

# Graduate Business Career Services

Frank G. Zarb School of Business

## INTERVIEWING SKILLS

### Purpose of Interviewing

To market your skills, and to allow the employer to discover why you want to work there specifically, whether or not you can do the job, and if you are a good fit. The goal of the first interview is to get the second interview.

### Preparing for the Interview

- 1) Research the job/industry- be familiar with the job description and know about general industry trends.
- 2) Research the employer- Be familiar with the company's website. Look for the annual report, company's mission, products and services. Use tools like Vault, Glassdoor and LinkedIn.
- 3) Answering interview questions with STAR stories! Use the STAR method when answering behavioral questions targeted to skills and experience listed on the job posting:  
**S**ituation- Describe the situation (e.g. maybe it was a circumstance or a problem you faced)  
**T**ask- Identify the specific task or goal that needed to be completed  
**A**ction- Describe your action or what you did  
**R**esult- State the outcome to your situation. It is best to have quantifiable results if possible

Verbal Communication- Watch your "ums", "likes" and rambling.

Solid and specific answers: Be as specific and concise as possible. Content and delivery both matter. PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE your STAR stories that are most relevant to the job posting.

Be ready to answer the following questions. Below are the most commonly asked interview questions. It is better to have "talking points" in mind rather than trying to memorize answers. Trying to memorize answers creates unnecessary stress for you and gives the appearance that you are not being yourself. For each question, write down some points you would like to make as you answer.

1. Tell me about yourself. *(Your elevator pitch. Not more than 2 minutes).*
2. Why do you want to work for us? *(Emphasize what you do best that they need most!)*
3. What do you like most about the position? *(Talk about how your strengths can lead to the organization's success).*
4. What are your strengths? *(Give 3-4 work related strengths. Use STAR stories to give examples.)*
5. What is one weakness? *(Be prepared to talk about a skill you needed to develop or a time when you failed to achieve goals. Keep it brief. Do not elaborate. Focus more on you have learned or done to improve.)*
6. What is your greatest accomplishment? *(Use a STAR story. Don't hold back. This is your place to shine.)*
7. What are your career goals? Where do you want to be in 5 years? *(Relate your answer to the position for which you are interviewing. Talk about your desire to grow in your field and to contribute to the organization.)*
8. Why should I hire you? *(Give 3-4 strengths supported by examples of accomplishments. Relate them to the needs of the employer. Use this chance to tell another STAR story.)*
9. Tell me about a conflict with a boss or a co-worker. How was it resolved? *(Use a STAR story here.)*
10. Why did you leave/ are you leaving your last/current position? *(If you are employed, talk about your goals and plans for meeting them. If you were laid off, fired or quit, share what you learned and how it helps you contribute in your next job. DO NOT say anything negative about a past employer.)*

### Use BIG INTERVIEW

You are required to view all sections of module 1 under the "Interview Training " Section on Big Interview prior to an interview preparation appointment with your Career Advisor. Click here to access- <http://zarbmba-ms.biginterview.com/> and enter code zarb347 to register.

### **Day of the Interview**

**Timeliness:** Be on time! Arrive about 15 minutes early.

**Resumes:** Bring about 5 extra copies on resume paper in a portfolio. Also bring a separate list of references (including name, title, organization, email and phone number).

**Cell Phone:** Remember to turn your phone on silent.

**Professional Attire:** Professional business attire, conservative color, black, navy or charcoal.

**Body Language:** Maintain good posture and eliminate nervous habits (pen tapping, knuckle cracking, etc.). Offer a firm handshake, smile and always maintain good contact.

### **Closing the Interview:**

Questions to ask- you should have 5-10 questions prepared to ask your interviewer since some will be likely answered during the interview. Ask questions that focus on the job, its responsibilities and its opportunities.

### **The 10 Best Interview Questions to Ask** taken from U.S. News and World Report- April 18, 2012 By Alison Green

When your interviewer wraps up the job interview by asking if you have any questions, you might think they finished assessing you, but that's not the case. Interviewers draw conclusions about you based on what you ask—or don't ask. You don't want to give the impression that you're not very interested in the job, or that you are only concerned about the compensation. Instead, ask about the work, company and team. Here are 10 best interview questions to ask:

1. What are the biggest challenges the person in this position will face?
2. Can you describe a typical day in the position?
3. What would a successful first year in the position look like?
4. How will the success of the person in this position be measured?
5. How long did the previous person in the role hold the position? What has turnover in the role generally been like?
6. How would you describe the culture here? What type of people tend to really thrive and what type don't do well?
7. How would you describe your management style?
8. Thinking back to the person you have seen do this job best, what made their performance outstanding?
9. Are there any reservations about my fit for the position that I could try to address?
10. What is the time line for getting back to candidates about next steps?

Questions about salary or benefits should not be asked until you get a job offer.

- I noticed X on your website. Can you tell me more about that? (Shows you did your research)
- What are the next steps in the hiring process?

**Thank you notes-** Always send a thank you note (email or letter is fine) within 24-48 hours following the interview. Help the interviewer to remember you and distinguish you from other candidates. State why you want the job, the skills, education and experience make you a great match for the job, and how your personality and interests are a good fit for the company.

**Following up-** It is important to follow-up- just do not harass the employer! Use your judgment.