Surviving the Interview
Company Research

- Research the company
- Look at advertising or Web information
- Learn about the products or services the company offers
- What are the company’s goals and plans for future development?
- If possible, speak to someone who works or has worked for this employer in the past
Do...

- Be **CLEAN**—hair, teeth, fingernails, and don’t forget deodorant!
- Wear clean, pressed clothes.
- Dress one level “dressier” than the style people wear to work at this company.
- Dress conservatively.
Don’t...

- Smoke for 30 minutes before your interview— and make sure your clothing doesn’t smell of smoke
- Wear short, sheer, or tight clothing!
- Wear excessive jewelry. One ring per hand, please!
- Unfair or not, men should remove earrings. Women who want to wear them should stick to simple, small earrings.
- Apply strong perfumes, colognes, or scented aftershaves.
- Wear ties, pins, or designs that express political or religious opinions.
The Interview
The Interview as a Tool

- Employers look at information about prospective employees from several sources.

- Resumes and applications provide standard answers to questions about one’s education and experience.

- The interview is the most powerful tool an employer has in making decisions about whom to hire.

- Companies spend a lot of time and money training staff to screen applicants to find the best “fit” for the position.
Employers Seek Those Who are...

- Dependable
- Team players
- Willing to learn new skills
- Self-directed—able to work without close supervision
- Able to focus on solutions, not problems!
Common Questions

- Tell me about a time you had to handle an angry customer…
- Have you ever had a conflict with a coworker or supervisor? How did you handle it?
- What is your greatest strength? Your greatest weakness?
- Where do you see yourself in five years?
- Why do you want to work for this company?
- Tell me about yourself…
- What did you like most/least about your last job?
- What motivates you?
- Do you have any questions for me?
Your Responses

Whenever possible, use a real experience from work or school as an example when you answer an interview question.

Think about the questions that may come up and several of your experiences that you can use to illustrate your answers.

Answering with a simple yes or no won’t have the impact of a real illustration of your skills and experiences.

Use the **STAR** format outlined on the next screen to keep your answers on-track.
The **Star** Format

**S**ituation

**T**ask

**A**ction

**R**esult
Have you had to work with deadlines in the past?

Situation – *When I worked at ABC Widgets*

Task – *Our team had a goal of 2,000 widgets*

Action – *I worked out a way to streamline…*

Result – *As a result, our team exceeded the goal by 130 widgets*
Tell me about your self....

Sorry, but the employer isn’t asking because he or she wants to know where you went to grade school. Tell how you have prepared for your career. School? Experience?

Let the Interviewer know
-- you are motivated
-- you like challenges
-- why are interested in this career path, this industry, this company.
Where do you see yourself in five years?

Focus your answer on developing your Career path *in this field*.

Don’t say that you plan to go to back to school to study something completely different or open your own business!
What is your greatest weakness?

Please don’t say that you have no weaknesses! Pick one that you can reveal and quickly tell how you overcame it.

“When I was a project manager at ABC Widgets, I had difficulty keeping my desk organized. A coworker showed me a system that solved my problem.”
What did you like least about your last job?

Think carefully here! Do not say anything negative about a former employer. Stick to a duty that offered no challenges and end with a positive note.

*I sometimes got bored when things were slow, but I always liked assignments that made me really think.*
Why do you want to work for this company?

This is where your company research is important.

*I did some research and am impressed by the innovative ways the company has…*

*I admire and respect the stance this agency has taken on …*
Do you have any questions you’d like to ask?

You should have two or three possible answers ready for this one!

*How did you get started with this company? What do you like about the company?*

*Don’t ask about pay or benefits at the first interview!!!*
Follow Up!

Write a thank you note! Believe it or not, it WORKS! Your name is in front of the interviewer again—saying you appreciate the opportunity to meet and discuss the position and that you really want that job!

That’s All Folks!