Interview Tips

Before the Interview

- **Be Prepared**: Know your resume, the field, the organization, and the job description. Practice interview questions. Arrive early.
- **Present yourself professionally**: Dress better than everyday dress at that workplace. Bring a copy of your resume, a list of references, and a list of questions for employers.

During the Interview

In an interview you are asked to share details of your experiences. Past examples may come from work experience, internships, academic experiences, co-curricular activities, or volunteer work.

**Give details. Tell SHORT stories. Don’t monologue.**

An interview is, ideally, a conversation between a business (you, offering your labor) and another business (the employer, offering to pay for your labor). It’s not an interrogation. Make it a conversation as much as possible.

Before leaving, make sure you know what the next steps are in the application process.

Phone and Zoom Interviews

Make sure your cellphone/device is charged and you are in a quiet area with no background noise. Treat the interview as you would an in-person interview. Smile and sit up straight—your body posture greatly influences your tone of voice.

Have your resume and the job ad in front of you for reference. Always send a thank you afterwards.

Manners and Etiquette

- **Turn off your cell phone** before going into the interview.
- Be friendly to everyone you see! Receptionists are often asked for their impression of you.
- Stand when people come into the room or are being introduced to you.
- Handshakes are very important.
- Sit up straight and look people in the eye. Do not slouch or cross your legs.
- If your interview includes a meal, read up on table etiquette. Remember this is not about food—you are still being interviewed. Order from the mid-price range on the menu, something easy to eat. Do not order alcohol. Do not speak with your mouth full. The person inviting you is expected to pay. Remember to thank them.

**Do**

- Keep calm and don’t panic!
- Smile (especially when asked a question).
- Maintain good eye contact. If there’s more than one interviewer, look from person to person.
- Be articulate and listen carefully to each question before giving your answer.
- It is okay to take your time answering questions and/or asking for clarification if you need to.

**Don’t**

- Don’t cross your arms.
- Don’t play with your face, jewelry or hair.
- Don’t touch or look at your cellphone.
- Don’t interrupt when being asked a question.
- Don’t give one-word answers (unless the answer dictates a one-word answer!).
- Don’t bring coffee or food in with you.
- Don’t be rude. (To anyone. Ever.)

Always Remember to Write Thank You Emails

Get the business cards or contact information of everyone that you meet at the interview, as this will be helpful in writing thank you emails. Send them no more than 12 hours after your interview. Make sure to express your sincere appreciation, reemphasize your strongest qualifications, and reiterate your interest in the position.

HFA Advising and Career Center, E 202 South College, 413- 545- 6152, umass.edu/hfa/advising/careers