

# Interviewing

*Make a good impression and secure an offer*

## 1 RESEARCH

Learn as much as possible about the organization or company:

- What is the mission, goal or purpose of the organization?
- What kind of content do you see on their official website?
- Has the company been in the news recently?
- What projects or initiatives are they currently working on?
- How much do you know about the culture of the organization? How big is the organization? How many employees work for them?

*Talk to anyone you know who works at the organization/company or check out the Alumni Directory or LinkedIn to see if there are any alums working for the company you could speak with to learn more.*

***Highlight some skills and important aspects of the job description:***

***List some company facts and research:***



# 2

## PREPARE

Using the skills and important aspects of the job description (previous page), use the SPAR acronym to develop examples that illustrate those skills. You can use these SPARs to answer interviewing questions - each SPAR example can be used to answer multiple questions. The SPAR acronym can help you develop examples.

**Skill to Highlight:** Problem Solving

### Situation

I was participating in a research project in the Cognition and Action Neuroimaging lab where we manage toddlers' interactions and behaviors ...

### Problem

one of the children got really sick during one of our sessions

### Action

I took initiative and went to our emergency contact information database to contact the child's parent

### Result

I was able to calm the child down without upsetting the other children and her father was really thankful for the way I handled the situation. He ensured us his daughter would be back to participate as soon as she was feeling better

**This SPAR relates to the following questions:**

*Tell me about a time you had to handle a difficult situation?*

*Describe a situation in which you worked as part of a team and what role you had within the team.*

*Give me an example of your problem solving capabilities. (and others questions)*

**Skill to Highlight:**

### Situation

### Problem

### Action

### Result

**This SPAR relates to the following questions:**

# Types of Interviews:



Phone



In-person



Online



Group

## Common Interview Questions

While it is better to prepare for an interview by compiling your list of SPARs, here are some typical interview questions that you may be asked:

- *Tell me about yourself.*
- *Why are you interested in working with our organization?*
- *What is one of your greatest strengths?*
- *What is one of your greatest weaknesses?*

You can always use the career guides online or Google to find industry specific interview questions as well.

***click here to see more sample interview questions and questions to ask employers***

***click here to access the IU Career Guides (each guide has industry-specific questions located under the "Find a Job or Internship" tab)***

## Questions to Ask the Employer

At the end of the interview, you will have the opportunity to ask the employer questions. Try to ask questions that genuinely interest you, but also show your knowledge of the organization.

- *What is the culture of the organization?*
- *How do you see new staff contributing to the (initiative, project, etc.)?*
- *What are your goals for this position in the first year?*

**Use this formula to brainstorm potential questions:**

*this is what I know + this is why I care + so tell me more about...*

**Example:**

*I read that your company is increasing its philanthropic contributions by 20% + I have always been passionate about fundraising for nonprofits + can you tell me more about this new initiative?*

# 3

## GET READY

*Below are some tips on wardrobe choices and general day-of-interview prep.*

### MEN

### WOMEN



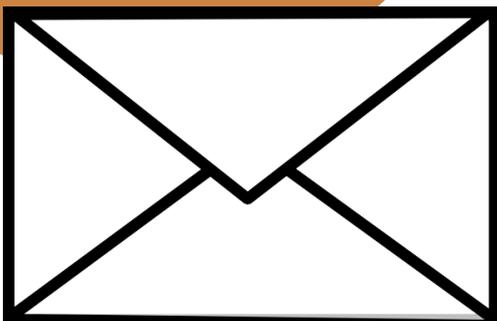
- **SUIT:** Wear a two-piece matching suit in navy, dark grey, or black.
- **SHIRT:** A long sleeve, collared, button-down shirt is appropriate.
- **SHOES & SOCKS:** Match your belt to your shoes. Wear dark colored socks and professional business shoes.
- **NEVER WEAR:** Shorts, cologne, sandals, or t-shirts.
- **GROOMING:** Always be clean shaven or have well-groomed facial hair. Clean fingernails are also important.

- **SUIT:** Wear a two-piece suit or skirt and blazer combo. Skirts should cover thighs when seated.
- **SHIRT:** A blouse, knit sweater, or shell is appropriate.
- **HOSIERY:** With dresses and skirts, wear hosiery in neutral or sheer shades.
- **SHOES & SOCKS:** Wear professional-looking heels (no higher than 2 inches) or flats.
- **NEVER WEAR:** Mini skirts, low-cut blouses, leggings, large jewelry, platform heels.
- **GROOMING:** Make-up should be minimal and fingernail polish should be neutral in color.



### To-Do List:

- *Bring a padfolio or notepad, extra copies of your resume, and a list of questions to ask the employer*
- *Give yourself plenty of time to travel and arrive a few minutes early*
- *Plan out your day ahead of time. Look up directions, parking, address, etc.*
- *Have the office phone number on hand in case you need to contact them*



## THANK YOU LETTERS

# 4

- Before you leave, write down names of interviewers/get business cards so you don't misspell names
- Send thank you letters to each person who interviewed you within 24–48 hours of the interview (can be handwritten or sent via email)
- Check for typos
- Be sure to thank them for their time, restate interest/show enthusiasm, mention something you discussed with the interviewer(s)