
Interviewing

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Their Goal

- To find the best employee with:
 - Expertise towards job
 - Creativity and problem solving skills
 - Independence and Team Players
 - Communication skills
 - Teaching, mentoring and supervisory skills
 - Leadership potential and skills



Your Goal

- Convince employer that you fit their goal
- Learn about the institution and department
- Learn about the locality
- Decide if this is a good “fit” for you



It's not just your expertise.....

- Non-verbal communication
 - Voice
 - Eye contact
 - Gestures
 - Posture
 - Nervous mannerisms
 - Handshake
 - Facial expression
- Verbal communication
 - Language
 - Grammar & sentence structure
 - Ability to organize & express ideas
- Listening skills
- “Fit”



Academic vs. Industry

- Many similarities:
 - Goals
 - Phone interviews
 - On-site interviews

- Many Differences:
 - Types of people you will meet
 - Job talks
 - Duration and number of interviews
 - Timeline to decision



Interviewing by Phone or Videoconferencing

- Land-line and find a quiet place
- Typically 30 - 45 minutes, anywhere from 1 - 3 interviewers
- Remember and use interviewers names
- Loss of facial and body language cues can be challenging
- Conversation will likely end with them asking you if you have questions



Academic On-site Schedule

- Eat all meals with potential colleagues
- Meet with:
 - the Chair of relevant Departments and Center
 - individual faculty - in & out of your field
 - members of the search committee
 - students and/or postdocs - often over lunch
 - [Deans or other University leaders]
- Present:
 - a seminar (45 minutes)
 - [a chalk talk]
 - [a class]
- Tour:
 - facilities, potential lab space, classrooms, and cores
 - the town & surrounding areas



Industry Interviews

	Challenging Interview	Easier Interview	General Comments
Duration	2 days	½ day	Highly competitive position is more likely to have a multi-day interview; can start morning or afternoon
Research Presentation	1 hour	Not required	Know where presentation can be shortened in case of time crunch, may be placed anytime during schedule
Likely interviewers	Immediate supervisor, team personnel from other disciplines, HR representative, department colleagues, lab support staff, management	Immediate supervisor, a few department colleagues, head of department	Depends on sensitivity of position, size of company, interviewer schedules; expect changes to interviewer list
Length of interview	1.5 hours with immediate supervisor	~30 minutes with each interviewer	Depends on number of interviewers
Environment	Multiple interviewers	One-on-one	
Location	In a single conference room	Interviewers' offices	Escort between locations
Personal interviewing styles	Hostile	Enthusiastic	
Meals	Lunch: company cafeteria or local restaurant with 1-2 colleagues Dinner: local restaurant with supervisor and their management		



Types of interview questions

- Ice breakers
 - “So, Tell me about yourself”

- Skill-based
 - Science, management, communication and interpersonal
 - “Tell me about your research”
 - “How do you give feedback to subordinates?”

- Behavioral
 - Identify character traits and motivations for seeking the job
 - to see if you are a “good” fit
 - “Strengths and Weaknesses”
 - “What excites/worries you about this job”



STAR approach

- Situation or Task
 - Describe what happened
- Action
 - What did you do?
- Result
 - How did it end, what did you learn, what was accomplished?



PREPARE!!!!

- Understand travel and other logistics
- Read institution websites
- Research your interviewers
- Make lists of questions & resources you need to learn about
- Make an impression – clothes that are comfortable, neat, and consistent with the science culture. Do NOT get new shoes!
- Be prepared for all types of questions
- Practice your talk MANY TIMES
- Bring copies of your CV/resume



What You Should Be Asking About

- The culture
- Research themes and areas of focus
- Other duties
- Quality and numbers of trainees or staff
- Mentorship new employees
- Shared resources and core facilities
- Grant expectations (academics)
- Tenure and salary policies
- Personal views of the department, institution, and area
- Anything important to you personally or professionally



Need two jobs?

Academics

- Best discussed with dept chair or head of the search committee, but others may probe on their behalf
- Appropriate to bring this up during the first interview
 - Be positive
 - Ask about local consortia/agreements that might help
 - Be clear about types of positions your partner will accept

Industry

- Best not discussed in first interview
- Not as accommodating as academics
- Research local companies and consortia



Keep in mind:

- Preparation pays off
- First impressions form quickly
- The interview is not only about you
- You are trying to connect professionally AND personally
- Even the social activities are part of the interview
- You must have questions when asked



Other resources

- www.training.nih.gov
 - Videos under prior events
 - Academic and non-academic
 - Job talks for academics and non academics
- OITE Career Center
 - Library
- Various internet sites
 - Riley guide
 - Job-hunter.com
 - Monster.com



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