initiative.”
 - “Describe the most creative presentation or project you’ve done.”

Behavioral Interviews - Preparation

- Research on industry, company & position should tell you what qualities are important
- Prepare accomplishment stories/examples that demonstrate success in these areas
- Use CAR format for complete answer:
 - C = Challenge – what was the problem or situation?
 - A = Actions – what specific actions did you take to resolve the situation?
 - R = Results – what were the outcomes

Technical Interviews

- Prepare: review job description, study specific technologies, skills, practice answering process, search online for question examples
- During interview: clarify problem, collect necessary information, talk through or write your thinking process, not just answer
- Goal: company is determining your analytical and problem solving abilities, ability to articulate thoughts, and self-confidence

Resources for Technical Interview Prep

- www.leetcode.com
- www.hackerrank.com
- <http://jobsearch.about.com/od/interviewquestionsanswers/a/top-50-it-interview-questions.htm>
- <http://www.indiabix.com/technical/interview-questions-and-answers/>
- <http://www.hackreactor.com/blog/technical+interview+questions>
- <http://technical-interview.com/default.aspx>
- Others – Google search

Case Interviews

- Common for management & consulting positions
- Assess analytical, problem solving and communication / presentation skills
- Format: Summarize question, verify client's objectives, ask clarifying questions, lay out structure, identify case
- www.casequestions.com

Tips for the 2nd Interview

- Review the first interview – what went well, what else do you want to say now?
- Rehearse your answers – focused preparation
- Be assertive – make yourself an even better match, based on what you now know
- Different interviewers
- Ask your own questions – more of a discussion

Interview Etiquette

- Be early- plan for traffic, etc
- Professional appearance
- Cell phone off
- Bring extra resume copies, references
- Treat everyone with respect
- Be aware of non-verbal communication
- Be energetic, enthusiastic, positive, confident

Interview Format

- Opening – make positive first impression, hand shake, “small talk”
- Candidate sell – questions for you, your opportunity to sell yourself, make a match
- Employer sell – your questions for recruiter, their opportunity to sell company to you
- Closing – restate qualifications (why you’re best candidate) and interest in job, clarify next steps, get business card

Tough Questions

- Tell me about yourself
- Why are you no longer with company X?
- What are your strengths?
- What are your weaknesses / what are you working to improve about yourself?
- What are your short term and long term career goals?
- Why should I hire you?
- What have you learned from your mistakes?
- What qualities would your supervisor and co-workers use to describe you?
- Who's the most challenging client you've worked with?
- What can you offer us that someone else can't?

Tell Me About Yourself

- Describe your best attributes - skills and experience – relevant to the job
- 3 part marketing statement
 - Brief summary of your career history
 - Your career development – recent accomplishment, focus on what makes you exceptional
 - Brief summary of what you want to do next or why you're interested in this job
- No personal info
- Keep answer brief

The Salary Issue

- Research salaries in advance – industry, field, positions – know your worth
- Try to defer question, get them to make offer
- Focus on specifics of job & your qualifications
- Ask what their range is for position
- If pressed, give a ~\$5,000 range, based on research
- Indicate willingness to take lower salary
- May be some flexibility on benefits
- Total compensation is more than salary

Your Questions

- Based on research of company & industry
- Demonstrate your interest in company, their goals, values & priorities
- Also determine your level of interest in company and job
- Common:
 - Company's vision for future
 - Company's culture
 - Prospects for your growth within organization
 - Potential challenges faced in next year
 - What does success look like for this role after 6 months, 1 year

Follow Up

- Follow up letter:
 - Thank you
 - Customized, tailored, to each person
 - Reinforce your qualifications, match for position, interest
 - Email, hand-written, computer generated
 - Within 48 hours
- Follow up phone call – when, why
- Connect on LinkedIn
- Review interview – what went right, wrong
- Contact your references

Manage Your References

- Current list
- Can speak to various aspects of your qualifications – have ~10 you can choose from
- Willing, able to provide positive reference
- Update them on your status, new skills
- Let them know when they might be contacted
- Know what they will say – guide them to what you want them to say

Overqualified/Ageism Issues

- Understand why companies have concerns
 - You will be bored and unchallenged, and quit
 - You won't be able to keep up with the team and will be too set in your ways
 - You won't take direction from younger managers and will have a “know-it-all” attitude
 - Your salary requirements will be too high

Overqualified/Ageism Issues cont'd

- Demonstrate a positive, forward-thinking, enthusiastic attitude
- Show you're keeping current with technology for your field, new education or training – agile & lifelong learner
- Be clear and upfront with hiring manager
- Emphasize transferable skills and core competencies all employers look for
- Emphasize your experiences – work and life
- Focus on benefits of age and experience
 - Loyalty, dedication
 - Commitment to doing quality work
 - Someone to count on in a crisis; don't just react, but bring perspectives & can think through complex issues and problem solve
 - Solid performance record; in job and industry
 - Team player; work across generations
 - Great mentor, understand importance of building relationships
 - Confidence from experience

Layoff/Termination

- Layoff – be honest, no negativity towards employer, show how you're focusing on future and how you're using your time productively
- Termination – if your fault, address any problems, accept blame where it's due then let go of the rest
- You will need to explain – prepare, bury negative with positive, focus on future

Success Tips

- Google your interviewer (and check LinkedIn profile)
- Send your interviewer your LinkedIn profile prior to interview
- Interview as if you already have the job – i.e. here's what I can do for you
- Be the best of who you are – be yourself, at your best
- Don't be negative about a previous boss, company, co-worker, etc
- Demonstrate your resilience and adaptability
- Be prepared to address presumption of over qualification, perceived ageism questions

More Success Tips

- Listen to the question, think for a few seconds before responding, answer with a quality response
- Don't interrupt the interviewer
- Prepare marketing piece to leave with interviewer, as a supplement to your resume
- Don't ramble – keep your answers focused and concise
- Bring a professional portfolio to the interview

Questions?

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