

The Mock Interview Experience

Purpose

The University of Maine Career Center offers a mock interviewing service to students registered to use the Center's services. The purpose of the mock interview experience is to provide the student with an opportunity to develop and practice interviewing skills before "the big interview".

Procedure

- 1) Register with the Career Center. If you have not already done so, register with the Career Center by filling out the profile on CareerLink which can be found on the Career Center website www.umaine.edu/career.
- 2) Make an appointment. Several of the Career Center staff are trained to provide feedback regarding the student's interviewing skills. Call the Center at 581-1359 to make an appointment for a mock interview.
- 3) Prepare for your appointment. To prepare for your mock interview, consider the following questions that are likely to be asked in both mock interviews as well as actual interviews held both on campus and off. Mentally prepare answers to these questions. Some students find it helpful to write out answers to these questions. This can be a good technique but avoid trying to give a memorized response to every question in an interview. This will hurt your chances of appearing comfortable and relaxed. Also, the actual questions asked in an interview may be different or followed by a series of more detailed questions. Potential questions:

Tell me about yourself.

Why did you choose your major?

What was your favorite class? Why?

What are your strong points?

What is your weakest area?

Is there a skill that you would like our help to develop?

Describe how you used your interpersonal skills to get something accomplished.

Describe situations where you worked successfully with a team.

Tell me about any leadership experiences you have had.

Describe your experiences communicating complicated information orally and in writing.

Describe a specific situation where you had to use your problem solving skills.

How do you anticipate applying what you've learned in school, on the job?

Describe your level of computer proficiency.

How do you deal with stress? Failure?

What do you know about our company and the position for which you are applying?

Why did you choose to apply to our company for this position?

Where do you expect to be in your career five years from now?

Why should I give you the job over the other highly qualified candidates?

What questions do you have for me?

The actual questions asked will depend on your career interests. It is unlikely that all of the questions will be asked in the short time available for a mock interview session because half of the session will be devoted to viewing a videotape of your interview.

*If you would like to receive a copy of your interview, bring a flash drive with you. We will have a copy of your video ready for you within 24 hours of your mock interview.

Remember, when answering questions keep your answers short and to the point. A good format to follow is to answer the questions briefly, elaborate with examples, and summarize your response.

Example: "Describe your computer proficiency."

Answer: I have a great deal of computer experience. I have used Word, Excel, and PowerPoint software packages during my internship and for several courses at school. I have used Word to complete all of my research papers. In my accounting and finance classes, I used Excel to perform ratio analyses on corporate financial statements. During my internship I used PowerPoint to prepare marketing presentations for senior sales representatives. I enjoy using computers and learn new software packages quickly.

- 4) The mock interview experience. On the day of your mock interview appointment, plan to show up early for your session. Dress appropriately for a formal interview and bring a resume. The mock interview will be video taped unless you prefer that it not be. The purpose of taping the session is to facilitate the identification of areas that could be improved and areas where you perform particularly well.

A typical mock interview session will last one hour and will include:

- a. A discussion of the mock interview process and the types of positions for which you will be applying (5 minutes)
- b. The interview itself (20 minutes)
- c. Reviewing the tape of the interview (20 minutes)
- d. Sharing perceptions of your performance (15 minutes)

The attached interview feedback form will serve as a basis for discussing your performance. Both you and the interviewer will fill out a form and compare impressions. Areas that are strong points and areas that could be improved will be considered and an action plan developed for further practice should you desire it.

Other Resources

Additional Career Center interviewing handouts include: Job Interviews: *What You Should Expect, Examples of Frequently Asked Questions, 50 Questions Recruiters Ask College Seniors*, Tough Interview Questions: *How to Handle Them*, and Company Research: *Information to Have on the Employer*. The Career Center also offers resume and cover letter review services. Finally, the Maine Mentor Program is available to students who would like to contact an individual currently employed in the field of interest to the student.