Effective Interviewing for PhDs

Spring 2019

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Graduate Pathways
Our mission
To empower all Maryland students and postdocs to reach their full career potential

Our goal
To educate and motivate you to actively engage in career planning and professional development from DAY 1

How will you maximize your training to be ready for a career in academia, industry, government, non-profit organizations or entrepreneurial ventures?

15 Minute Overview of Services YouTube Video:
https://youtu.be/7lxDI5DbNDk
UMd Career Services

- **University Career Center & The President’s Promise**
  - Careers4Terps (C4T)
  - workshops, panels, networking events, fairs
  - appointments with me through C4T

- **Engineering Co-Op & Career Services**
  - Careers4Engineers
  - walk-in 8:30-4:15
  - workshops, events, fairs

- **Robert H. Smith School of Business Career Services**
  - HireSmith

- **School of Public Policy Career Services**
  - Career Connections; UMD Policy Jobs
Handouts & Slides from Previous Workshops: https://gradschool.umd.edu/professionaldevelopment/workshop-materials

• PhD Career Updates e-newsletter
• Follow @UMDPhDCareers
Career Self-Management Competencies

1. **Know yourself** (interests, skills, and values). Communicate convincingly about your transferable skills and strengths.

2. Able to **name the specific type of jobs** you are looking for within specific **industries** and understand the qualifications and typical career paths.

3. Keep up with discipline/industry trends. **Continue to develop required skills.**

4. Effectively **build, maintain and utilize your professional network** at all stages of your career. Use it for gaining information, job search assistance, and identifying opportunities.

5. Manage a professionally branded and **effective online presence.**

6. **Know sources of postings.** Understand application processes & timelines.

7. Able to **draft, edit and tailor documents** (CV, resume, cover letters, email correspondence, letters of acceptance and decline...).

8. **Master the art of effective interviewing.**

9. Able to effectively **negotiate and accept/decline offers.**

10. **Accepts responsibility** for ongoing career and professional development. Maintains **positive mindset and demonstrates resilience.**
Today’s Session

- Effective interviewing as part of the overall hiring process

- Interviewing Tips and Resources
  - TERP GUIDE; UCLA PhD Career Toolkit
  - Webinar on screening and onsite interviews
  - InterviewStream

- Interviewing with STARR method

- This session is a starting point!
Hiring Process

1. Application Process
2. Assessment & Application Review
3. Interview Process
4. Job offer & Employment Process
Basics: Application to On-site Interview

- **REALITY**: An employer can receive 100-200+ applications for a position. May screen electronically, individually or by committee.
- **Materials** (resume, cover letter, other documents) must be tailored for position. **Goal is to get you to next step of the process.**
- **Screening interview** (phone, online, at a conference). 10-20 candidates. Short. 30-45 minutes. **Goal is to get an invitation for an on-site interview.** May involve a group or case interview depending on position.
- **On-site interview**. Different lengths, different formats. Usually bring 3-4 candidates on site. **Goal=offer.**
## Skills Employers Want

Figure 1: Attributes employers seek on a candidate's resume

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attribute</th>
<th>% of respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>80.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to work in a team</td>
<td>78.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication skills (written)</td>
<td>70.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problem-solving skills</td>
<td>70.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication skills (verbal)</td>
<td>68.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strong work ethic</td>
<td>68.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initiative</td>
<td>65.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analytical/quantitative skills</td>
<td>62.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flexibility/adaptability</td>
<td>60.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical skills</td>
<td>59.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal skills (relates well to others)</td>
<td>58.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Spotlight for Career Services Professionals
November 18, 2015 - See more at:
Types of interviews

- Traditional Interviews-Hypothetical Questions

- Behavioral-Based- “Tell me about a time…”

- Case Interviews-Individual or Group. Asked to provide resolution to situation. Observation of group dynamics, problem solving, subject matter.

PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE

- Anticipate questions and how you will respond
- Recall 10-12 stories that highlight skills and experiences relevant to the position
- Practice your presentation/job talk with a live audience
- Use interview stream then schedule an appointment with a career advisor
Homework: Transferable Skills Activity

1. Check all skills you have.
2. Narrow to 10
3. Narrow to top 5
4. Come up with a STRONG examples of when you used your top 5 skills
Typical Questions from TerpGuide and UCLA PhD Career Toolkit

Questions Employers Ask

**PERSONAL**
1. Tell me about yourself.
2. What are your hobbies?
3. Why did you choose to interview with our organization?
4. Describe your ideal job.
5. What can you offer us?
6. What do you consider to be your greatest strengths?
7. What are areas of growth for you?
8. Have you ever had any failures? What did you learn?
9. Of which these accomplishments are you most proud?
10. Who are your role models? Why?
11. How does your college education or work experience relate to this job?
12. What motivates you most in a job?
13. Have you had difficult getting along with a former professor/supervisor/colleague and how did you handle it?
14. Have you ever spoken to a group of people? How large?
15. Why should we hire you rather than another candidate?
16. What do you know about our organization (products or services)?
17. Where do you want to be in five years? Ten years?
18. Do you plan to return to school for further education?

**EXPERIENCE**
20. What job-related skills have you developed?
21. Did you work while going to school? In what positions?
22. What did you learn from these work experiences?
23. What did you enjoy most about your last employment? Least?
24. Have you ever quit a job? Why?
25. Give an example of a situation in which you provided a solution to an employer.
26. Give an example of a time in which you worked under deadline pressure.
27. Have you ever done any volunteer work? What kind?
28. How do you think a former supervisor would describe your work?

**CAREER GOALS**
29. Do you prefer to work under supervision or on your own?
30. What kind of boss do you prefer?
31. Would you be successful working with a team?
32. Do you prefer large or small organizations? Why?
33. What other types of positions are you considering?
34. How do you feel about working in a structured environment?
35. Are you able to work on several assignments at once?
36. How do you feel about working overtime?
37. How do you feel about travel?
38. How do you feel about the possibility of reoccurring?
39. Are you willing to work flexible?

Before you begin interviewing, think about these questions and possible responses and discuss them with a career advisor. Conduct mock interviews and be sure you are able to answer most clear, professional questions in an interview.
Other Tough Questions

- Familiarize yourself with illegal questions and consider your response if asked.
- Be prepared to respond regarding your authorization to work in the U.S.
- Be prepared for questions about your salary requirements. Do your research, give a range, don’t respond on the spot.
InterviewStream

CONDUCT AN INTERVIEW

WATCH MY INTERVIEW

MOBILE INTERVIEW

OVERVIEW

1. Number of Assignments for this company or institution.

2. Percentage of mobile versus computer site usage.

3. Number of interviews in the past 30 days.

RESOURCES
INTERVIEW STREAM
Interview Suite

INTERVIEW TOPICS

KEY QUESTIONS
- Tell me about yourself.
- Why should we hire you?
- Can you walk me through your resume?
- Why do you want to work here?
- What are your three greatest weaknesses?
- What are your weaknesses?
- What are your three greatest strengths?
- What are three positive things your last boss would say about you?
- How would your peers describe you?
- What can you do for us that other candidates can’t?

INTERVIEW TIPS
- How do I make the best first impression?
- Using Silence in an Interview to Your Advantage
- What if I don’t have much experience?
- Things You Need to Find out About the Company You’re Interviewing With
- What if they ask me an impossible question?
- Addressing Hard Feelings About a Previous Employer
- What is the best way to present yourself in an interview?
- What do I do when there is silence?
- How can I give a strong answer without being too long-winded?

INTERESTING TOPICS
- Research
- Preparing for an interview
- Non-Verbal Communication
- First Impressions
- Breaking the Ice
- Making Sure There Is a Mutual Fit Between You and a Company
- While Waiting in Reception
- What salary are you seeking?
- Self-Assessments and Peer Interaction
- Should I follow up after the interview?
Using the STARR method

S=Situation, explain the context of a specific instance
T=Task, what you were supposed to accomplish
A=Action, what you did to accomplish the task
R=Results, use numbers, outcomes
R=Relate it to the position, connect it back to the job you are interviewing for now
Homework: Watch this video

https://youtu.be/ojMt2ktJEyQ
Other resources

- **LinkedIn Learning**
  - numerous videos on interviewing, career, job search
- **Graduate School Writing Center**
  - help with presentations and job talks
- **TLTC, CIRTL** - for help preparing academic job search statements
- **NCFDD** - Resources- 3-Part “How to Navigate the Academic Job Market” by Karen Kelsky of The Professor is In
Some helpful books
What are your next steps?

Some suggestions

- Review InterviewStream
- Identify you 10-12 stories
- Transferable Skills Workshop
- Practice with InterviewStream
- Schedule appointment for live feedback after you use resources

When this session ends, please complete the Evaluation!

Q&A

go.umd.edu/phdcareerinfo
all webinar materials at:
go.umd.edu/phdwebinars2019-2020