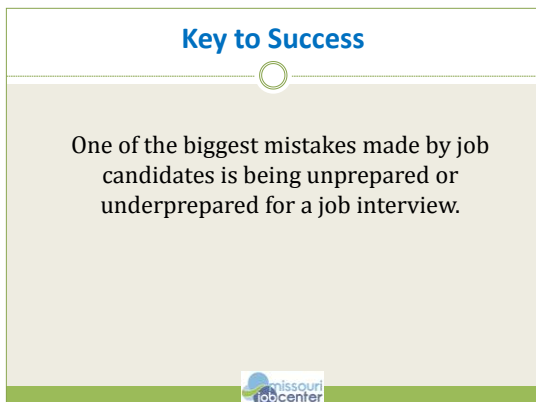


INTERVIEW PREPARATION WORKSHOP

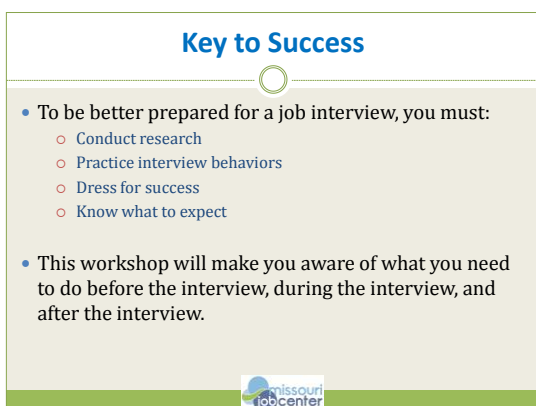
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- Introduce Yourself and the workshop



- Most job seekers do not know how to prepare for an interview. Or, job seekers do not appreciate how much preparation is needed for a job interview.



- These are the Key Concepts to be covered in today's workshop.
- The workshop is organized into three parts:
 1. before
 2. during
 3. after



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Before the Interview

- This is misleading – the interview starts the minute an employer contacts you.
 - Answer the phone in a professional manner.
 - Be prepared to take notes
 - Instructions for the interview
 - Directions to the interview location
 - Rephrase the details to make sure you've understood the message.
- The interview continues the minute you drive or step onto the employer's property.
 - Be professional to everyone you meet.



- The most important work for an interview should occur well before the actual interview.
- Each contact with the employer should be considered part of the interview process.

Before – Research

- Research the Position
 - Review the job description, job ad, or job posting
 - Review the documents you sent in response
 - Resume
 - Cover Letter
 - Application
- Research the Career Field
 - Visit O*Net Online
 - Visit the Occupational Outlook Handbook
 - Conduct a general internet search



- Provide some specific ideas for researching the position and the career field. Refer to resources available through the Job Center.

Before – Research

- Research the Employer
 - Visit the employer's website
 - Look for recent news stories about the employer
 - Visit the Better Business Bureau or the Local Chamber of Commerce or the local library
 - Talk to current and former employees
 - Scout out the location



- Provide some specific ideas for researching the employer.



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Before – Research

• Research Types of Interviews

- Be familiar with the different types of interviews you may face.
 - Screenings / Phone interviews
 - Panel interviews
 - Behavioral interviews
 - Demonstration interviews
 - Group interviews
- Talk to current and former employees.
- Ask the hiring manager who set up the interview.



- This workshop will go into some detail about each type of interview listed here.

Before – Know What to Expect

• Screenings / Phone Interviews

- Screenings are used to identify qualified candidates. Your goal is to get a face-to-face interview.
- Prepare for an on-the-spot interview
 - Have a copy of your resume in front of you.
 - Don't eat, drink, or chew gum.
 - Avoid background noise.
 - Answer questions promptly, confidently, and with appropriate, professional language.



- Many companies use phone interviews as a screening process.
- Phone screenings most often review the resume, cover letter, and other materials the job seeker sent.
- Cover some basic telephone skills.

Before – Know What to Expect

• Panel Interviews

- Panel interviews are face-to-face meetings with representatives of the employer.
- Prepare for a face-to-face interview
 - Have extra copies of your resume and any other documentation that you want to share.
 - Be aware that panel members may represent several departments or positions with the employer.
 - Treat all panel members with respect and a sense of importance.



- Panel interviews are more traditional.
- Panel interviews will have at least two representatives from the company.



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Before – Know What to Expect


- Behavioral Interviews
 - Behavioral interviews include questions about specific situations and your behaviors in those situations.
 - Prepare for situational questions
 - Answer questions with specific examples from your past experience.
 - Tell stories that emphasize your skills and abilities.



- Provide some specific questions that employers may ask:
 - Why do you want to work for us?
 - Tell me about a time you disagreed with a supervisor.
 - Tell me about a time you solved a problem.

Before – Know What to Expect


- Demonstration Interviews
 - You may have to audition for some positions.
 - Prepare for a demonstration interview
 - Ask for specific instructions about the topic, the environment, the people involved, and the time limit for your demonstration or presentation.
 - Ask about the equipment you will be using and ask what materials or equipment you should provide.
 - Do research on your topic or practice the skills you will be demonstrating.



- Provide some specific examples :
 - Teachers, trainers, writers
 - Welders, mechanics, production workers
 - Computer programmers, call center staff, customer service staff

Before – Know What to Expect

- Group Interviews
 - Your interview may include other job candidates applying for the same position.
 - Prepare for a group interview
 - Maintain composure, even if you disagree with others in the interview.
 - Demonstrate your leadership and group-communication skills.
 - Pay attention to the interviewer in charge.



- Provide specific examples of group interviews:
 - Candidates working on a task
 - Candidates taking turns to answer the same questions



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Before – Practice

- Review questions from previous interviews
 - Think about your previous experiences.
 - Talk to others about interview questions.
- Review questions from internet websites
 - Conduct a general search for interview questions – many websites offer advice for answering general and difficult questions.



- This may be a good place to offer some sort of handout with possible interview questions or refer people to specific online resources.

Before – Practice

- Become familiar with “illegal” interview questions and how to respond to them.
 - Employers should ask questions relevant to your ability to do the job
 - Employers should not ask about race, age, disability, family status, sex, birthplace, etc.



- If you answer an illegal question, you are revealing info the employer doesn't need and shouldn't know.
- If you refuse to answer, you may jeopardize your chance at the position.

Before – Practice

- A few strategies are available
 - Answer the question.
 - Refuse to answer the question or end the interview.
 - Ask how the question is relevant to the position.
 - Provide an answer that focuses on your ability to perform the duties of the position.



- Redirect the question/answer to information related to your ability to do the job. This will take some tact.



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Before – Practice

- Participate in Mock Interviews
 - Practice in front of a mirror – watch for nonverbal communication.
 - Record yourself and critique your performance.
 - Practice with friends and family and ask for suggestions.
 - Set up a more formal practice – Job Centers will assist in mock interviews.



- Offer some specific suggestions for practicing an interview.

Before – Dress for Success

- Because you want to look your best at an interview, take time to prepare your clothing.
- Consider these factors when choosing what to wear at a job interview:
 - Be conservative.
 - Be comfortable.
 - Be clean.



- The way you dress for an interview sends messages to the employer.

Before – Dress for Success

- Be Conservative
 - Remember many HR or Hiring Professionals are “old school” and have preconceived ideas about interview clothing.
 - Wear solid colors unless a creative style is a part of the job.
 - Dress one step better than you would every day on the job.
 - Cover tattoos and remove piercings.
 - Avoid distracting clothing – too revealing or too busy/noisy.



- Conservative dress is best.
- Provide specific suggestions for clothing for men and women.



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Before – Dress for Success

- Be Comfortable
 - Avoid clothing that is too tight or too loose.
 - Wear comfortable (and clean) shoes – you may get a tour of the facilities.
- Be Clean
 - Wear clean, wrinkle-free clothing.
 - Avoid perfume and cologne.
 - Avoid smoking and eating/drinking before an interview.



- Clothing that makes you uncomfortable may make you more nervous or self-conscious.
- Clean clothing and good hygiene is also important.

Before – Other Tips

- Set out clothes, documents, instructions, etc. before the day of the interview.
- Get a good night's sleep before the interview.
- Arrive at the interview location 10-20 minutes early.
- Go to an interview alone.
- Turn off electronic devices (or leave at home).
- Know the name of the person or department conducting the interview.



- Don't wait for the last minute to get ready for an interview.

During – Be Friendly

- Greet people with a smile and/or handshake.
- Repeat a person's name when you are introduced.
- Don't sit down until the interviewer indicates a seat.
- Be prepared to make small talk – most interviewers will "break the ice" with talk about the weather, your drive to the interview, etc.



- If you have made it to the interview, the employer thinks you are qualified for the job. The employer is looking for soft skills – how the candidate interacts and communicates with others.



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During – Be Professional

- Use appropriate and correct language.
- Don't speak negatively about past employers.
- Don't reveal confidential information about yourself or past employers, clients, etc.
- Don't chew gum or eat; think carefully if a beverage is offered.



- Be very careful about the information you share with the employer.
- This is where the preparation pays off.
- Remind participants that interviews will have periods of awkward silence – interviewers often take notes during an interview. Don't feel the need to fill up the silence with more talk.

During – Be Thorough

- Make sure you understand the question – ask for clarification or rephrase the question if you are unsure.
- Answer the question fully but don't add too much unnecessary information. Have examples and specific instances to share.
- Ask questions of the interviewer – this gives you a chance to show off your research and knowledge.



- Provide some suggestions for questions to ask the interviewer(s).
- Avoid talk about salary. If it comes up, be prepared (you should have researched appropriate salaries for certain positions).

During – Be Nonverbal

- Maintain good eye contact with the interviewer(s).
- Avoid nervous behaviors – rocking, tapping, shifting, leg-shaking, etc.
- Use natural hand movements and gestures, but avoid choppy and large gestures.
- Sit up straight.
- Smile.



- Nonverbal communication is very important. Sitting through mock interviews will make you aware of your nonverbals and how to make them more effective.



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After – Follow Up

- Follow up with correspondence.
 - Shows courtesy.
 - Gets your information on the hiring manager's desk one more time.
 - Gives you a chance to revisit a question you might have answered poorly.
 - Gives you a chance to add information you may have missed during the interview.



- Following up with a thank you gets your name on the interviewer's desk one more time.
- Most candidates don't follow up, but most employers expect a follow-up.

After – Document

- Make notes for future reference.
 - List names of people who conducted the interview.
 - Make note of your strengths and weaknesses.
 - Make note of unusual interview questions.
 - Write any other thoughts or "If I could do over..."



- Add value to your follow-up; this is a chance for a 'do over.'

Questions



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- You should make notes for future interviews. This will help you be better prepared for the next interview.

- Ask for questions or comments from your audience.



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