THE ETIQUETTE OF INTERVIEWING

Preparation for the Interview

DAYS BEFORE THE INTERVIEW

Get clear on the details of the interview.

- Know with whom you will be meeting and the time and location.
- How many people will be interviewing you? Have enough resumes printed for everyone.
- Discover how long it will take to get to the interview location.
  - The best way to discover this, if driving, is to do a trial run during rush hour if you are in a larger city.
  - Find out what to expect with the parking layout and possible costs.
  - Allow time delays such as rush hour traffic, construction or weather delays.
- Research the company and learn all you can about their product or service, history, vision, mission, culture and current goals.
- Practice interview questions out loud, preferably with a career professional, or try the InterviewStream® resource on Wildcat CareerLink www.uky.edu/careercenter. This resource allows you to choose from over 7,000 interview questions that you think an interviewer may ask you and then record yourself answering those questions. It’s fun and easy!
- Prepare 3-5 questions to ask the interviewer.
- Acquire professional interview clothing for the interview.

THE DAY BEFORE THE INTERVIEW:

- Make sure your professional interview attire is clean, pressed and that all buttons and zippers are functioning. THEN TRY IT ALL ON, then hang it back up! You don’t need any unexpected surprises with your wardrobe the morning of the interview.
- Do belts and shoes match?
- Polish your shoes.
- Put gas in your car.
- Put your car keys, house keys, charged phone, note pad, pen, interviewer’s contact info and resumes together by the door before you go to bed.
- Review driving directions.
- Watch a fun movie and Relax! 😊

The Day of the Interview

THE GROOMING STUFF DO’S AND DON’TS:

- Of course you will shower, and you DO want to use deodorant, however, please avoid additional fragrances.
  - No perfume or aftershave is best! Some people are allergic or sensitive to perfumes, including hair products. If the interviewer is overwhelmed by how strong you smell, you’re not likely to get the position! So remember: “less is more.”
- Wear minimal make-up, not distracting make-up.
- Be sure your hair is clean, combed and out of your eyes.
- In many cases, you will want to remove any piercings and cover tattoos until you are clear about the opinions the company has of them.
• Avoid large earrings, bracelets, scarfs, etc. that may take the interviewer’s attention away from what you are saying.
• DO wear shoes that are comfortable, professional and safe. If you are not used to wearing 5 inch, spiked high-heels; today would not be the day to learn how to do that!
• DON’T smoke after the shower and getting dressed. Cigarette smoke will stick to your hair, skin and clothing and is easily detected in non-smoking offices!

DO’S AND DON’TS IN THE CAR TRIP TO THE INTERVIEW:
• Do have the point person’s contact phone and email with you in case you get lost or stuck in traffic.
• Don’t eat or drink while driving to the interview, you’ll be late if you spill something on your new interview clothes and have to go home to change.
• Don’t smoke in the car.
• Don’t use alcohol and/or drugs on the way to an interview. (Really, you say?...you’d be surprised)!
• Don’t text!! Ever! And today is definitely not a good day to have a fender bender.
• When heading out to the interview, relax and be mindful of what you’re doing, especially if you are driving! Forget about the interview questions at this point, you’re ready!
• Do smile! It will help you relax.

Etiquette Tips for Face-to-Face Interviewing

DON’T BE LATE! Arrive 10 to 15 minutes early. If you arrive exactly on time, you’re late.
• This will give you time to relax and settle into your interview environment.
• It gives you time to make a positive impression on the person in the reception area. Most often the boss will ask them what they think of you.
• If you get there earlier than 15 minutes, wait in the car. However, know that this is not the time to put on make-up or fix your hair. They may be able to see you from their vantage point.
• Turn off your cell phone before entering the building.
• You should only be carrying in a portfolio with copies of your resume and your car keys. Ladies, carry the smallest purse you can get by with and even consider locking it in your trunk. The fewer items you take in, the fewer you have to deal with during the interview or possibly forgetting when you leave.
• Do not chew gum during an interview.
• Body language and facial expressions tell a lot about you.
  o Be aware of your walking and sitting posture.
  o Don’t cross your legs or ankles and you will be able to maintain a better posture while sitting. Knees together and feet flat on the floor.
  o Do rest your hands on your lap. Arms should not be folded across your chest as that suggests defensiveness or an unwillingness to listen.
  o Keep your hands away from your face and hair.
  o Eye contact is important to show that you are listening and will help you bond with the interviewer.
  o Avoid excessive head nodding.

VERBAL DO’S AND DON’TS:
• Do avoid using verbal placeholders such as “um”, “you know”, uh” and the ever popular “like.” The InterviewStream® program on Wildcat CareerLink will count how many times you use these verbal placeholders. This resource is a great way to hear yourself not only answer interview questions but to alert you to recorded body language and verbal habits that you may want to eliminate.
• Avoid cursing, regardless of how mild you may think it is.
• Don’t try to impress the interviewer with a large vocabulary.
• Practice the STAR system of answering “behavioral” questions so that you don’t ramble.
• Don’t speak too loudly or too softly.
• Don’t lie about your experience. You will be found out.
• Don’t bash previous employers. It only makes you look bad.
• Don’t giggle. Believe it or not, nervous laughter is fairly common and something many people do under stressful events such as an interview.

ATTITUDE:
• Many people who may not have had as much experience as their competition have been hired because of a positive attitude in the job interview.
• Share your willingness to learn and how quickly you have picked up new skills in the past.
• Show your enthusiasm for working for their company.
• Give examples of why you would be a good fit for their organization.

Etiquette Tips for Online Interviewing
Most of the interviewing etiquette tips above still apply to online types of interviewing as well with a few additions. If you are using a system such as Skype you will want to consider:
• Technology
  o Prepare ahead of time with the right contact info for Skyping in.
  o Try to assure that you can see and be seen in the interview.
  o Check audio levels.
• Clear away anything distracting in the background.
• Eliminate any possibility of unnecessary noise in the background; kids, pets, washing machine, etc.
• Keep items in front of you to a minimum; your resume, portfolio items, and questions for the interviewer.
• Don’t have anything in front of you that you can knock over or spill.
• LOOK INTO YOUR WEBCAM LENSE. The employer doesn’t want to interview the top of your head!
• Don’t forget they can see you, so continue to smile.

Etiquette Tips for Phone/Tele-conference Interviewing
Even though you cannot be seen over the phone, there are still preparations that you will want to make to ensure a successful interview!
• Never interview for a job while at your current job. Plan this interview time during home hours.
• Whether using a cell phone or landline, be sure all batteries are fully charged.
• Turn off the call waiting function.
• Shower, dress, have a meal and whatever else makes you feel alert and on the job. Don’t interview in pajamas or any other “slouchy” time of clothing; it will come across in your voice!
• Eliminate all background noise as much as possible.
• Don’t multitask while interviewing such as flushing toilets, walking the dog, driving or as a passenger in a vehicle. Even Bluetooth type devices often emit a loud background noise.

Listening is always key in communication and even more so when you cannot see the people to whom you are speaking.
• It is common for both parties to speak at the same time on the phone and so you always want to defer to the interviewer to speak their comment first if this happens.
• If you unable to understand the person on the other phone, be honest and express this to them so that adjustments can be made.
• In any type of interview, if you don’t understand a question presented to you, feel free to ask for clarification.
• If you don’t know the answer to a question, it is perfectly fine and expected that you state that you don’t know.