

Interview Process

Interviewing is Key:

“Recruiters only spend an average of six seconds looking at a candidate’s resume.

Congratulations, you have made it past the first six seconds. How do you now separate yourself from the other candidates?”

**-Alyson Davis
University Relations Specialist
LORD Corporation**

BEFORE:

- DO RESEARCH! Research everything about the company, its current projects, its competitors, and the interviewer.
- Review interview types and practice answers to interview questions.
- Practice interviewing: online with InterviewStream
in-person at the ACPC with a Mock Interview
- Dress appropriately. Use minimal/no cologne/perfume.
- Avoid smoking before, and chewing gum, mints or cough drops during.
- Bring extra resumes (and your career portfolio if appropriate).
- Arrive 10-15 minutes early.
- Read company materials or review positive experiences from your resume.
- When the interviewer comes to get you, stand up, smile, and introduce yourself in a positive, courteous manner, give a firm handshake (without crushing the interviewer’s hand).

DURING:

- Convey optimism and enthusiasm, especially during the informal conversation on the way to the interview room. Many employers form a lasting first impression from the way you act during the first five minutes.
- Make good eye contact without staring at the interviewer.
- Use the interviewer’s name (use Mr. or Ms. and Last Name) during the interview.
- Listen to how you are speaking (not too quickly, not too slowly). Do not ramble or mumble. Use good grammar. Always “yes,” never say “yeah” or “yup” and try to avoid “uh” and “um.”
- Give nonverbal feedback to the interviewer; smile, nod, and look like a strong candidate.
- Do not put materials on the interviewer’s desk unless you are showing an example from your portfolio.
- Be honest and brief when answering questions, but provide enough detail to support your answer. Some interviewers say candidates can undersell themselves by being too brief.
- Answer negative questions with positive points.
- Use action words to describe KSAs. Give detailed examples.
- **Be a STAR—Situation, Task, Action, Results.** Some employers use behavioral interviewing, e.g. “Tell me about a time when you led a team.” They want a specific example. In answering any question using STAR examples is much stronger; think to yourself, “Let me tell you about a time when I...”
- Ask questions that can’t be answered by the organization’s website. Write out several in advance in case some are answered during the interview. Start with position responsibilities, advancement opportunities; ask questions that would benefit the company.
- Ask about next steps, decision dates, permission to contact her/him, and phone or email preference.

AFTER:

- Write your thank you letters/emails to all involved in the actual interviewing process; send within 24-48 hours and briefly re-emphasize your strengths and highlight your qualifications.
- Evaluate the interview and debrief yourself, keep notes in an Excel file by company for future interviews.
- Review an interview evaluation (for OCI positions) with ACPC staff and/or do more mock interviews.
- FOLLOW UP! At three to five days after their stated decision date, contact the representative about your status. Plan your contact ahead of time to market yourself effectively, while making your call/email brief and concise.