

Notes from Interviewing Lunch and Learn

Caveat: This presentation was specifically addressing interviewing for positions in industry.

- Interviews are not an oral exam, they are a conversation to determine if you are a good fit for the position and company and if the position and company are a good fit for you.
- Remember these questions:
 - Can you do the job?
 - Do you want to do the job?
 - Will the people at the company enjoy working with you?
- When answering their questions:
 - Always answer with neutral or positive responses to their questions. Avoid negativity, especially about previous employers.
 - Give short answer (summary) first, *then* support with examples vs. leading to your answer.
 - Use specific (but brief) examples that show you have the qualities/requirements/preferences for the job.
 - Think – How have you handled this situation, **not** how would you handle the situation.
 - Use PART to structure your answers: Problem, Action, Result, Take-away
 - Be aware of non-verbals, and correct as needed during the interview:
 - Good posture
 - Eye contact
 - Facial animation
 - Voice modulation
 - Gestures
- Brainstorming activity: “Interview Prep: Summarize your case for the job”
- **Prepare**
 - Research the employer
 - Know their needs
 - Know your strengths and how they fit the position
 - Anticipate questions and rehearse answers (including non-verbals)
 - Keep responses to open-ended questions relevant to the position
 - Know your weaknesses, and be prepared to describe a weakness to which you have applied an effective strategy, so it won’t affect your performance
 - Have specific and purposeful questions prepared for them about the job and the company
- **Participate**
 - Enjoy the conversation
 - Dress somewhat formally: wear something that looks professional and elegant but comfortable
 - Remember non-verbals: monitor yours *and* theirs to manage the conversation
 - Keep the spotlight on them to minimize nervousness: focus on *their* needs and interests, and how helpful your skills qualities will be

- Put your heart and soul into it: get “psyched” for the interview (even if this position may not be your first choice) - so you communicate energy and genuine interest, a major factor in hiring. It is always valuable to make a good impression.
- **Follow-up**
 - Make yourself memorable by mentioning a specific point you enjoyed discussing/learning about during the interview, to help them remember you
 - Send a thank you note
 - Express appreciation
 - Briefly remind them of your strengths and interest in the job
 - If you forgot something in the interview, mention it in the note
 - Gracious persistence
 - Check in with them
 - Timeline for decision
 - Continue to check every week or so
 - Remind them you are a good match for the job
 - Show interest and enthusiasm for the position
- Salary question
 - Do salary research for the position and industry *before* the first interview
 - Research benefits and other compensation
 - If asked, ask them what they anticipated for the salary (make them give a number first), or defer by saying you can only evaluate a salary within the context of total compensation
 - Try not to discuss salary until they have made an offer: you are in the best position to negotiate then.
- Ended with practice workshop