



Landing That Elusive Job

Guide to Interviewing

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Like most students, your final year of school is a busy time. The coursework is demanding and you want to do well on final exams so you can finish on a high note. You also need to start thinking about the transition to work after graduation. This "Guide to Interviewing" should help you make that transition from university to corporate life.

Where to Start?

Before you apply for job opportunities, you have to decide what you want to do. Which university studies do you enjoy the most? Do you like Java programming or economics classes? Once you identify what you enjoy, you can search for career opportunities in those areas. For example, if your objective is to be a Java programmer, applying for a business graduate program may not be the best idea for you. Applying for everything and anything out there will be a waste of your time. Once you've decided on your career path, the next thing to consider is where to go to look for career opportunities.

"I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel."

MAYA ANGELOU

Where Should You Look for Career Opportunities?

You can hunt for jobs two ways: using traditional methods and using online search and social media.

Traditional Job Search

You can look for jobs on your campus job board or website, talk to career counselors, go to campus events when companies visit, and so on. Internships are a good way to learn about business and identify career opportunities. These are great tried-and-tested ways to find out about companies that are hiring.

Online and Social Media Job Search

Most companies now broadcast information about programs and roles for recent graduates online. Companies use their website, Facebook, Twitter, Glassdoor, LinkedIn, and online job forums. A Google search using the right keywords can give you fantastic results. There could be numerous companies hiring programmers in your city. You have to search them out and connect with them.

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In addition, be sure to look through the social and professional networking sites that are most relevant to your desired career.

Write a Great Resume

A good resume is a key that can open the interview door for you. You have 30 seconds to make a great impression and convince an employer to interview you. A good resume needs to summarize your basic information, job objectives, educational background, experience, skills, and abilities.

What should you do before you write your resume?

- » Evaluate yourself
- » Research the position
- » Research the organization

Basic Information

- » Name
- » Phone number
- » E-mail address
- » City, State, Zip

Education

- » Name of university
- » Type of degree
- » Major
- » Date of graduation
- » GPA* (Use only if customary for your region. Otherwise, provide educational measurement that is customary for your region.)
- » Relevant coursework
- » Academic honors

Job Objective

- » What do you want to do?
- » What can you do?

Work Experience (list for each employer)

- » Employer's name
- » City and state of employer
- » Employment dates
- » Job title
- » Tasks and accomplishments

Skills and Abilities

- » Both technical and nontechnical
- » Target the skills/experience listed in the position that is advertised



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Get Ready for an Interview

'The first impression can be a lasting impression,' the saying goes. It takes only a few seconds for the interviewer to evaluate you based on your body language, your appearance, your mannerisms, and how you are dressed.

Research the Company

Find out about the company: Know what it does, its products, culture, competitors, and people.

Dress Appropriately

Remember that first impressions count. Be well groomed and presentable. Ask your recruiter about the best way to dress for the country, culture, and weather. For example, some companies may expect male students to appear in business attire with a necktie, but this may not make sense in all countries or locations.

If the company has a dress code, adhere to it. Regardless of the type of clothes, make sure they are clean and comfortable.

Rest Well and Be Relaxed

A good night's sleep before your interview will allow you to begin your day in the right frame of mind and with the energy you need.

What to Bring

Place two copies of your resume, extra writing paper, a pen, and all relevant documents in a folder. Carry a few copies of passport-size photos. If possible, place a glue stick and a mini stapler in your folder. Remember to switch off your mobile or keep it on silent mode.

Read more about how to prepare for an interview:

https://blogs.oracle.com/campusrecruitment/entry/competency_based_interviews

What to Expect at an Interview

The main thing to remember is to be yourself at an interview. Companies want to get to know more about you, so be yourself.

Companies may put you through different types of interviews. Some interviews cover technical information, while others are behavioral. Companies are looking for people who not only can do the job but who also fit the company's culture and ethics.

Telephone Interviews

Just because an interview takes place on the phone, do not take it lightly. The person talking to you will assess you based on the discussion.

Telephone interviews tend to be prescreening discussions that can last anywhere from 10 to 45 minutes. Employers will look for information to ensure you meet their criteria, which could include your technical abilities or your reasons why you want to work for them.

Read more about preparing for phone interviews:

http://blogs.oracle.com/campusrecruitment/entry/how_to_prepare_for_a_telephone_interview

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Behavioral Interviews

The thinking behind behavioral interviews is that the best predictor of future performance is past performance. Companies link behavior that you exhibit to core competencies. An example of a behavioral question could be: "Describe a time when you had to deal with a difficult coworker or customer."

Behavioral questions tend to follow the STAR format:

- » **Situation:** Tell us a time when you...
- » **Task:** Describe the project's challenge and the expected outcome
- » **Action:** Step us through how you went about completing the task/project.
- » **Result:** What was the outcome?

Companies are looking for how well you articulate your answer through the four phases listed above.

To prepare, write out some questions and rehearse the answers with a friend or family member. Go through your resume to refresh your memory about your school history. You can use experiences outside work or school as well, such as community work or sports, if they demonstrate your point. Read more about behavioral interviews:

https://blogs.oracle.com/campusrecruitment/entry/competency_based_interviews

Technical Interviews

Technical interviews can be completed online or in person. There are many ways for companies to assess your technical aptitude in a given technical skill set.

Interviewers are not trying to trick you; they likely want to see the thought process that you use to come to a solution. Remember in a graduate program, companies will invest the time and effort to teach you the technology they use. They are likely assessing if you have the capability to learn and work with that technology.

In software development roles, it is all about problem solving. Software development is a wide and varied field. Even the best developers get stuck. Successful developers know how to create answers to technical problems or find ways around roadblocks.

Group Interviews

You may be required to participate in group exercises, such as group problem-solving sessions where each candidate's contributions and participation is noted. During these exercises, the interviewers assess candidates against a set of competencies and see how they interact with others, work in a team, communicate, and influence others. Other behaviors that interviewers may be looking for include leadership, organizational skills, the ability to handle stress, to deal with feedback, to analyze, and to problem-solve.

Your Work Has Paid Off: A Job Offer

When the company contacts you to offer a job, take the opportunity to ask any outstanding questions you may have so that you can make an informed decision.

Make sure to celebrate your success while staying focused on completing your studies and your university career on a strong note.

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Many companies might offer a graduate role before you complete your studies. You might not start for three to six months after you receive your formal offer letter.

What Now?

Some recent graduates wonder what to do after receiving a job offer. There are several ways to make the most of your time.

Complete Your Studies

If you are still completing your studies, buckle down and finish on a strong note. The last thing you want to do is have to turn down your dream opportunity because you didn't complete all your subjects.

Research the Company

While you are waiting to start your new role, learn more about the company. Read about its history, services, and products so that you will get a better understanding of the environment and culture. Most companies have blogs or Facebook pages that will give you some great information and insights.

Prepare for Change

Talk to some of your peers who are already in the workforce. Ask them how life has changed since they finished their studies. Working life likely means still waking up early in the morning but heading to work instead of attending lectures at school.

Review Your Wardrobe

You will want to start stocking up on business attire that is suitable for work. What you wore in school may not be appropriate in a corporate environment.

Stay Productive

If you have time, get involved in volunteer work to keep yourself occupied.

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