



## CAS Career Services

# Interviewing and Professional Dress:

### Before the interview

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- Research the company and prepare questions to ask during the interview
- Review the job description and any unique qualifications that would make you a good fit
- Know your driving directions, interview location, and parking information ahead of time
- Review your application materials. If it is in your application, they may ask about it.
- Practice interviews with a mock interview or Interviewstream on [www.HireOSUgrads.com](http://www.HireOSUgrads.com).
  - To access it click interview button on left menu then click practice interviews. Choose any of the pre-health options. You can access this with any computer that has a camera or webcam, 24/7.

### During the interview

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- Arrive 10-15 minutes early and bring the best, professional version of yourself
- Take a moment to organize your thoughts before answering challenging questions
- Draw from your skills, experiences, coursework, and other examples to answer questions
- Speak clearly and concisely while maintaining enthusiasm and positivity for the job
- If you get stuck, avoid saying "I don't know," instead ask to come back to the question later

### After the interview

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- Ask the interview committee your prepared questions and take notes on answers
- Ask for business cards or contact information to send a thank you card/email
- Write a thank you card/email and use your notes to make yourself more memorable
- Maintain professional communication until you receive an offer
- Complete any further instructions given at or after the interview

### Professional dress tips

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- Use unscented deodorant liberally and mints/mouthwash to prevent distracting odors
- Be mindful of accessories that could be distracting, such as jewelry, scents, and tattoos
- Groom hair, nails, and make-up in a clean, professional, and simple fashion

# Sample Interview Questions

## 1. Tell me about yourself.

This question is extremely common for an opening question. Take 60-90 seconds to give an overview of who you are. Talk about why you chose a specific path of study, why you are interested in the job, how your values, personality, and skills would align with the mission and vision of the company, and how obtaining this position would help you accomplish short- and long-term goals. Briefly mention all the key details that are relevant. This is also the perfect time to make sure you point out anything from your application that you want them to know.

## 2. Why did you choose your major?

Describe your thinking process that led you to choose your academic major. Discuss what skills you gained and how you would intend on applying them in a professional setting. Explain how projects helped you conceptualize information, team dynamics, and time management.

## 3. Why do you want to work for our company?

This is the time to show your company research and explain why working for this company or in this specific job would be a good fit for you. What made you apply? Describe what attracted you to the job and the company. Discuss any initiatives, products, services, etc. that they develop.

## 4. What qualifications do you have?

Explain how your education and experiences have prepared you for this job. You can talk about jobs, internships, classes, class projects, volunteer positions, or campus involvement that demonstrate how you developed skills that directly connect to the job. Pull examples from more than one experience and make ties to the job duties and roles.

## 5. Behavioral Based Questions

Behavioral questions are an attempt to determine how you would behave in a given situation. Answer these questions by telling a story from your personal, academic or work experience. Listen to the question carefully to make sure you understand the question before you start to answer. Use the STAR formula to organize your answer but also include enough detail to stay unique and memorable. Before the interview, determine what stories and examples you could share so the information is fresh in your mind. Practice your delivery, but do not memorize the dialog so you can be flexible with delivery. If you have to tell a story or describe a specific experience, it will be a behavioral question. General indicators of a behavioral question:

- Describe a time when you had to...
- Give me an example of...
- Tell me about a situation where...

Use the **STAR** method to help outline your response

**S**ituation + **T**asks Required + Your **A**ctions Taken = **R**esult

- Situation: What was challenge or situation?
- Tasks: What were you required to achieve?
- Actions: What did you do?
- Results: What was the outcome of your actions?

### Behavior Based question examples:

Tell me about a time you worked with a team.

Give me an example of a time you had to solve a problem.

What experience do you have with communication?

Tell me about a time you failed.

Give me an example of a time you worked through a difficult situation.

Tell me about a time you had a leadership role.  
What was your biggest accomplishment or success?  
What was your favorite/most challenging class?  
Tell me how you built a skill you listed on your resume.  
Give me an example of a project/task you completed independently.  
Tell me how you have helped others/ considered the needs of others.  
Give me an example of an ethic decision you had to make.

## **6. What motivates you?**

Interview committees want to know what you like doing and why you like doing it. Answer this honestly, and the content is likely to be personal. Avoid money motives and clichés, but the possibilities are endless. Respect, helping others, problem solving, accomplishment, goal driven are some options.

## **7. What are your strengths?**

List 1-3 strengths you can offer the institution/program and outline where you used them or where you learned them. This answer will be stronger when you can prove you have the skills by including examples utilizing the STAR method.

## **8. What are your weaknesses?**

It is time to be honest and identify an area that needs development. Do not mention something that would make this type of work impossible for you, but put some thought into an area you want to improve. At the same time, do not make any excuses. Finish this answer with a positive spin by talking about how you have overcome this weakness or what you are doing to improve in this area.

## **9. What are your long- and short-term goals?**

This requires you to describe where you see yourself in the future. Do not answer with goals that would not align with the company. Even if you do not plan to work there forever, the employer needs to determine if you are worth their investment.

## **10. What are your salary expectations?**

Do your research ahead of time so if asked (and ONLY if asked) you can provide a fair salary range. Career Services can help you find this information from recent grad surveys, [glassdoor.com](http://glassdoor.com), and NACE salary data. Determine a salary with a \$2K-\$5K range based on this data and cost of living in the area.

## **11. Why should we hire you?**

This is your time to sell yourself. Describe what makes you different from other students. Tell them what you can bring to the table and describe key experiences or skills that set you apart. You have something to offer – here is where you show that!

## **12. Do you have any questions for us?**

Come prepared to ask a few questions to employer. Do not ask something that can be found on their website or in the job description. Prepare 4-5 questions but likely you will only ask a couple. Have many questions prepared because you may receive some answers during the interview process. Avoid the “what’s in it for me?” type of questions. NEVER ask about salary or benefits.

- I am very interested in this position. What is my next step in the hiring process?
- What drew you to work for this company? What is your favorite part of this company?
- Tell me about a typical career path for this position.
- Describe the office culture.
- What type of leadership is there within the company?
- Who evaluates employee performance, and how is success measured?

# Interviews Types

## Phone/Skype interviews

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- Reserve a quiet, private place (e.g., 360 Student Union, library study rooms)
- Be ready 15 minutes before the interview and make sure to account for time zone
- Write down the names of the interviews when introduced
- Expect normal pauses in conversation and resist the urge to keep talking
- Look at the camera, not the screen when speaking

## On-campus interviews

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- Log onto your Hire account and click on OCI (On-Campus Interviews) and Job Listings
  - Choose the OCI tab to learn about the companies visiting campus for interviews
  - Choose the Job Listings tab to research positions posted on the Hire system
- Use a portfolio to have multiple copies of your resume for the interview committee

## Scholarship, leadership, or graduate school interview

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- These will focus on academic achievement and preparation
- Be prepared to answer questions about why you chose this career/academic path
- Outline your involvement in the classroom and on campus

## Canceling interviews

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- Avoid canceling any interview unless you have accepted a job offer
  - If you have accepted an offer, be sure to let the organization know
- Cancel interviews at least 48 hours before the interview date
- Provide a legitimate reason in a professional manner

# Dress for Success

## Business professional attire

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- Matching, two-piece dark colored suit (black, blue, grey)
- Tailored shirt/skirt with conservative neckline/length and mild colors
- Keep accessories to the bare minimum and avoid flashy designs and strong scents
- Polished dress shoes that match belt color

## Business casual attire

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- Top and bottom do not necessarily need to match and can have bolder colors
- Shirts/skirts still need to be pressed/tailored and have a conservative neckline/length
- More freedom with accessories and colors, but keep them in moderation
- Make sure body piercing and tattoo coverage aligns with company culture/standards