

CENTER FOR CAREER AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT GUIDE



MORAVIAN
COLLEGE



INTERVIEWING

Have further questions?

Please contact the Center for Career and Civic Engagement at 610-861-1509, stop by the office or send an email to careercivic@moravian.edu.

HOURS OF OPERATION: Monday- Friday from 8:00am-4:30pm.

Interviewing Overview

The heart of the job search process is the interview. This is your chance to show your stuff. It is where your motivations and the employer's needs come together. To be best prepared for the interview, you must know how to match the employer's needs to your skills and abilities.

Resume vs. Interview

Your resume is your vehicle to get an interview and the interview is your vehicle to get a job offer. Be sure to spend quality time preparing for the interview. It is extremely important that you do not skip pre-interview activity.

Pre-Interview Activity

A successful interview begins with research. You must learn about the organization and the position that you are interested in. Review articles and information about the company in such diverse resources as websites, directories, social media, newspapers, magazines, current employees, and annual reports. Develop some of your questions for the interview from this information. Be sure to know yourself and be able to identify your skills and abilities.

Remember to bring a briefcase or portfolio to interviews. It should contain:

- A note pad
- One or two pens
- Several extra resumes
- Several copies of your reference list
- Letters of recommendation (if you have them)
- Work samples (where applicable)

References should be listed on a separate sheet of paper from your resume. See References example in the Resume/Cover Letter guidebook for more information.

Interview Check-List

- Confirm your schedule, date, time and location.
- Arrive on time.
- Dress appropriate.
- Know the interviewer's name, pronunciation, spelling and title (Mr., Miss, Ms., Mrs., Dr.).
- Extend a warm greeting and a firm handshake.
- Wait to be asked to be seated.
- Maintain eye contact.
- Show enthusiasm!
- Display knowledge of the company, industry, position, interviewer, and job location.
- Be prepared to answer and ask questions.
- Be sure to silence/turn off your phone.

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THE INTERVIEW

The interview process is a conversation that accomplishes two objectives. First, a candidate presents himself or herself to a potential employer. Second, the candidate gains information about that employer. A good interview involves give and take. You're shopping the company, and the company is shopping you.

Two types of interviews are the most common:

- *The Screening Interview.* A short interview in which first impressions are quite important.
- *The On-Site Interview.* Usually a longer follow-up to the screening session. You must be able to establish rapport quickly and sustain it.

In the interview setting, you must be aware of both your verbal and nonverbal behavior. Appearance, self-expression, self-confidence, enthusiasm, and your ability to relate to the interviewer all exert an influence.

The job interview is usually structured in five parts:

- First impression
- Being asked and answering questions about yourself
- Being told about the job and company
- Asking the interviewer about the job and company
- Wrapping up.

FACE TO FACE

At this point, employers are looking for honesty, intelligence, competence, enthusiasm, and likability. In the end, employers hire the people they like. Therefore, you should convey that you are likable and can get along with others. You can convey this by using nonverbal behaviors, which include:

- Sitting with a very slight forward lean toward the interviewer. It will communicate your interest in what the employer has to say.
- Making frequent eye contact with the interviewer. You will be perceived as more trustworthy if you look at the interviewer as you ask and answer questions.
- Smiling. A moderate amount of smiling will help reinforce a positive image.
- Conveying interest and enthusiasm through your vocal inflections. If you speak in a monotone throughout the conversation, it will sound as if you are bored.

ANSWERING QUESTIONS

Preparation and practice are keys to your success. Most questions will relate to your educational background, work experience, career goals, personality, and behavior traits. Behavior-based questions are those in which an interviewer asks a question about your past behavior in a situation (such as, "Describe how you handled a conflict situation in a professional setting" or "Tell me a time when you led a group and discuss the result"). Whatever the question happens to be, you want to answer it as it relates to the position you are interviewing for. Always try to use an example from your experiences to further emphasize your skills. Using the STAR approach is an effective method. When giving an example, follow these steps:

- **S**ituation. Tell the interviewer the situation that gave you the chance to acquire the skill. Think of problems you have solved or a situation that you handled effectively. It doesn't have to be a big deal; just something in which you were able to use your skills.
- **T**ask. Explain the task you undertook.
- **A**ction. Tell the interviewer how you went about solving the situation. Tell what you did and how you did it. Focus on what you did. Let the interviewer see how you think. Show him or her

how logical, analytical and creative you are. Be detail oriented. This will show the interviewer what the organization can expect from you on the job.

- **Result.** Let the interviewer know the result of the situation. Was the job more efficiently performed? Less costly? Made easier? Talk about increasing efficiency, productivity, morale, or elimination of waste. Show that you know the bottom line for business is profit. Try to give an example with a positive outcome. But even if it is negative, let the interviewer know what you learned from the experience.

Your example does not have to be an on-the-job experience. It can be taken from the classroom or from extracurricular activities. Anything that can convey your skills is appropriate to use.

See the Questions section of this guide for examples of questions you will be asked.

HANDLING OBJECTIONS AND NEGATIVES

Be positive! Never complain. If you can't say anything good about a person, company, or institution, don't say anything at all. The underlying question will always be "why should I hire you?" When handling employers' objections, recognize their stereotypes and biases. Then raise their expectations by stressing your strengths and avoiding your weaknesses. Be honest in doing so. The substance and form of your reply should be positive. Avoid words like "can't," "won't," and "don't." While you cannot avoid all negative words, realize that the type of words you use makes a difference, and therefore word choice should be managed. Avoid simplistic yes and no answers. Instead, use examples that explain your reasons and motivations.

OBJECTIONS

Question: I see that you don't have a lot of work experience. It is very different working in a business environment. Why should I hire you?

- **Wrong Answer:** I can understand that. I don't have business experience but I do have a business degree.
- **Right Answer:** I understand your hesitation about hiring someone without actual business experience. Many people don't adapt well to a business environment without business experience, but I don't believe I will have that problem. I am used to working with people. I work until the job is done, which often means long hours and weekends. For instance, for the American Marketing Association, I organized a panel presentation of marketing professionals. I spent 40 hours researching the people and businesses to obtain a list of appropriate professionals for the discussion, and recruited five people for the panel. I then marketed the presentation to students and faculty. I sent out e-mail correspondence, hung flyers, and made announcements in marketing classes to increase attendance at the event. I spent more than 80 hours working on this experience. It was quite a success, especially for a first-time event. The panel discussion was attended by more than 70 students, and our organization gained 10 new members.

Why: The first answer is incomplete and does not really address the interviewer's objection. He or she already knows your degree is a business degree, but the objection is there anyway. With this answer, you lose the opportunity to add information the interviewer doesn't have, to allay the employer's fears about your apparent inadequacy, to sell the skills you would use in a business environment. The second answer states in a positive way the skills you have acquired to perform well in a business environment.

NEGATIVES

If the interviewer asks you to describe a negative quality about yourself, you can handle this situation in several different ways.

Question: Describe one of your biggest weaknesses.

More than One Right Answer:

- Discuss a negative that is not related to the job being considered.
 - I don't enjoy accounting. I know this is very important, but I find keeping the books boring.
 - I really enjoy selling. It is great that this job is primarily selling. . . .
- Discuss a negative already known to the employer. And turn it to your advantage.
 - I lack extensive work experience, but I have participated in many student organizations. In fact, I am the president of the Psychology Club.
 - As president I was able. . . .
- Discuss a negative that you have improved upon.
 - I used to over-commit myself and miss deadlines with my classwork. To improve on this, I read about time management and learned what I was doing wrong.
 - In three weeks, I improved my performance and found that I could meet my deadlines with no problem. . . .
- Discuss a negative that also can be a positive.
 - I am very detail-oriented. I know I have to fight the temptation to spend lots of time getting things perfect.
 - For instance, on one project I spent four hours editing. It did result in an A.

BE PREPARED

Your best strategy for managing the interview is to stress the positive and emphasize your strengths. Questions will come in many different forms. Anticipate what the employer is going to ask you and practice positive responses.

ILLEGAL QUESTIONS

Most employers are very familiar with the laws regarding what questions they can ask and what they can't.

Some employers nonetheless will ask a question that is not appropriate. Some of these questions include:

- Are you married, divorced, separated, or single?
- Do you go to church regularly?
- Do you own or rent your home?
- What does your spouse think about your career?
- Are you living with anyone?
- How much do you weigh?

If you do get a question like this, don't get upset and say, "I refuse to answer that." While you do not have to answer the question, use tact in responding. For instance, if the employer asks if you are married, you could respond with a question of your own: "Can you tell me how that is related to my job responsibilities so that I can answer your question appropriately?" If the employer does ask an illegal question, remember to answer it with tact. (But also take warning from questions like these, and consider whether the work environment at this company will be right for you.)

ASKING QUESTIONS

This is your time to find out more about the company and see if it really is the right fit for you. Employers expect you to ask intelligent questions about the organization and the nature of the work. Intelligent questions come from detailed research. You should not ask questions that can be found readily in the company's literature or its homepage. Some questions you may want to consider are the following:

- How long has this position been in the organization?
- What am I expected to accomplish in the first year? How will I be evaluated?
- Based on your experience, what issues would someone new in this position probably encounter?
- I see the organization's trend is towards _____. What does the future look like for this _____?
- Can you tell me about the people who have been in this position before? Promotions? Terminations?
- What type of person would be the ideal candidate for this position? Personality? Work style? Background?
- What is unique about working with this organization?
- With whom would I be working in this position?
- You have just acquired XYZ Company. How do you think this will affect your hiring?

THE CLOSE

You sense the interview is coming to a close. You think it went really well. Now the question is how to close. The interviewer will generally take the lead by standing, shaking your hand, and saying thank you for coming. At this point, you should not just say thank you for your time. At this point, you should summarize your interests, strengths, and goals. It is appropriate, at this time, to ask the employer about selection plans. For example, "When do you think you will be coming to a decision?" The last question you should ask is "When should I call you to inquire about my status?" By taking the initiative, you will prompt the employer to clarify your status soon.

THE FOLLOW-UP

It is very important for you to follow up after the interview. You want to communicate two things to the employer: first, that you are interested in the position, and, second, that you will do a good job. Once the interview is over, record what happened during the interview. Try to be as specific as possible. List the names of the people you spoke with, the data you gathered about the company and position, and the skills you have that particularly fit the position. Job search etiquette requires that you send a note of thanks to the people who have interviewed you. You should send this immediately, preferably the day after the interview. You should also call, if that was what was decided during the close.

THE THANK-YOU LETTER

The letter should be printed on a good quality bond paper, handwritten on a note card, or e-mailed (followed by a written note). Remember that this is a short note. The content should be brief and cover three points:

- Express your gratitude for the opportunity to interview. Restate the date of the interview.
- Sell yourself. If you think of something that you wish you had told the employer during the interview, this is the time to bring it out. At the very least, restate your qualifications that were discussed in the interview.
- Close by mentioning that the interviewer may contact you if he or she has any further questions. If it was decided in the interview that you would be calling to follow up, mention it here.

It is amazing how few people take the time to say “thank you.” If you want to see your stock go up in an employer’s eyes, send a short thank-you note. The thank-you letter is not only a courteous act but a reminder to the employer of your candidacy for the position. In the end, how well you did in the interview, including the post-interview follow-up, will tell the employer something about how well you will conduct yourself in the job.

See the sample thank you note for more information.

LEVERAGING CONTACTS

If your interview was the result of a networking contact, your follow-up should include a call to the contact.

This can result in three benefits:

- Your contact may call the employer on your behalf.
- It may stimulate a conversation about you between the interviewer and your contact.
- It will help you to get additional information about the company and the position.

After the follow-up, keep the process going. The interview process is not over until you (or another candidate) have been offered the job and have accepted it. During the time you are awaiting an answer from the employer, continue to network and apply for other positions that interest you. It may take weeks between the interview and the hiring decision, so use this time constructively.

WAITING

The uncertainty of the waiting process can be tough. However, you can perform some activities that will make your waiting period a little more relaxing.

- As you are waiting for follow-up calls from employers, leave a professional message on your answering machine. If any employers call back for further information, you do not want to give them any impression that you are not the professional person they met at the interview.
- If you asked the appropriate questions during the interview process, you will know when the employer expects to make a decision. You can use this information to develop a calendar that lists all of the dates that you should hear from employers. Based on your calendar, you can contact an employer five to ten days after the employer’s anticipated decision date to inquire about the status of the decision.
- Remember never to make this a confrontation: “You said you were going to let me know by now,” or “I have to know right now.”

WHEN TO STOP INTERVIEWING

Remember that once you have accepted an offer from an employer, you should stop interviewing with all other potential employers. Send a letter to other employers stating that you have accepted a position and that you would like to withdraw your application.

TELEPHONE INTERVIEWS

Telephone interviews just like face-to-face interviews take preparation, concentration and a little bit of luck. The telephone interview is basically a “trial run” for the face-to-face interview. Employers view it as a chance to screen applicants and see if they are interested enough to bring the candidate in. Just a reminder: “it is not always the most qualified person that gets the job, it is the person that can best sell their accomplishments and best fits in with the existing team.”

PREPARATION

- It's best to sit at a desk or table in a quiet room so you can concentrate on the interview. Make sure to turn off all other phones, televisions, radios, computers, etc so you will not be distracted/interrupted.
- Tell your roommates, parents, anyone who is around that you need quiet during the interview.
- Be sure that everyone who answers your telephone understands the importance of the calls you will be receiving. Make sure they take complete messages for you.
- Listen to the outgoing message on your answering machine/voicemail. How does it sound? Is it something you want potential employers to hear?

REMAIN CALM

- Sound positive, friendly and in control. “Thank you for calling Dr. Smith, could you please wait a moment while I close the door?” Get the correct folder out, make sure everything is in there and RELAX.
- Have a pen and pad of paper ready and a copy of your resume in front of you.

WATCH OUT FOR FAMILIARITY

- Just like in a face-to-face interview, address the interviewer by Dr., Ms., or Mr.
- If there are multiple people on the line write their names and titles down.

SOUND INTELLIGENT

- Respond positively.
- The interviewer(s) will probably do most of the talking, but do not be afraid to ask questions during the interview. (“What major projects are currently in progress?” “What sort of person do you envision in this position?”)
- Avoid yes and no answers because they provide no information.

ACT LIKE A PROFESSIONAL

- Speak directly into the phone and do not eat, smoke, pick or chew during the interview.
- Take notes because they can be helpful in the fact-to-face interview.
- Note taking can also help you if the interviewer is interrupted during the interview, you will know where the interviewer left off.

ASK QUESTIONS

- Ask about the responsibilities, priorities and major goals of the position.
- Do not ask about money or benefits. Save it for the face-to-face interview.
- At the conclusion, the caller usually explains what you should expect next. If the interviewer fails to identify the next steps, you should politely ask.
- Before hanging up, be certain you have the person's name (& spelling), title, address and phone number.
- Be sure to thank the person for calling you.

DINING INTERVIEWS

Food and business cannot be separated anymore! Because of this, many organizations take not only clients, but POTENTIAL EMPLOYEES out for a meal. If you are applying for a position that involves a lot of client contact the employer may want to make sure you are making a good impression of yourself and representing the organization well. Like it or not, good manners are associated with competence in your job and in business...they say a lot about you!! So... don't get too comfortable or relaxed if you're taken out to lunch as part of the selection process. No matter how informal, you are still being interviewed!!

If you're confident with your manners and etiquette, you will feel comfortable in any situation, no matter how formal. These resources will help answer any questions you may have on the several basic components to proper etiquette listed below:

- Handshakes, Introductions & Making Conversation
- Honoring the Host
- Tackling Tableware, Tricky/Challenging Foods
- Paying the Bill/Tipping

FIRST IMPRESSIONS- CREATING A PROFESSIONAL IMAGE

How you look, act, and carry yourself is important during the interview process. Individuals who are self-confident, self-aware, and professionally dressed have the highest success rate in gaining positions. First impressions are critical. There are several factors contributing to the first impression, including appearance, handshake, voice level, and eye contact.

APPEARANCE

- Dress to look professional. See the following section for dress guidelines.
- Stand and sit up straight.
- Hold your head up and look the interviewer in the eye.
- Though nervousness is a natural condition in interviews, try to look calm, confident, and alert.

HANDSHAKE

- An immediate impression is made by the way you shake the interviewer's hand.
- The impression you want to make is one of self-confidence.
- Whether you are female or male, the hand is extended straight and firm, locking thumbs.
- Keep your hand dry and apply moderate pressure.

VOICE LEVEL

- Some people speak at a lower volume than others. Neither way is right or wrong.
- You must speak clearly and at a level that will enable the interviewer to understand everything you are saying.
- Speak firmly, clearly, and not too fast or too slow.

EYE CONTACT

- Eye contact conveys many things to different people.
- In the interview, you want to hold eye contact when speaking and listening to the interviewer. This shows you are listening carefully and are concerned with what the person has to say.
- If you look away for long periods of time, it can mean that you have a feeling of inferiority, that you are unsure of what you are saying, or are not paying attention to what is being said to you.

HIGH-TECH FIRST IMPRESSIONS

- Technology gives you just as much opportunity to make (or fail to make) a good first impression as more personal means of contact.
- Voicemail should have a professional and clear message. Avoid clichés, songs, poetry, or jokes in your message.
- E-mail messages should be professional. Use proper grammar and punctuation. In addition, do not use "clever" signature slogans at the end of the e-mail, and ensure that your e-mail address is professional.
- Using a funny, cute, or sexy name for your e-mail address will not impress an employer.
- If you use a picture in your email be sure the picture is professional in nature.

ATTITUDE

Your attitude makes a statement. If you act enthusiastic and eager, the impression is that you're an enthusiastic and eager worker. If you act too timid or too quiet, it implies that you may need a lot of supervision. Some managers say that it can be even more important than experience.

MANNERS

Good manners are important. They show that you're civilized and sociable. They show that you will represent the company well and work well with your colleagues. The first manner an employer will look for is punctuality; it is critical that you arrive on time to an interview.

GUIDELINES FOR DRESS

Potential employers are interested in gaining a sense of you as a professional. Dress is one way to enhance your professional image.

Interview clothing is typically very conservative. If you are interviewing in corporate, educational, or government fields, dress in a conservative suit. This advice may change if you are interviewing for an “image” career, such as fashion merchandising, where a “fashion statement” is not out of order.

You may find, once you get the job, that all the men in the office wear sneakers and all the women wear three earrings in each ear. You will naturally adapt your dress to the prevailing office culture. The advice given here is about what is safest and most effective in the interview.

WOMEN

- Suit or tailored dress in solid or subtle color, no extreme slits.
- Closed toe shoes, basic dark pumps with medium or low heels.
- Nails subtle color if polished, clean and not chipped.
- Make-up should be minimal.
- Clutch or small shoulder bag, choose between an attaché case or handbag (not both).
- Simple and basic jewelry. Nothing that dangles or is distracting.
- Always wear hosiery and keep color neutral.
- Light perfume, if any.

MEN

- Navy, charcoal gray or black suit.
- Shined shoes. Tassel loafers, wing tip or lace shoes preferred.
- Clean nails.
- Conservative tie, simple and neat.
- Avoid flashy cuff links, rings or neck chains.
- Over the calf dark socks.
- No strong fragrant cologne.

BOTH

- No smoking or chewing gum.
- One ring per hand.
- Quality pen, portfolio, briefcase and extra copies of your resume and letters of reference.

BUSINESS CASUAL

Many organizations have converted from conservative dress to business casual. Business casual is neat and classic but not trendy. It is important to understand what clothing is considered business casual. For men, business casual usually means neatly pressed slacks or khaki pants with a leather belt, sometimes a sport coat or blazer, buttoned collared shirt, and casual shoes such as polished leather loafers. For women, business casual usually means casual but neatly pressed tailored skirt no shorter than knee-length, pants, or dress, blouse or buttoned collared shirt, tailored sweater sets, and leather shoes. Avoid anything tight or baggy. Clothing should always be neat, cleaned, and well-pressed. Business casual does not include frilly or bare-shouldered dresses, sweats, shorts, jeans, athletic shoes, or any other clothing that suggests play rather than work.

TRADITIONAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Traditionally employers have asked questions designed to help them gain a feel for who you are and what makes you unique: your motivation level, your background and strong points, your interest in the position and the aspects of your personality that may affect how you perform on the job, such as organization, interpersonal skills, decision making, teamwork, etc. The questions asked might be seeking expansion of information presented on your resume, or focus on the qualities and skills you can bring to the table.

SAMPLE QUESTIONS:

- Tell me about yourself.
- Why do you want to work as a...?
- Why did you choose Moravian College? Why did you choose your major?
- How has your education prepared you for this position? Are your grades a good indication of your abilities? Why? What was your favorite course/least favorite course? Why?
- How did you learn about us? Why do you want to work for us? What do you expect from your employer?
- What do you think makes a good manager?
- What do you see as the biggest challenge currently facing organizations such as ours?
- What activities have you participated in during college? Tell me about your involvement.
- Tell me about a goal you have NOT attained? Why not?
- What do you see as the biggest challenge currently facing organizations such as ours?
- What motivates you?
- What are the most important rewards you expect from your career?
- What have you learned from previous work experiences that will assist you in this position?
- What accomplishments are you most proud of? Why?
- How do you determine or evaluate success?
- What are your short/long term goals? Where do you see yourself in five/ten years? How long do you plan to work here?
- Are you willing to relocate/travel? Do you have any geographic restrictions?
- What are three of your strengths and weaknesses?
- How would your best friend describe you?
- Do you prefer working alone or with others?
- What do you do in your free time?
- How do you deal with stress?
- How familiar are you with computers? To what extent?
- Have you thought about attending graduate school? When? Where? Subject/Major?
- Give an example of any major problem you faced and how you solved it.
- What was your greatest failure, what have you learned from it?
- Why should I hire you?

BEHAVIORAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Based on the premise that the best way to predict future behavior is to examine past behavior, behavioral interviewing is now widespread among hiring managers. The technique involves asking a series of questions designed to get the candidate to talk about how he or she handled certain situations in the past. Interviewers feel they can make more accurate hiring decisions by focusing on an applicant's past actions and behaviors rather than subjective impressions of a candidate's self-proclaimed qualities.

Typically, the interviewer will have determined several behavioral characteristics that would be most important for on-the-job success and will base questions on the characteristics identified. You will be asked to share situations in which you may or may not have exhibited these behaviors. You won't be able to theorize or generalize about events, rather, you will be asked to provide details. The interview will be a more structured process that will concentrate on areas identified by the interviewer, rather than on areas that you may feel are important.

SAMPLE QUESTIONS:

- Tell me about a recent project you had to plan. What went well? What might you have done better?
- Tell me about a specific time when you eliminated or avoided a potential problem before it happened?
- What is the most difficult situation you have faced? How did you handle it?
- Tell me when you had to go above and beyond the call of duty in order to get a job done.
- Tell me about a time you were criticized. What was the issue involved, who made the criticism and how did you handle it?
- Tell me about a time when you had to approach several different people for support or cooperation. How did you approach them?
- Give me an example of how you exercised leadership in a recent situation. What did you do to gain the team or groups' cooperation?
- Describe a time on the job when you were faced with problems or stresses that tested your coping skills.
- Tell me about a recent team you worked on/with. How may you have handled someone who was not as cooperative as needed?
- How would you motivate someone who is not motivated?
- Tell me about a time you had to conform to a policy with which you didn't agree.

Follow up questions will test for consistency and determine if you exhibited the desired behavior in that situation: Can you give me an example? What did you do? What were you thinking? How did you feel? What was your role? What was the result?

How do you prepare for these types of questions? Remember-think about developing brief accounts from your past highlighting the skills for which the company will be looking. Think "S.T.A.R.": 1) the situation or task you had to perform 2) the action you took 3) the results of your actions.

THANK YOU LETTER SAMPLE

January 15, 20XX

Any Person
Recruiting Specialist
ABC State Institution
1000 Main Street
Anywhere, ST 12345

Dear Ms. Person:

Thank you for taking the time on April 1 to interview me for the juvenile probation officer position with your organization. Your discussion of operational procedures of ABC, as well as your expectations of your staff, was very informative and interesting. I am confident that I would make a strong contribution to your staff by increasing the effectiveness of your re-entry program and by decreasing repeat offenses by clients.

As discussed in our interview, my qualifications that would directly relate to the position include:

- More than four years of broad-based education that focused on critical thinking and analysis.
- My ability to effectively handle many different projects simultaneously.
- My experience working at the State Prison as an intern.

Thank you for considering my candidacy. If there are further questions, please feel free to contact me at 610 405-1111 or via e-mail at staxs04@moravian.edu. As we discussed, I look forward to hearing from you the week of February 6, 20XX, with your final decision.

Sincerely,

Any Student

Any Student
123 Successful Street
Bethlehem, PA 18018
student@moravian.edu
(610-861-1234)

STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS

- Do a good job in the pre-interview activities to insure a successful interview.
- Interview with a variety of organizations. Don't focus all your attention on the Fortune 500 companies. Remember, the largest growth in the job market will be with small to medium size companies.
- Prepare for any and all contingencies. This means that you should consider all possibilities. Don't reject an employer or a position because you think you know something about the industry/job. Talk to the employer. Explore the opportunity. Remember, you are under no obligation to accept an offer if one comes your way.
- Look throughout the region, and to the extent possible, look at opportunities across the country. Flexibility will be key to any successful job search.
- Be persistent! If you haven't heard from an employer in a timely fashion, call them to find out what is going on.
- Interview with any and all organizations, using all resources available to you. Develop your own leads, follow up on newspaper ads and develop your own network.
- Maintain an accurate record of all your interviews. Who did you interview with (organization and individual)? When and where did you interview (date and place)? What did you think of the interview? Was there anything of note which was said during the interview? Did you send the thank you?
- Most importantly, keep at it!

NEGATIVE FACTORS ON THE INTERVIEW & HIRING PROCESS

- Unprepared for the interview—lack of knowledge of the organization and available positions
- Overbearing—over aggressive, conceited, superiority complex, know-it-all
- Inability to express self clearly—poor communication skills
- Lack of career planning—no purpose, goals or direction, not focused on what he/she wants to do
- Asks no questions about the job/company
- Lacks involvement in campus activities
- Does not belong to professional association associated with her major
- Poor communication skills—uses slang, improper grammar
- Lack of enthusiasm, doesn't smile, appears uninterested
- Poor appearance, inappropriately dressed for the interview
- Lack of confidence, nervousness (to a fault), ill at ease
- Overemphasis on money
- Poor academic record
- Expect too much too soon; unwilling to start at the bottom
- Makes excuses, evasiveness
- Lack of tact, courtesy and maturity
- Condemnation of past employers
- Poor eye contact & limp handshake
- Candidates who want job only for short time
- Lack of or little sense of humor
- Candidates who are merely “shopping around”
- No interest in organization or in industry
- Too much emphasis on whom one knows, trying to impress
- Unwillingness to relocate
- Strong prejudices
- Narrow scope of interests
- Little or no interest in community activities
- Inability to take criticism
- Late for interview without good reason
- Indecisive

INTERVIEW DO'S & DON'TS

DO:

- Know yourself (skills abilities, goals, interests, values, strengths/weaknesses, etc.)
- Know your potential employer (position interviewing for, primary products, services, etc.) Read company literature.
- Look professional, be on time (arrive at the site 15 minutes early to check your appearance, compose yourself, etc.)
- Be clear, concise and to the point. Give a firm handshake & maintain eye contact.
- Listen carefully, think before you answer, market yourself, be positive & enthusiastic.
- Be assertive, not aggressive.
- Bring appropriate materials (resume, transcript, etc.) in a portfolio.
- Find out what the next step is and when a decision will be made.
- Send a thank you follow-up. Get correct names and titles.

DON'T:

- Be late, smoke, chew gum, eat candy, slouch or dress inappropriately.
- Dominate the conversation, ramble, interrupt or invade the interviewer's physical space.
- Don't apologize, make excuses or make assumptions or be aggressive.
- Rely on other people's words or thoughts (use your own).
- Ask obvious or inappropriate questions (about vacation, sick time, etc.)
- Ask about other applicants or criticize previous employers, professors, etc.
- Tell the interviewer what he/she doesn't need to know such as personal information.
- Don't request salary information.