Interview Skills Webinar

A Guide to the Interviewing Process
First Things First

- An interview is ultimately a two way street
  - The Employer Evaluates You
  - You Evaluate the Employer
Employers Want to Know

- How well will you do the job?
- What interests you about the role?
- How good of a fit will you be for the team?
- What traits and qualities do you have that will help you get the job done?
- How do you stack up to others?
Interview Goals

- Make a Positive Impression (first, second, or third)
- Learn more about the organization from its employees
- Relate your abilities and experiences to the position
Preparing for The Interview

- Do your research!
  - Company Website (About Us, Press Releases, Upcoming Events)
  - Better Business Bureau
  - Wikipedia
  - Glassdoor
- Consider your 5 most relevant skills towards the positions
- Project what questions they might ask you
- Create your own good questions for the interviewer
- Establish your commute (physical and technological)
- Plan your outfit!
The Day of The Interview

◊ What to Bring
  ◊ Copies of your Resume, Cover Letter, Reference List
  ◊ Other Supporting Materials
◊ Don’t Smoke and Bring Breath Mints
◊ Give yourself plenty of time to get there/set up your interviewing space
  ◊ If you have pets or children, consider where they will need to be
◊ Double check how your looking
◊ Take a breath and focus.
Before Receiving the Call/Virtual Interview

- Make sure you’ve done your research on who you’ll be speaking with (LinkedIn)
- Be sure to have the contact information of the interviewer
- Have a general idea of the questions that will be asked
- Don’t be afraid to ask questions
Some Additional Tips

- Practice good posture, but don’t focus too much on it
- Maintain eye contact
  - On computers, be sure to look at the camera, not the image of the people
- Smile and be polite
- Speak with your hands, but avoid overdoing it
- Feel free to take time to think about a response, just not too much
- Don’t over share
The Typical Interview

- Greet the Interviewer Politely
- Be at Ease/Remain Focused
- 2-3 minutes of “small talk”
- The interviewer/s will ask their questions
  - Be Open and Honest
  - Keep from droning on
- You will be able to ask your questions
- Closing Remarks/Next Steps*
Tough Interview Questions

- Tell me about yourself.
  - Don’t provide too much info
- Greatest Strengths/Weaknesses?
  - In the case of strengths, relate them to the position
  - In the case of weaknesses, focus on areas of improvement, and how you have improved
- Why do you want to work for us/Why do you want this position?
  - Focus on mission, purpose of the organization and how that inspired you to apply
- Tell us about a failure
  - Everyone has at least one failure, what’s important is what you learned from the experience.
- Situations, examples.
  - The Behavioral Interview.
The STAR Method

- Situation
  - What’s the setup of the story
- Task
  - What needs to be accomplished
- Action
  - What did you do
- Result
  - The end of the story (Everybody forgets this part)
STAR Example

Tell me about a time where you showed good leadership, what were the necessary skills?

Situation

Student who applied to work with the US Marshals was simultaneously receiving citizenship.

Task

Navigate and coordinate hiring process for the student.

Action

Tracked the student down for the Citizenship Paperwork and submitted it to the Marshals

Result

Student Started his internship, albeit 2 days later than everyone else.
STAR Method Practice

◊ Give me an example of when you set a goal and were able to meet or exceed it.

◊ What’s the situation?
◊ What was the task that needed accomplishing?
◊ What action did you take?
◊ What was the result?
STAR Practice #2

Tell me about a time where you failed at something? What did you learn?

- What’s the situation?
- What was the task that needed accomplishing?
- What action did you take?
- What was the result?
Following the Interview

- Send a Thank You Email!
  - If you are able to write and deliver, all the better
  - Unfortunately, hiring timelines don’t tend to support that format much anymore
- Evaluate the organization holistically
  - Goals/beliefs/values
- Take stock in how you feel about the interview
- Reward Yourself
  - Interviews are stressful and you deserve it
Final Reminders

- This is a two way street
- Preparation and research are key to a successful interview
- Practically every interview allows you to ask at minimum, 2 questions
  - Be Sure To Ask Them
- If you need a moment before answering a question, take it, just not too long
- The STAR Method
- Reward yourself for this!
  - In general, about 10% of applications turn into interviews
QUESTIONS?

Brian Bar
Assistant Director of Career Development
703-993-8559
bbar@gmu.edu