

# Interview Preparation



## **BEFORE THE INTERVIEW**

### **Portfolio:**

- ✓ Pen
  - ✓ Paper
  - ✓ Completed application (even a generic one)
  - ✓ Questions to ask employers written on paper
  - ✓ 3 copies of your resume
  - ✓ 1 copy of your transcript
  - ✓ List of references that can be called/recommendation letters/reviews
  - ✓ Calculator (in case of testing)
  - ✓ Location, time, directions, phone #, name of interviewer, etc.
- Know the name and title of your interviewer
  - Ask where to park and get specific directions

### **Research/Review:**

- ✓ Research the company and the type of position for which you are interviewing.
- ✓ Review in your mind your qualifications for the position.
  - ◆ Ask for an annual report if possible
  - ◆ Know the products and services and locations of the company
  - ◆ Identify and be able to discuss the mission of the company and be aware of its corporate culture
  - ◆ Use the resources provided to you in the Career Services Office (Sorkins, CorpTech, filing cabinet, etc.)

### **Preparing for the interview:**

- ✓ Be able to identify and discuss your strengths and weaknesses
- ✓ Be prepared to give examples of your work situations that you handled successfully
- ✓ Have questions prepared to ask the interviewer and write them down!
- ✓ Bring a list of your employment history, street addresses, zip codes, and phone numbers for application forms (use the sample application form)

### **Prepare for your first impression:**

- ✓ Have a **neat appearance** (shower, shave, clean nails, fresh breath, etc.)
- ✓ Trim your hair now so that you can get used to the change so that you feel comfortable with the style
- ✓ Be **well rested**
- ✓ Pick out your clothes and ensure that they are pressed and cleaned at least three days prior to the interview

- ✓ **Have conservative clothes** (men wear suits-no sports jackets and slacks; no trendy suits; women-suits preferred; dresses okay)
- ✓ Do not wear heavy cologne or perfume; no jewelry for men; conservative jewelry for women
- ✓ Be sure to **brush your teeth** (bring mints with you if you are concerned about your breath)
- ✓ If you usually smoke, **abstain** until after the interview

## **DURING THE INTERVIEW**

- ✓ Be prompt – arrive at least 15 minutes early
- ✓ Be pleasant to secretary/receptionist – greet the first line of contact politely
- ✓ Give firm handshake – look the person in the eye with an enthusiastic smile!
- ✓ Be alert
- ✓ Use proper English/grammar
- ✓ Be aware of your body language; smile, sit up straight, maintain good eye contact
- ✓ Be yourself
- ✓ Answer questions directly, concisely, truthfully
- ✓ Ask Questions – refer to your notes when needed
- ✓ Sell yourself--Tell them you are the person for the job

**\*Nobody can sell yourself but you!**

### **Be sure to:**

Ask for a **business card** (so you can write a thank you letter)

**Ask for the job** (if you don't, someone else will)

Ask how the **selection process** will continue

**Thank the interviewer** (common courtesy)

## **AFTER**

- ✓ Send a business typed "Thank You" letter within 24 hours of interview to each individual you interviewed with (sample in your notebook)
  - ◆ **Remind** him/her why you are a match for the position
  - ◆ **Add information** you forgot to say in the interview
  - ◆ **Thank** him/her for their time and attention
- ✓ Keep good records of interviews (dates, times, attitude, thank you letter sent, follow-up with counselor/company)
  - ◆ **Write down the questions** you were asked and how you responded to them
  - ◆ **Evaluate how you did**, and what you could improve on

