The interview is an opportunity to discuss your talents and interests with an employer’s representative. It is also your goal to convince them that you are the top candidate and best fit for their organization.

BEFORE THE INTERVIEW:

➢ Conduct a realistic self-assessment to become aware of your assets and career goals.
  • Become familiar with your:
    ▪ Values – what you want from a career and what you are willing to sacrifice to get it.
    ▪ Strengths - what skills you bring to the marketplace as a worker.
    ▪ Weaknesses – what skills and/or personal characteristics need to be improved?
    ▪ Interests – what career field really excites you and where do you make the most contributions?
  • Think about how you want to present these values, strengths, weaknesses, as well as your education, work style, skills, and goals.

➢ Learn about the company, organization or educational institution by doing some research in advance.
  • Gather information about the company’s organizational structure, type of clients/students, work philosophies, and past and present achievements. A simple internet search of the company will give you this information.

➢ If you are provided the name of the person(s) you will be interviewing with, memorize it.

➢ Practice responding to interview questions. (See sample questions in packet)
DAY OF THE INTERVIEW:

➢ Decide what to wear. If the interview is early in the morning, it’s a good idea to try on and lay out your outfit the night before.
➢ Dress conservative, simple, and classy.
   ○ Women’s Attire
      ▪ Solid color suit
      ▪ Coordinated blouse, nothing with a flashy print
      ▪ Moderate shoes
      ▪ Limited jewelry (these should be simple added touches)
      ▪ Neat, professional hair style
      ▪ Tan or light hosiery if you are wearing a suit with a skirt
      ▪ Simple, classic make-up
      ▪ Manicured nails
   ○ Men’s Attire
      ▪ Solid color suit
      ▪ Coordinated collar shirted (Light colors are usually best)
      ▪ Conservative tie, not to bright or patterned
      ▪ Dark socks, Professional Shoes
      ▪ LIMITED jewelry, if any
      ▪ Neat, professional hair style
➢ If at all possible, hide any tattoos
➢ Do not wear an excessive amount of perfume or cologne
➢ Arrive 15 minutes early to show your reliability and seriousness.
➢ Have a pad folio or a manila folder with extra copies of your resume and credentials.
➢ Have fresh breath.😊

DURING THE INTERVIEW:

➢ Give a firm shake, and greet the interviewer with a pleasant smile.
➢ Show a positive and confident attitude when you introduce yourself.
➢ Don’t become tense. Be comfortable and face the interviewer…remember they were in your shoes once too.
➢ Listen to questions effectively and answer genuinely.
➢ Answer every question with confidence and maintain eye contact with your interviewer.
   ○ It’s alright to pause if you need time to answer a tough question.
➢ Always elaborate your answer. Never just say “yes” or “no”.
➢ Do not complain about past employers or organizations.
➢ The interviewers are not only listening to your answers but looking at your non-verbal cues as well. Sit up straight, smile, and never chew gum.
➢ When given the opportunity, ask relevant questions that will showcase your knowledge of the organization.
➢ Do not bring up salary during the interview.
➢ Always be honest with your answers.
AFTER THE INTERVIEW:

➢ Before leaving thank the interviewer(s) for their time, and if not already told, ask about the next step in the process.

➢ Follow up the next day by sending a thank you card to the interviewing committee thanking them for taking the time to meet with you.
  o You can also highlight with a sentence or two that you would be a great fit for their growing company.

COMMON INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1) Tell me about yourself.
   i. This should be a brief description of your education and life accomplishments. Add a fun hobby you have at the end for a personal touch. No more than 2 minutes.

2) What specific skills acquired or used in previous jobs relate to this position?

3) What are your strengths and weaknesses?

4) Why did you choose to become a teacher, nurse, counselor, etc?

5) What are some qualities that you possess that you believe would make you successful at our organization?

6) Where do you see yourself in 5 or 10 years?

7) How does your education relate to our needs?

8) What would be your greatest contribution to this organization?

9) Describe your most rewarding work experience.

10) Describe your toughest work moment and how you handled it.

11) How well do you collaborate with others?

12) Do you have any questions for us?

If you would like assistance answering these questions or would like to come in for a mock interview, please contact the Center for Careers and Employment at (518)629-7326 or email us at cce@hvcc.edu to schedule an appointment.