

Mock Interview Program

No job search activity creates greater stress than interviewing. However, your comfort and confidence levels can increase with some practice and advance preparation.

The Career Services Center offers the Mock Interview Program as a service to students and alumni who are preparing for job search interviews. During a scheduled, one-hour appointment, you can practice an interview with a Career Services staff member who serves as the interviewer. The purpose of the recorded, simulated session is to help you learn what to expect from real interviews, respond to actual questions, and improve the way you present yourself.

Following the interview, the recorded session is replayed so both you and the interviewer can evaluate your skills and performance. The interviewer discusses your strengths and offers suggestions for improvement. In addition to increasing confidence, many students have found the session to be beneficial in helping them to manage anxiety.

To Schedule a Practice Session

- Visit or call the Career Services Center at 814-393-2323, and schedule an appointment for a mock interview. Allow an hour for your appointment. *Please call our office if you have to cancel your appointment.*
- Drop off a resume when you schedule your appointment. The interviewer needs time to develop questions specifically for your job or career interest area.
- Write down the date, time, and location of your mock interview.

- Get some information about interviewing essentials by reviewing Career Services' online resources prior to your practice session.
- Be prompt on the day of your interview.
- Dress professionally, as if you were going to an actual interview.
- Bring a blank DVD to the interview if you would like a copy of your mock interview.

Preparing for Your Practice Session

You should prepare for a mock interview as you would for an actual interview. Here are our suggestions for ensuring a successful practice session.

Before the interview:

- Know what kind of job you want. Talk with a career counselor. Review career information. If you know someone working in a similar position or career field, talk with him/her and get the "inside story."
- Know your abilities and be prepared to discuss your qualifications as they relate to your career interests. Be able to state your K-A-S-E: the knowledge, accomplishments, skills, and experiences that qualify you for the position.
- Review Career Services' online publications and PowerPoint presentation on interviewing.

- Don't go into your mock interview "cold" and expect to do well. Practice your interviewing skills with a friend first. Role play an interview session with one of you assuming the role of the interviewer and the other the role of the interviewee.
- Dress professionally so you become accustomed to interviewing in professional attire. Review our online information on interviewing and professional attire.
- Arrive a few minutes early for your mock interview and check in with the receptionist.

During the interview:

- Greet the interviewer by last name in a friendly, but professional, manner. Do not address the interviewer by the individual's first name unless specifically asked to do so.
- Give the interviewer a warm smile and a firm handshake.

- Avoid writing notes during the interview. Wait until the review session to jot down key points to remember.
- Be prepared to discuss your career goals as well as how your qualifications relate to your occupational preference. Cite specific examples as evidence.
- Pay as much attention to *how* you present yourself as to *what* you present. Watch your grammar, tone of voice, and mannerisms.
- Remember, this is your sales presentation. Be enthusiastic about the job and your ability to do it.
- And most importantly, be yourself!

After the interview:

- Complete an evaluation form so the Career Services staff has feedback about your experience with the Mock Interview Program.

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This publication and other interviewing resources are available online at www.clarion.edu/14174.