Chapter 13
Interviewing for a Job

- 21st Century Interviews
- Interview Strategy
- Preparation
- Interview Channels
- Interview Customs
- Kinds of Interviews
- Final Steps for a Job Search
21st Century Interviews

Most employers expect you to:

- Participate in multiple interviews
- Be assertive
- Follow instructions to the letter
- Take one or more tests
- Be approved by the team you’ll join
- Provide samples of the work you’re applying to do
Interview Strategy

1. What about yourself do you want the interviewer to know?
2. What disadvantages or weaknesses do you need to minimize?
3. What do you need to know about the job and the organization to decide on a job offer?
Preparation: Final Research

- Read
  - Web pages
  - Newsletters
  - Annual reports
  - Trade journals
- Ask people you know about the organization
- Find out who will interview you and research them, if possible
- Determine salary ranges for job/location
Preparation: Travel Planning

- Find building and closest parking
- Plan how much time you’ll need to get there
- Leave time margins for unexpected events (e.g., traffic jams, broken elevators)
- Plan transportation and schedule, if flying
Preparation: Attire

- Meet interviewer’s dress expectations
- Make conservative choices; traditional dark suit is most common
- Research organization’s culture, if possible, and dress a step above
- Wear comfortable, shined shoes in good condition
Preparation: Attire, *continued…*

- Style hair conservatively
- Wear understated jewelry and makeup
- Avoid perfume and cologne
- Present flawless personal hygiene
Preparation: Professional Materials

- Extra copies of your résumé
- Notepad, pen, and list of questions
- Copies of your work or a portfolio
- Reference information

A low-cost briefcase will carry these items
Interview Channels

- Campus interviews
  - Know protocols and expectations
  - Provide good details and professional stories about your work
  - Focus on 3-4 selling points
Interview Channels, continued…

- Phone interviews
  - Narrows list of candidates
  - Take notes, but don’t let it interrupt your answers
  - Ask for verbal feedback
  - Smile, lean forward, and gesture when speaking
  - Eliminate background noise
  - Focus on 3-4 selling points
Interview Channels, *continued*…

- **Video interviews**
  - Preparing a video
    - Practice answers ahead of time
    - Capture your best performance
    - Be thorough
  - Participating in videoconference
    - Prepare a practice video ahead of time
    - Keep your answers under two minutes
Interview Practice

- Put on the clothes you’ll wear
- Practice everything
  - Entering a room
  - Shaking hands
  - Sitting down
  - Answering questions
- Use video equipment if available

Answering out loud is much harder than answering in your head!
Interview Customs: Behavior

- Practice active listening
- Do not monopolize interviews with lengthy monologues
- Never say anything bad about current or former employers, including schools
- Be enthusiastic
- Be yourself—your best self
Interview Customs: Behavior

- Review your accomplishments; know your self-worth
- Remember these basics
  - Look at people when you talk; don’t mumble
  - Sit up straight; mind your table manners
  - Turn your cell phone off
  - Order non-messy foods
- Look for signs of organizational culture
Interview Customs: Note-Taking

- Record the following briefly during or right after the interview
  - Interviewer’s name (or names)
  - Advice given to you
  - What they liked about you
  - Negative points discussed
  - Answers to your questions
  - When you’ll hear from them
Interview Customs: Interview Sections

- Opening (2 to 5 minutes)
  - Conversation to set you at ease
  - Easy questions or information about company
Interview Customs: Interview Sections, continued…

- **Body (10 to 25 minutes)**
  - Answer questions that let you show and tell your strengths
  - Deflect questions that probe weaknesses evident on your résumé
  - Ask questions when opportunity arises
  - Watch the time; get in your key points
Interview Customs: Interview Section, continued…

- Close (2 to 5 minutes)
  - Summarize your key accomplishments and strengths
  - Listen to find out what happens next
Kinds of Interviews: Behavioral

- Asks you to describe past behaviors, such as
  - Using writing to achieve goal
  - Making a decision quickly
  - Working under a tight deadline
  - Taking a project from start to finish
- Probes you to think about what you did and discuss what you would do differently
Kinds of Interviews: Situational

- Puts you in a situation similar to those you’ll face on the job
- Tests problem-solving skills and ability to handle problems under time constraints and minimal preparation
- Focuses on the future
Kinds of Interviews: Stress

- Puts you under stress to see how you handle pressure
- Requires demonstration of job skills on the spot
- Presents opportunity to change what causes physical stress
- Allows you to answer stressful questions assertively
  - Rephrase questions that put you on the defensive, including illegal and sexist questions
  - Treat them as requests for information
Kinds of Interviews: Group

- Multiple candidates interviewed at once
- Prepare two-minute story of how you fit the job; practice it before interview
- Arrive early to meet people
- Make good eye contact with everyone
Kinds of Interviews: Group

- Participate in the discussion
- Look engaged (even when you’re not)
- Watch body language
- Be conscious of how you’re interacting with other people
- Avoid getting caught in a combative situation
Final Steps for a Job Search: Follow-Up

- Follow-Up Phone Calls
  - Show enthusiasm for the job
  - Reinforce positives from interview
  - Overcome negatives from interview
  - Provide information to persuade the interviewer to hire you
Final Steps for a Job Search: Follow-Up, continued...

- Follow-Up Written Messages
  - Thank the interviewer for useful information and any helpful action
  - Remind interviewer what s/he liked about you
  - Use company jargon; refer to specifics of interview
  - Show enthusiasm
  - Refer to the next move
Final Steps for a Job Search: Negotiating Salary and Benefits

- Wait for job offer to talk about salary
- Find out going rate for work you’d do
- Avoid naming a specific salary
- Negotiate package, not just starting salary
Final Steps for a Job Search: Accepting a Job Offer

- Know what’s important to you; for example
  - Are you willing to take work home?
  - Would you want firm deadlines or flexible schedule?
  - What kinds of opportunities for training and advancement are you seeking?
  - Where do you want to live?
- Plan what to say at time of job offer
Final Steps for a Job Search: Accepting a Job Offer, continued…

- Ask for 2 weeks to accept or reject offer
- Make acceptance contingent upon written job offer
- Let other interviewers know when you accept a job