

Aims' Career Services

INTERVIEWING TIPS & SKILLS

970.339.6251 * www.aims.edu/student/career * College Center, "One Stop" - Advising/Career Center



The interview: a chance to make a good impression and stand out above the rest!

You scored the interview, NOW WHAT?? DO YOUR HOMEWORK!

Do your research!

Find out as much information about the organization as possible. Spend time on their website to make yourself aware of their mission and history. Think about how you could fit into their team and how you will express that in the interview.

Practice, practice, practice!

Know typical interview questions and practice your responses. Talk to people in the field as to field-specific questions and expectations of interviewers. Schedule a mock interview with Career Services to get more comfortable and to hone those responses.

Pump Yourself Up!

Practice self-talk. Remind yourself of your competence and qualifications. Get yourself enthused and confident! You are the only one who can sell yourself to the employer.

Review your documents!

Always bring a spare copy of your resume to the interview. Arrive 10-15 minutes early and review your documents before you go in.

Appropriate Attire: Think one big step up from what the daily working attire would be at the organization.

	MEN
Highest	Suit with tie
Min	Nice slacks, shirt, tie

	WOMEN
	Skirt Suit
	Dress pants, button down shirt

- Make sure all attire is cleaned and ironed
- Men should not wear earrings and women should wear simple jewelry
- Make sure nails are trimmed and clean
- Avoid strong perfumes and colognes
- Men should be cleanly shaven and trimmed
- Women's skirts should be knee-length or longer
- When in doubt, dress conservatively!



FACT: You only have
**ONE opportunity to
make a first impression!**

Kinds of Interviews

One-on-One: Most common. Involves being interviewed by one person who is usually responsible for all phases of the hiring process.

Screening: Used to screen applicants and narrow the pool for further consideration. Often shorter and can either be conducted in person or by phone. Take it as seriously as any other interview.

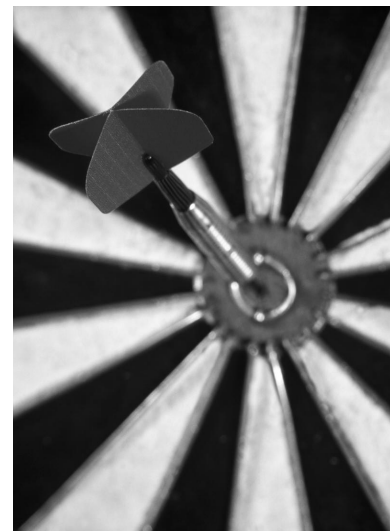
Panel: Becoming more frequent in use. Several people interview applicants at the same time—asking a series of questions round table. Stay calm, listen closely and make eye contact with all interviewers.

Serial: Involves meeting with several people from the organization at different time or in a series throughout the day. Treat each interview as though it were your first. All interviewers come together to share notes and make a final decision.

NOTE: When you are offered the opportunity to interview, you can simply ask the caller about what type of interview setting you should expect. You can also ask for the name of the interviewer or committee chairperson.

STRATEGIES

- You must sell yourself.
- Always be positive and upbeat.
- Keep your answers short and to the point.
- Show the interviewer what you're like.
- Focus on providing job-related information.
- Speak in terms of what you can do for the company.
- Understand the question before answering.
- Concentrate on your strengths.
- Don't put yourself down.
- Make eye contact.
- Smile!



Typical Questions: PRACTICE

Be prepared to answer typical interview questions that will most likely be asked regardless of the position. These questions are often behavioral in nature focusing on how you would act or react in the work environment as you engage with people.

- Tell us about yourself and why you are interested in this position.
- What would current or former supervisors identify as your strengths and weaknesses?
- Provide an example of a time you worked in a team setting and tell us about the contributions you made to that team.
- How have you demonstrated your ability to develop positive interpersonal relationships?
- What are you looking for in a supervisor?
- Tell us about a personal achievement that makes you proud.
- Please describe your level of competency using computer software and technology.
- Tell us about a time that you made a mistake. How did you respond and what did you learn?
- Describe a time when you experienced conflict with a co-worker. How did you handle that situation?
- How do you define professionalism?
- What are your long-term goals, both personally and professionally?
- Why are you leaving your current job?
- How do you respond to stress or pressure to complete projects?
- How would a supervisor manage you in order to bring out your best?
- What personal attributes will you contribute to our team?

*Need to practice your interviewing skills?
Do you want to receive feedback on how to improve
your presentation?*

Call the SSC front desk at 339-6251 to make an initial preparatory appointment with Career Services.

The **Mock Interview** process involves two appointments. Please bring a copy of your current resume to the first appointment.

*We'd love to help you polish your interviewing skills so
that you can SUCCEED!*

Miscellaneous Tips:

- More than 50% of your communication is non-verbal. Watch your posture, facial expressions, energy, gestures, and eye contact. Practice in front of a mirror.
- Freshen your breath before you enter the room. Be sure to spit out gum!
- Listen very carefully to what you are being asked so that you are sure to respond appropriately.
- Welcome all questions with a smile.
- Do not interrupt.
- Be positive and upbeat!
- Get a good night's sleep and have a solid meal before interviewing so that your energy is up.
- Finish strong—if you want the job, say so!



Answering Typical Questions

Many of the behavioral questions asked during interviews can be answered using the S.T.A.R format. You can practice using this format so that it becomes natural to you. This format really enables you to answer the questions completely.

S T >> Situation or Task

Begin by outlining the situation or task that you faced. Create a picture in their minds of the setting.

A >> Action

Explain the actions that you took to address the situation or task at hand. Be specific and detailed as it relates to the heart of the question you are answering.

R >> Result

Describe the outcome of your actions, the impact on the team, the end result of your decisions. End positively by highlighting how you grew as a professional.

Asking Questions

It is fairly common that at the end of the interview you will be asked, "What questions do you have for us?" You ALWAYS want to come prepared with some questions. The questions should be based on your research about the organization as well as what you need to know in order to make your decision about the job.

Some typical questions may include, but are not limited to:

- How would you describe a typical day in this position?
- How does the mission of the organization play out in the daily operations?
- What expectations do others in the organization have of this role?
- What opportunities for professional development exist within your organization?
- Why are you looking to fill this position?
- Why do each of you work at this organization—what makes you stay?
- When can I expect to hear from you regarding the hiring process? (last question)

Always end the interview by thanking them for their time and consideration. End on an up note by leaving with them with a strong statement about your desire to join their team or about your sense of fit based on your qualifications.



The Follow Through

Practice your *handshake* so that it is confident and strong. Be sure to shake hands as you leave. Look each person in the eye.

Send a *Thank You letter* within 24 hours of your interview.

(*See resource on writing Thank You letters.)

Be patient! The hiring process can often be long and tedious. Do not assume that you are out of the running until you receive notice.