

Applications & Interview Information for Session I

Introduction and Groundwork

- This portion of your presentation will give students some context in which to hear you speak. You can also set the stage here by explaining what you look for and then build on that as you talk about both resumes/applications and interviews.
- Briefly tell about your company – what your company does, what skills you look for when hiring, the types of positions you hire for, etc. Talk about starting wages and educational requirements as they pertain to your company.

Applications

- Discuss applications with the students and common pitfalls with applications such as leaving something blank, penmanship (in this case they'll be completing their applications online), rules of grammar (capitalization, punctuation, spelling), and answering completely.
- Discuss on-line applications and how to navigate through them. The students will be completing their "official" mock interview application on-line this year in the time after.

Before the Interview

- **KNOW YOURSELF AND YOUR GOALS.** Go over your resume carefully as the recruiter will relate many of the interview questions to it.
- **PREPARE ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS** such as "Tell me about yourself," and "What is your greatest strength?" and "What is your greatest weakness?" Think of examples in your experience to use to answer behavioral interviewing questions.
- **DO YOUR HOMEWORK ON THE COMPANY.** Search on the Internet for the employer's webpage as well as other references to the company (news stories written, recent events, etc.). Copies of company literature, job descriptions, videos and other information about the company may also be available at your local library or college career center. You should know the information on the company web page and also do additional research on the internet and in printed resources. Know the company's product and services, their competitors, and their industry trends. Use this information to develop questions for the employer indicating your interest.
- **DRESS APPROPRIATELY.** Employers tend to make their decision about you during the first two to five minutes of the interview. Obviously, appearance is important. Decide what you will wear, get your clothes ready and allow enough time before your interview for good grooming. Dress professionally. Suits are usually preferred for full-time entry-level positions in business. Good grooming and good taste should prevail. A good rule is to not overdo anything including jewelry, cologne, make-up, color and pattern. The idea is to look professional and competent.
- **ARRIVE TEN MINUTES PRIOR TO THE INTERVIEW.** Never keep the interviewer waiting. If this is a second interview on the employer's site, be sure to show a sincere interest in all of the people you meet at the interviewing location. This includes folks you see in the parking lot, the elevator, the rest room and the reception room.

During the Interview

- YOUR FIRST IMPRESSION MUST BE POSITIVE. Start your interview like a winner! Use a firm handshake, have a pleasant smile, and present yourself with a confident attitude. (Practice this with the students.)
- LISTEN ATTENTIVELY AND MAINTAIN STEADY (WITHOUT STARING) EYE CONTACT
- ANSWER QUESTIONS IN A POSITIVE MANNER. Speak clearly using excellent grammar and a pleasant tone. (It is a good idea to practice with a friend or use a tape recorder to listen to your responses.) Take time answering questions. It is okay to pause to think or to ask for a question to be repeated. Never downgrade a former employer. Always relate the positive results of a former experience even if it was a negative one.
- **IMPORTANT!** ASK PERTINENT QUESTIONS ABOUT THE JOB AND THE COMPANY. This is the reason for the homework mentioned above and could be critical to your success. Be familiar with the job description and the goals of the company. You should be able to ask questions about the position and the future direction of the company. You can also tell them how you would be an asset to the organization.
- EXPRESS YOUR INTEREST IN BEING HIRED. Let them know you are impressed with the company and would like to work there.

After the Interview

WRITE A THANK YOU LETTER the next day to everyone with whom you interviewed. Restate your interest in the position. Be sure to get the correct spellings of their names and companies.

DON'T GIVE UP! If you are not called back for a second interview, don't despair. You have one more interviewing experience behind you and are better prepared for the next one.