The Interview is Over, Now What? How to ‘Close the Deal’ with an Employer

Kate Juhl, Program Director, University Career Center & The President’s Promise

...because you can’t stay in school forever!
It’s a PROCESS

Self-Assessment ➔ Job Search

Explore Career Options ➔ Get Experience
Interviewing 101: Are You Prepared?

- Research, research, research
- Practice possible interview questions
- Try on your interview outfit/dress to impress
- Consider taking a practice run to the interview location
- Print copies of all application documents you have submitted and/or a list of references
- Compose a list of questions for the interviewer(s)
- Participate in a mock interview!
What are Employers Looking For?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill/Quality</th>
<th>Weighted average rating*</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communication skills (verbal)</td>
<td>4.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strong work ethic</td>
<td>4.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teamwork skills (works well with others)</td>
<td>4.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analytical skills</td>
<td>4.56</td>
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<tr>
<td>Initiative</td>
<td>4.50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Problem-solving skills</td>
<td>4.48</td>
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<tr>
<td>Communication skills (written)</td>
<td>4.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal skills (relates well to others)</td>
<td>4.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer skills</td>
<td>4.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flexibility/adaptability</td>
<td>4.37</td>
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<tr>
<td>Detail-oriented</td>
<td>4.18</td>
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<tr>
<td>Technical skills</td>
<td>4.16</td>
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<td>Organizational skills</td>
<td>4.05</td>
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<td>Leadership skills</td>
<td>4.04</td>
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<tr>
<td>Self-confidence</td>
<td>3.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tactfulness</td>
<td>3.84</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friendly/outgoing personality</td>
<td>3.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creativity</td>
<td>3.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategic planning skills</td>
<td>3.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entrepreneurial skills/risk-taker</td>
<td>3.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sense of humor</td>
<td>2.99</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*5-point scale, where 1 = Not important; 2 = Not very important; 3 = Somewhat important; 4 = Very important; and 5 = Extremely important
Key Questions to Practice

- Tell me about yourself
- What are your strengths and weaknesses?
- How do you think your education will help you on this job?
- Why do you want to work for this company?
- Why did you choose this career?
- If you went to work with us today, what job would you like to hold in three to five years?
- Why should we hire you?
Behavioral Interview Questions

“Tell me about a time you…."

- worked successfully as part of a team
- handled an upset client
- enforced a policy you didn’t believe in
- made a difficult or unpopular decision
- made a mistake and had to fix it
- used creativity to solve a problem

STAR (Situation-Task-Action-Result)
Let’s Practice

Why should we hire YOU?
Questions for the Interviewer

Possible Topics

- Training opportunities/professional development
- Office culture/atmosphere
- Trends/patterns
- Opportunities for advancement
- Future challenges the department may face
- Plans for future growth/expansion
- Major responsibilities of the job
- Projects the position oversees or is involved with

*When do you expect to make a hiring decision?
After the Interview...

- Try to get a business card and/or contact info from all interviewers

- Jot down notes about each conversation

- Send personalized thank you emails within 24 hours (but wait at least 1-2 hours after interview); consider following up with a handwritten card in the regular mail

- Mention something unique you discussed in each personalized thank you note

- Follow up if you don’t hear back in specified time frame (“I would like to check in and reiterate my interest in the ___ position.”)
After the Interview...

- Check back in with your references; update them about the interview and whom they may hear from for the reference check.

- Provide your references with a copy of the job description, your resume and possibly some “talking points” about why you feel you are a good fit for the position.

- Make a note of any difficult questions you encountered during the interview.

- Research salary if you haven’t already; be ready to negotiate!

- Don’t discuss the interview on social media.
Things to Remember...

- By interviewing in person, you are likely a finalist in a very small pool of candidates: congratulations!

- Most likely everyone interviewing in person is qualified; it is your job to show the interviewer how you would add unique value.

- Are there any supplemental materials that might help your case? Reference letters, samples of your work, etc.?

- A very small percentage of candidates actually send thank you notes. Don’t forget! Personalized letters are even better.

- Keep job searching!

- Try to detach as much as possible from the possible outcome & relax; it may take longer than you think to hear back.
When You Are Not Selected...

- Remember, you were likely a finalist in a very large pool of applicants (often 100+ these days)

- The reason you were not chosen could have nothing to do with you (internal hire, hiring freeze, etc.)

- Try not to take it personally (as hard as it is)

- Take care of yourself by doing something that makes you happy

- Use “market intelligence” gained from interview to direct the next stage of your job search

- Don’t burn bridges! Use your new contacts to network as appropriate– Kate’s story
Good News: You’ve Received an Offer

- Factors to consider
  - Salary and **benefits**
  - Opportunities for skill development and advancement
  - Location
  - Personalities of supervisor and co-workers
  - Management style & organizational culture
  - Work Schedule and travel requirements
  - Does the position feel right?
Salary

- Salary is typically not discussed in the interview, but is left for after you have been offered the position

- If asked during the interview…
  - “I hope to receive a salary commensurate with my experience and education.”
  - Express confidence that their offer will be fair
  - Give an acceptable range
  - Turn the question back to them

- **Salary History Requests**— Add context for past positions (“My related employment history has been as a Graduate Research Assistant. My compensation included $1200/month plus free tuition.”)

- **Salary Requirements Requests**— RESEARCH & then give a broad range, hitting roughly 10% above what you think it should be, but state you are open to negotiation
Negotiating Salary: The 3 P’s

- **Preparation:**
  - RESEARCH: company, culture, geographic location, your “market value,” your personal needs for salary & benefits

- **Poise:**
  - Don’t reveal requirements too early, be confident, enthusiastic & positive, and take time to consider an offer

- **Professional:**
  - Know the dynamics of the situation (do you have other offers?), ask questions, detach from the outcome, look at the value of the total offer package, know where you are willing to compromise, know when to walk away

- Source: University of MN Graduate School, 2012
Negotiation After a Job Offer

- When the number is given, repeat it and stay silent for 15-30 seconds as you think it over.

- Make sure you understand the total benefits package

- Ask for at least 24 hours to think about it

- Get the offer in writing before formally accepting

- If employer doesn’t offer a formal letter, write your own and include: job title, start date, hours/schedule, salary & benefit information.
Final Salary Negotiation Thoughts

- Don’t bring up salary unless requested by employer
- Don’t disregard the value of benefits
- Research, research & research some more
- Be professional & positive
- Market yourself. How will YOU provide value to the organization?
- Walk away if it is not the right fit
- Don’t say yes right away—take at least 24 hours to think it over
Don’t Forget About Fringe Benefits!

- Health insurance
- Dental insurance
- Disability insurance
- Life insurance
- Paid vacation time
- Paid sick leave
- Paid holidays

A more comprehensive benefit package might include some or all of the following:

- Bonuses
- Child and day-care services
- Company car
- Cost-of-living adjustments
- Desirable office
- Education and training programs
- Expense accounts
- Flexible work schedule
- Maternity/Parental leave
- Savings plans
- Stock Options
- Professional membership dues
- Profit sharing plans
- Relocation expenses
- Supplementary pay plans
- Termination agreement (severance pay)
- Unpaid leave time
- Desirable office
- Education and training programs
- Parking
Salary Negotiation Resources

- www.payscale.com
- www.glassdoor.com
- www.salary.com
- NACE Salary Calculator (Located within Careers4Terps)
Rejecting an Offer

- Express your appreciation for the offer and for their confidence in you.

- Say something positive about the employer and be diplomatic.
  - Don’t burn any bridges!

- Conclude your interactions with an email.
Let’s Practice

- With a partner, pick one of the following to answer…

- [During interview] “If offered this position, what do you expect to make?”

- [During job offer] “As part of this job offer, I’m prepared to offer you $60K a year as a starting salary. Does that work for you?”
Are You Making the Most of Our Services? Have you...?

- Set up a search agent in Careers4Terps?
- Made an individual career assistance appointment?
- Attended a career fair? Fall & Spring Career & Internship Fairs, Boutique Fairs (Language, Public Health, Environmental/Sustainability, Architecture, Geography, Criminal Justice, etc.
- Attended networking events? Industry series panels, information sessions, Employer in Residence days, etc.
- Practiced your skills with Virtual Mock Interview?
Contact Us

University Career Center & The President’s Promise

- Schedule an appointment
  - Online (www.Careers.umd.edu)
  - Call (301.314.7225)
  - Visit (3100 Hornbake Library, S. Wing)
- Email (ucc-studenthelp@umd.edu)
- Hours: 9 AM – 5 PM, Monday – Friday

- Visit Careers.umd.edu to learn more about our services such as:
  - Individual Appointments
  - Careers4Terps Jobs/Internship Database
  - Upcoming Workshops
  - Schedule Interviews with Employers (internship, part-time and full-time)
  - And more!

- Visit PresidentsPromise.umd.edu to learn how to become competitive in your job/internship search by gaining experience.

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