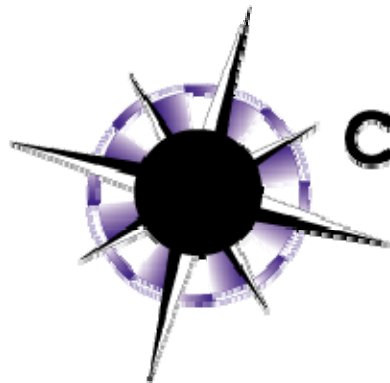


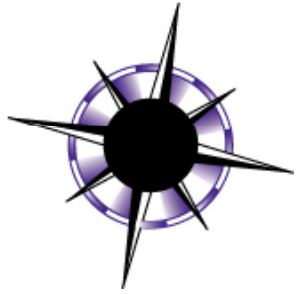
# *Winning Interviews*

Career and Employment Services  
Kansas State University  
100 Holtz Hall  
Manhattan, KS 66506

[www.k-state.edu/ces](http://www.k-state.edu/ces)   [ces@k-state.edu](mailto:ces@k-state.edu)   (785) 532-6506



**Career and Employment Services**  
*Guiding You from College to Career*  
**Kansas State University**



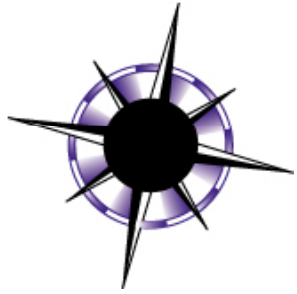
# *Winning Interviews*

## *Outline*

- Interview Overview
- Interviewing Techniques
- Preparing for the Interview
- Questions Asked During the Interview
- After the Interview
- Additional Information



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# *Interview Overview*

## **OBJECTIVE:**

**To take yourself one  
step closer to  
generating the job  
offer**

## **Distinguish Yourself by:**

- Treating the interview as the only opportunity you will have to speak with the employer
- Obtaining inside information about the organization through research and your networking contacts (alumni, faculty, friends, etc.)

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# *Interview Overview*

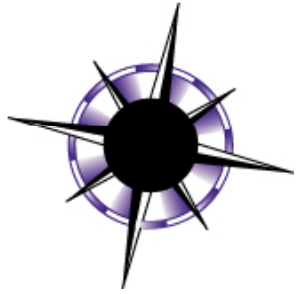
## **Characteristics of Strong Candidates:**

- Relevant Work Experience
- Analytical Skills
- Technical Skills
- Interpersonal Skills
- Communication Skills
- Academics
- Motivation
- Teamwork
- Leadership

## **Employers want people who:**

- Look like they can handle the job
- Appear to be dependable workers
- Convince them they have enough job-related skills/training to handle the job or can learn quickly

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# *Interview Overview*

**Research indicates that first impressions are critical to the ultimate decision to hire**

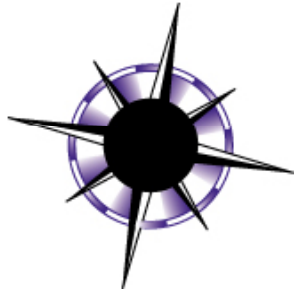
**Attitude is everything!**

- Demonstrate a positive attitude
  - Show excellence
- Strive to do your best

## **Interview Techniques**

- Basic Format
- Structured v. Unstructured
- Behavior-Based Interviews
- Telephone Interviews
- On-Site Interviews

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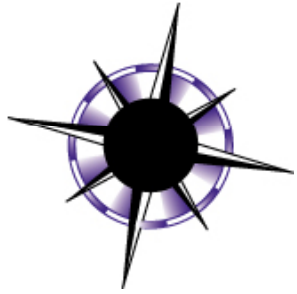
# *Interviewing Techniques*

**Put your best foot forward**

## **The Basic Format**

- Introductory Stage
- Review of your background, interests, and abilities
- Discussion of employer's potential opportunities and how you fit or match
- Conclusion- points are clarified and questions are asked/answered (i.e., a two-way exchange)

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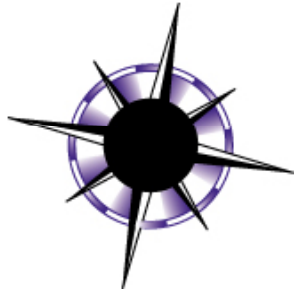
# *Interviewing Techniques*

**Some interviewers  
mix the styles**

## **Structured v. Unstructured**

- **Structured-** Interviewer asks a prescribed set of questions, seeking relatively brief answers
- **Unstructured-** Interviewer asks more open-ended questions to prod the candidate to give longer responses and reveal as much as possible

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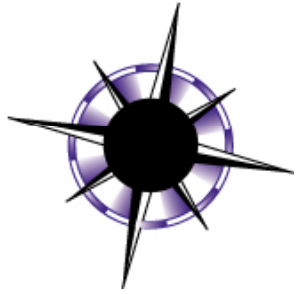
# *Interviewing Techniques*

**Looking for common  
skill sets  
(communication,  
leadership, problem  
solving, etc...)**

## **Behavioral Interviews**

- Built on the belief that past performance is the best predictor of future success
- Rather than ask how you *would* perform, you are asked how you *did* perform- “Tell me about a time when...” or “Give me an example of...”

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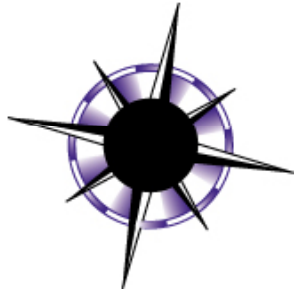
# *Interviewing Techniques*

## **Trial Run for the face-to-face interview**

### **Telephone Interviews**

- Take a surprise call in stride
- Beware of over-familiarity
- Allow the company representative to do most of the talking
- Speak directly into the telephone
- Keep your answers brief, but factual
- Take notes
- Have a few work-related questions prepared
- Don't hesitate to ask for clarification
- Stand up, look into a mirror, and have materials available for you to access

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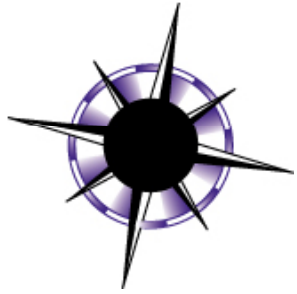
# *Interviewing Techniques*

**Remember: The hiring decision is based not just on your qualifications, but the *employer's total impression of you***

## **On-Site Interviews**

- How to prepare
- What to bring
- Be able to respond to questions, ask your own questions and observe
- Don't forget your table manners
- Salary discussion (know your worth!)
- Take notes/record your impressions

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# Preparing for the Interview

## ♂ Men ♂

Conservative 2 piece suit, white dress shirt, simple silk tie

## ♀ Women ♀

Conservative 2 piece suit, white or pastel dress shirt

### Dressing for the Successful Interview:

- Dress to suit your interviewer and the position for which you are interviewing
- Dress one level above the position you are interviewing for
- Dress conservatively, and wear fresh, neat, and pressed clothing
- Avoid excessive make-up, jewelry, and perfume/cologne

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# *Preparing for the Interview*

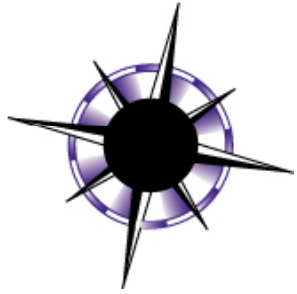
## **What to pay attention to when researching an employer:**

- Structure of the organization
- Products that are produced
- Services that are provided
- Financial status of the organization
  - The organization's competitors
  - The reputation of the organization
- Recent accomplishments/changes

## **Where You Can Acquire Information on the Employer:**

- Employer literature/company-controlled materials
- Internet Resources
- Company information/resources available at CES
- Informational interviews

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# Preparing for the Interview

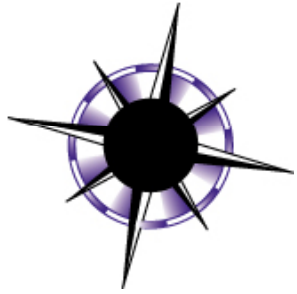
## Practice

Utilize resources  
such as Mock  
Interviews

### Types of Skills to Explain

- **Technical/Professional-** skills related to performing within a job, task or class, acquired by reading, training or education
- **Functional-** skills related to people, information or things that are transferable from one field or occupation to another
- **Personal-** skills that represent your style of working- often called personal traits or self-management skills

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# *Preparing for the Interview*

## **Top key points in Nonverbal Communication**

- Eye Contact: single most important type
- Facial Expressions: smile often, but naturally
- Posture: stand tall, sit tall, be tall
- Gestures: limit the amount used
- Space: be aware of your personal space and that of the interviewer
- Body language: should be open and confident
- Avoid nervous actions and defensiveness

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# Preparing for the Interview

## Use P.A.R. Statements by describing:

- the problem or challenge undertaken
- the actions taken in the situation
- the result of the experience

## How to Prepare for a Behavioral Interview

- Review your resume line-by-line. Your goal is to recall situations that show favorable behaviors or action and prepare short descriptions for each situation
- Use appropriate examples to back-up your statements



# Questions Asked During the Interview

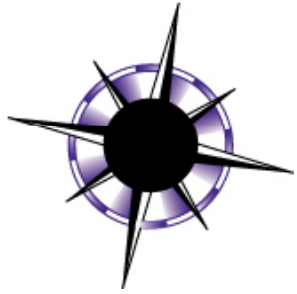
**See CES Interview  
Guide for additional  
example questions**

## Sample Questions

*Tell me about a time when you:*

- Worked effectively under pressure
- Handled a difficult situation with a co-worker
- Had to make an important decision with limited facts
- Were forced to make an unpopular decision

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# Questions Asked During the Interview

## Illegal/Improper Questions

- What is considered to be illegal/improper?
- What should you do if you are asked an illegal/improper questions?

## Examples of Illegal/Improper Questions

- National Origin
- Religion
- Marital Status
- Race
- Disabilities
- Citizenship

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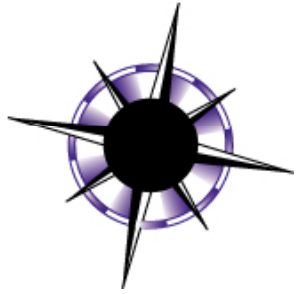
# Questions Asked During the Interview

## Prepare for the Problem Question

- Don't dwell on the negatives
  - Balance negatives with positives

## Examples

- What are your weaknesses?
- You have a low GPA. Why?
- I don't see any related work experience here. Why?
- Why haven't you been involved in extracurricular activities?
- What would you like to be doing five years from now?
- What would your references say about you?



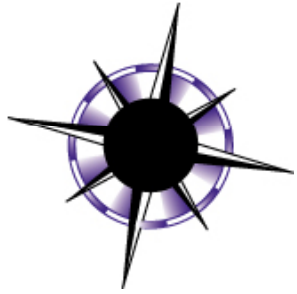
# Questions Asked During the Interview

Remember,  
*preparedness* is  
key!

## A Few Examples of Questions Commonly Asked by Employer

- Tell me about yourself.
- Why did you choose your particular college major?
- What personal characteristics do you think are necessary for success in this field?
- Why are you interested in my organization?

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# Questions Asked During the Interview

**Resist the temptation  
to discuss salary**

## **Examples of Questions Commonly Asked by Candidate**

- What would my immediate responsibilities be if I am hired?
- What qualifications are most important to a person's advancement within your company?
- What do you consider to be the biggest challenge(s) I would face if I am hired?

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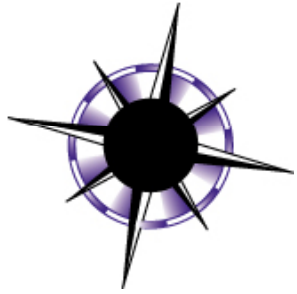
# *After The Interview*

**Thank you letters  
should be sent within  
*24 hours* of the  
interview if possible**

## **After the Interview**

- Call and thank them that day
- Write follow-up/thank you letters immediately
  - If possible hand deliver or email the thank you letter the next day
- When to call employers
- Ask for the job

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# *Winning Interviews*

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**THANK YOU!**



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