

# Interview Preparation

Employers use interviews to assess your fit for the position and their company. They will ask a variety of questions to assess your skills, motivation, education, qualifications, and characteristics. When preparing for an interview, thinking of what the employer is looking for will aid you in developing your answers. However, preparing for specific interview questions is only part of getting ready for an interview. The following tips will aid you as you get ready for your interview.

## Pre- Interview

### **Do Your Homework**

- Research the company using Handshake, Glassdoor, LinkedIn, company website, and company social media accounts.
- Know their mission, vision, product/services, financials, and current news stories.
- Think about how your skills and experience will benefit them.
- Identify specific accomplishments you would like to discuss. Review your resume!
- Reflect on your experiences and develop a “bank” of situations you can discuss to demonstrate specific skills you possess. (see “*Interview STARK worksheet CSO Su21*” tip sheet)
- Use the job description to identify what the employer is looking for in a successful candidate, use it to develop interview questions, and ask a friend to engage you in a practice interview. Remember to highlight the skills you believe the employer is looking for.
- Prepare questions that you would like to ask them. (see “*Interview Questions CSO SU21*” tip sheet)
- Schedule a mock interview with the Career Services Office to polish your interview skills.
- Do a “trial run” to ensure you have the correct directions and know how long it will take you to get there. Allow yourself extra time to account for accidents or construction along the way.
- Reflect on your career goals and be able to articulate them to the hiring committee.

### **Appearance**

- Appropriate business attire should be followed even if the company has a business casual dress code.
- Plan to wear a business suit in a conservative color such as black, brown, navy, or gray with a white or pastel collared shirt with closed toed comfortable shoes.
- Be mindful of tattoos and body piercings, consider covering heavy or excessive tattoos and body piercings.
- If you wear jewelry, wear it minimally.
- Go easy on cologne or perfume, be mindful of those who may have sensitivity to smells.

### **What to Take**

- A padfolio with resume copies on quality resume paper, a black or blue ink pen, and a notepad.
- The questions you've identified for the interviewers.



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For more information:  
Career Services Office  
[buscareers@kent.edu](mailto:buscareers@kent.edu)

## Interview Day

### Arrival

- Plan to arrive 10 to 15 minutes prior to your scheduled interview.
- No cell phones - if you carry one it must be "off" and not visible.
- No gum, food or drinks and NEVER tobacco.
- Come alone, no friends or family should accompany you.

### During

- Conduct yourself in a business-like manner. Even in the lobby you are being observed. The receptionist may be giving his/her observations to the hiring staff. Sit up in the chair and smile at passersby. Do not slouch or take a nap, you may be on camera.
- Relax. Remember that positive thinking is the key. Shake hands firmly, but don't squeeze. Smile. Maintain eye contact. Greet the interviewer with his/her last name if known. If you are not sure how to pronounce the name, the receptionist will be able to tell you.
- It is your responsibility to establish an immediate level of rapport so that you may communicate comfortably.
- Do not sit down until asked to do so. Then, do not sit all the way back in the chair, keep both feet on the floor, sit up straight, and do not slouch on the table.
- Listen effectively (you have 2 ears and 1 mouth for a reason) and follow the lead of the interviewer(s). Do not interrupt.
- Respond to each question thoughtfully, truthfully, concisely, and completely. If you are unclear of a question, ask for clarification. If you need a moment to collect your thoughts before answering, do not be afraid to do so.
- Stay calm and poised when challenged.
- Be aware of your posture and body language; they communicate attitude and impressions.
- Never close the door on an opportunity. Always conduct yourself as if you were determined to get the position you are discussing.
- Do not convey negative feelings. Accentuate the positive; it makes you look like a winner.
- Your comments and actions should convey enthusiasm, confidence, energy, dependability, loyalty and honesty.

### Post- Interview

- Say goodbye or thank you to the receptionist as you leave.
- Take a moment to write down the questions you were asked and your responses. This will assist with thank you letters and follow up interview preparation.
- Remember to write a thank you note within 24 - 48 hours. (see "Thank You Letter – CSO SU21" tip sheet)
- Address it to the specific individual who interviewed you, name and title. You must send a separate thank you note to everyone with whom you interviewed.

Keep track of your interviews, interviewers, dates, etc.



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