



UT CAREER SERVICES

2011-2012 INTERVIEWING GUIDE



Career Services

OFFICE OF STUDENT LIFE

865-974-5435

career.utk.edu

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Before the Interview

Know Yourself-Skills, Accomplishments, Goals

This is the first step you need to take in preparation for the interview process. Just as successful salespeople must know everything about the product they are selling, you must know your qualifications and be able to “sell” them to an interviewer. It is important to know what you have to offer. What are your skills, accomplishments and goals?

Interviews are not the time to simply to tell what you've done, but to “sell” your skills and give examples of your accomplishments.

Example: If an interviewer asked you...

Question: Tell me about a recent accomplishment that has given you the most satisfaction.

Answer: I coordinated an event that raised over \$5000 dollars for XYZ Charity.

TO REALLY SELL YOUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS YOU COULD ANSWER: As the volunteer coordinator of my student organization I set a goal to raise the most money to date for XYZ Charity. I decided we should host a benefit concert and contacted several local bands, secured a venue, coordinated marketing and promotion, and ticket sales. I supervised a group of 20 volunteers and delegated various duties to each person. The concert went smoothly and I am happy to say that we raised over \$5000 this year, which was double the amount raised a year ago.

This answer not only shows the student accomplished the goal that was set, but it also provides an excellent demonstration of skills. The student really “sold” himself or herself by providing more detail in the steps that were taken to make the event a success.

On the next page you will find the Self-Assessment for Interviewing. This assessment can help you to identify your personal qualities and positive job performance traits. By completing the assessment you will create a list of your skills and accomplishments that you can refer to before upcoming interviews.



Interview Quick Tip

Usually one of the first questions you will encounter in a job interview is “Tell me about yourself.” By making a list of your skills and accomplishment that match the employer's requirements, this will help you answer this question with ease and start the interview off on the right note. The closer your skills and traits are to the job description, the better chance you have of landing the job.

Self-Assessment

An important part of knowing yourself is having an accurate assessment of your personal qualities and skills. Identifying these before your interview is important, you will want to use some of these traits to “sell” yourself in the interview. Using the scale below, rate your perception of your competence in each personal quality and skill.

4	3	2	1	0
Excellent	Good	Average	Weak	Poor

Personal Qualities

<input type="checkbox"/> Enthusiastic/Energetic <input type="checkbox"/> Goal Oriented <input type="checkbox"/> Responsible/Reliable <input type="checkbox"/> Effective Team Member <input type="checkbox"/> Persevering	<input type="checkbox"/> Resourceful <input type="checkbox"/> Competitive <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrated Initiative <input type="checkbox"/> Proven Work Ethic <input type="checkbox"/> Quality Oriented
--	---

Skills

<input type="checkbox"/> Analyze <input type="checkbox"/> Teach/Train <input type="checkbox"/> Implement <input type="checkbox"/> Communicate Effectively	<input type="checkbox"/> Create/Develop <input type="checkbox"/> Motivate <input type="checkbox"/> Administer/Manage <input type="checkbox"/> Sell/Promote
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NOTE: Think of examples for each rating of 3 or 4. You can use these examples during your interview.

WHAT IS YOUR TOTAL SCORE? Below is a guide to help you evaluate how you scored. There are a total of 72 possible points.

SCORE	EVALUATION
58-72	This score indicates that you have acquired most of the traits that employers desire. If you have good evidence of these abilities you have the potential to do very well in job interviews.
45-57	You are a strong candidate. You have many of the necessary skills to succeed in job interviews. You need to build on these strengths and work on the weaker categories.
32-44	There are two ways to look at this score. Either you are average at many things or you are good at some and weak at others. If you are average at many things, you need to identify ways to improve in some of these areas. If you are good at some and weak at others you need to build on the good points and work on some of the weaker ones.
21-31	There is definite need for improvement here. These are traits that most employers value and you have ranked yourself weak on many of them. You may want to discuss your self-assessment with one of the Career Services staff.
20 or lower	You should make an appointment with a career advisor.

Research The Company - Learn as much as you can beforehand!

The Verdict Is In: Interview Success Is In The Research!

Many times Career Services is asked how a student can separate themselves from the rest of the crowd when trying to impress an on-campus interviewer. Should students wear crisp new business suits? Should they spend top dollar on a fresh hairstyle or cut? Maybe a video practice interview to help cut down on being nervous would help. Simply put, all of these things will help in impressing employers. But the best way for students to stand out is to conduct serious research on the company they are interviewing with. Here in UT Career Services we have a long standing tradition of surveying on-campus recruiters to gauge how well students do while being interviewed for position openings. Like clockwork each year employers rate UT students low in two areas 1) **“Knowledge of how to sell themselves to the employer”** and 2) **“Students had researched our organization”** (see Table 1).

Table 1

(Likert 1-5)

Information provided by career services prior to my visit (e.g. recruiter information, schedule information) was adequate, helpful, and received in a timely manner.	4.54
The physical facilities were comfortable, clean and conducive to effective interviewing	4.44
Career Services was well organized. Procedures related to recruitment were efficient	4.58
Career Services staff was available, cooperative and interested in being of help.	4.75
The resumes were of good quality. (They were professional in appearance and presented needed information.)	4.44
Students were knowledgeable of how to sell themselves in an interview.	3.92
Student had researched our organization before the interview	3.66
Generally (name of school) compares favorably to most other institutions as a recruitment site.	4.28

UT Career Services decided that we needed to offer students more information on what employers expected them to know during that all important first interview. Our goal is to have all items in Table 1 rate above the 4.0 line.

To assist us with this project we teamed with Clemson University to survey employer expectations concerning first interview preparation research. The survey asked employers to rate 17 “points of knowledge” a student could learn about their company in preparation for a first interview. Employers were asked to respond using the following key:

- 5 = The student must know this about our company at the first interview. Not knowing this would eliminate them from consideration.
- 3 = It would be an advantage if the student knew this about our organization at the first interview, but not knowing it wouldn't eliminate them from consideration
- 1 = It is not important for the student to know this about our organization at the first interview

Table #2 shows the results for both UT and Clemson. The most obvious finding was that across both schools students would be advised to know the primary product or service and its history within the organization. This was ranked number one across both institutions. Interestingly after #1, although not in exactly the same rank order both schools had the same top five!

Table 2

What Students Need to Know About Companies for Their First Interview	Average Response			
	UT	#	Clem	#
Our organization mission statement	2.8		1.9	
Where our headquarters are located	3.3	4	3.38	3
When our company/organization was founded and by whom	2		1.79	
Who are our competitors	3.1		2.56	
Who are our typical clients and/or customers	3.3	3	3.59	2
Our corporate/organizational culture	2.2		2.06	
Specific details of the job they are interviewing for	3.2	5	3.07	4
Our CEO, President or Director's name and his/her bio	1.6		1.72	
Our primary product or service and its history	3.9	1	4.21	1
Emerging issues that may affect the industry or our organization	2.5		2.41	
Our company/organization's expectations for relocation	2.1		2.39	
Our secondary or emerging products or services and their potential	1.7		1.67	
All of the divisions that make up our organization	2.2		2.22	
Recent mergers or acquisitions that have occurred that affect our company	2.5		1.62	
Our relative standing in the marketplace	3.6	2	2.89	5
Our stock symbol/what our stock traded for recently	2		1.52	
Our rank in the Fortune 500	2.4		1.92	

At UT Career Services we have always known that students needed to conduct research on employers in order to be impressive. However, it became apparent to us that there was little written survey documentation of just exactly what employers wanted students to know about them at first interviews. This research is a first step towards providing students with a useful tool as they prepare. Note to students... given the wording of the employers response key any item on the chart ranked above 3 would be considered an advantage to the student to know this about the company. Students looking to gain an advantage during on-campus interviewing should refer to this chart as they prepare for their interviews and spend the majority of their time researching the items on the chart with a 3.0 and higher listing.

The Career Services Web Site provides links to some very prominent sites that will help with employer research. Keep in mind, however, personal contacts, news publications and other sources of information should also be used.

Where to find the information:

- Company websites
- Library
- Local newspapers (Checkout the Finance & Business sections)
- Chambers of Commerce
- Business and trade magazines

Websites that can help:

- www.lib.utk.edu (Check out the D& B Million Dollar Database)
- www.wetfeet.com (User Name & Password is: utvols)
- www.career.utk.edu (Click on Students, Job & Internship Search, then Employer Research)

Prepare Your Questions

Asking questions is a very important part of the interview process. Before the interview, compile a list of questions you plan to ask the employer. At the end of your interview, expect the interviewer to ask, “***Do you have any questions for me?***” Now it is your turn to “interview” the interviewer. It is your opportunity to show off your research and evaluate whether the position and organization has something to offer you.

The questions you ask are just as critical as the responses you give. Although you may have impressed the interviewer with your answers to the questions posed, you can leave the interviewer in doubt of your interest in and knowledge of the position and organization by not asking questions or not asking the right questions. Asking thoughtful, intelligent questions requires advance preparation on your part.

KNOW THE PURPOSE OF ASKING QUESTIONS

- Questions demonstrate interest, preparedness, critical thinking, and desire to achieve.
- Good questions reveal your knowledge about the job, show you pay attention, and establish a personal connection with the interviewer.
- Allows you to learn more about the position and the organization. Helps you determine if the position and organization are right for you.
- Gives you the opportunity to further “sell” your qualifications by gathering specific information from the interviewer. By listening to the interviewer’s responses to your well thought-out questions, you may learn more about the organization’s needs. Then you can follow-up with up how you can help them meet these needs.

KNOW HOW TO ASK QUESTIONS

- Ask questions that are of genuine interest to you and will help you make an informed decision.
- Ask questions that show the depth of your research and preparation. Do not ask questions which could easily be answered on the organization’s website or by reviewing the job description.
- Do not ask questions about salary or benefits until you are offered a job. These types of questions will make the interviewer wonder about your priorities.
- Tailor your questions to the interviewer. A human resources representative may not be able to answer specific questions about day-to-day functions of the position, whereas a manager or supervisor can discuss the technical, more detailed aspects of the job.
- Ask questions throughout the interview. You do not have to wait until the end of the interview to get clarification of something the interviewer shared. Additionally, if the discussion sparks a question you have, ask it then. You might forget the question by the end of the interview. However, try not to monopolize the conversation with questions and your own agenda. Let the interviewer lead and follow his/her cues.

KNOW WHAT QUESTIONS TO ASK

- Make a list of the information you need to learn about the position and the organization. Prepare at least 5 good questions. Prioritize your questions and write them down to take with you to the interview.
- Consider questions that concentrate on the broad view of the organization and on the specific details of the position.
- Review the list of questions on the next page. Use the questions to help you develop your own and/or adapt these questions to your own interests and concerns.

General Sample Questions

The Position

1. What are the main objectives and responsibilities of the position?
2. How does the organization expect these objectives to be met?
3. Can you tell me about the primary people with whom I would be dealing?
4. Can you describe a typical day?
5. Is this a newly created position? If not, how long did the previous person hold it? Was the previous person promoted? What is the potential for promotion?
6. How many and whom would I supervise? To whom would I report?
7. How and when would my performance be evaluated?
8. Where does this position fit into the company's organizational structure?
9. What results would you expect from my efforts and on what timetable? What improvements need to be made on how the job has been done until now?

Example: After reading your brochure about the Global Sourcing Internship Program at your company, I was excited about the possibility to develop and implement my own project. What are the chances that this would be a part of my experience and what kinds of projects have interns completed in the past?

The Company

1. What are the organization's strengths, and what major problems/challenges does it face?
2. What significant changes do you foresee in the near future for the organization?
3. What do you see ahead for the company in the next five years?
4. What do you see in the future for this industry?
5. How does the organization stand in comparison with its main competitors?
6. Can you describe the company's culture?
7. How does the company recognize diversity in its workplace and with its customers?

Example: I saw that Ernst & Young is a part of USA Freedom Corps. How do you encourage involvement at the local level?

Example: I recently read in *Business Week* that a major competitor of yours is increasing its market share in your main market. What plan does your firm have to regain its lost market share?

Education and Training

1. Are there training and development programs required/offered within the organization so that I can learn to grow professionally?
2. Is training done in a classroom/group session or is it handled on an individual basis?
3. Does the organization support further education for its employees?
4. Does advancement to upper management usually require an advanced degree?

Example: I read in your literature that your training program is comprised of three six-month rotations. Does the employee have any input into where he will go at the end of the rotation? How do you evaluate the employee's performance during the training period?

Example: I understand that Ernst & Young provides opportunity for formal learning through classroom and computer-based learning. As part of this process do you have a mentor program?

The Interviewer

1. Can you please tell me how your career has developed at the organization? Would someone entering the organization today have similar opportunities?
2. How would you describe your management style/philosophy?
3. What do you enjoy most about working for this organization?
4. If you could change one thing about your position or the organization, what would it be?
5. What qualities are you looking for in a new hire?

The Closing

1. Are there any further questions about my qualifications I can answer?
2. What is the next step in the process?
3. When do you expect to make a hiring decision for this position?

Practice, Practice, Practice

When preparing for an interview take some time to practice your interviewing skills and gain some feedback and coaching about your performance from a professional. One of the best ways to practice and prepare is to sign-up for a MOCK INTERVIEW at UT Career Services.

What is a Mock Interview?

- A Mock Interview is a videotaped segment of you interviewing with someone from the Career Services staff. The interview is designed to replicate the type of interview that you might experience with an employer.
- A review of the tape is conducted with the staff member, who will provide you with feedback on things that you did well and areas that need improvement. You should anticipate the whole process will take about 45-minutes.
- To make an appointment for a Mock Interview contact Career Services at 865-974-5435. Your interview must be made at least 24 hours in advance. If you are scheduling the interview due to a class assignment, please remember that spaces fill up quickly and you should make your appointment early in the semester.
- On the day of your Mock Interview please arrive on time and don't be a no show! If you wish to wear formal interview attire you may do so, but it is not required. You must bring a copy of your resume.
- If you must cancel your interview, please do so as soon as possible so that another student might have the opportunity to take your spot.

InterviewStream®

InterviewStream is an innovative tool that allows you to practice your interview skills from anywhere online as long as you have access to a webcam. InterviewStream creates a realistic interview experience where you are asked challenging questions and must respond. The questions are the same questions you would get in a real job interview. You can use InterviewStream whenever you want, as often as you want, to prepare for any employment opportunity. Just login to your Hire-A-VOL account and click on the InterviewStream logo. Please note that if you don't have a webcam, you can schedule a time to use the program at Career Services by calling 974-5435.

You may also practice your interview skills with friends, family members or by yourself in front of a mirror. Whatever you do, remember that with every skill you have ever learned, you had to first learn the technique and then practice. Interviewing well is a skill that takes practice!



Interview Quick Tip

Remember that working with someone on your interview skills and getting feedback on your performance in a mock interview is somewhat like working with a sports coach to improve your game. The time you spend practicing will assist you to improve in either situation.

In today's competitive job market you **MUST** be prepared and in top shape!

During the Interview

Be Prompt and Prepared

On the day of your interview you should plan to arrive 10 - 15 minutes before your scheduled interview time. Be sure to ask for accurate directions and take into consideration the distance you must travel to reach your destination, traffic you might encounter, parking, and even time zone changes if it's a long trip.

Items you should bring with you:

- Academic transcripts
- Extra copies of your resume
- List of at least 3 professional references
- Pen and paper
- All of these items should be organized in a folio

Items you should not bring:

- Backpacks or book bags
- Large handbag
- Laptop computer

Dress for Success

Appropriate attire supports your image as a person who takes the interview process seriously. Even if you are aware that employees of an organization dress casually on the job, dress up for the interview unless you are specifically told otherwise by the employer. Your clothing should be conservative and well-fitting; it should not take center stage. If you are primarily remembered by your interview attire, this is probably because you made an error in judgment!

Interview Attire for Men:

- A dark or gray suit, solid or with subtle pinstrips.
- A white or muted color shirt is best.
- There is more flexibility with ties, but conservative colors and patterns are most appropriate.
- Polished, leather lace-up shoes with dark matching socks.
- If you have facial hair, make sure it is neatly groomed.
- Be conservative with watches and other jewelry. Note that earrings might not be viewed positively.
- Avoid wearing cologne or aftershave on the day of your interview.

Interview Attire for Women:

- A neutral business suit. If wearing a skirt, it should be knee-length. Avoid high slits.
- A white or light colored blouse under the suit jacket. Do not show cleavage.
- Neutral hosiery with basic pumps, low heel. Avoid open toe shoes or sandals.
- Jewelry should be simple, with no dangly or flashy earrings.
- Light make-up is recommended, with minimal eye make-up.
- Clear or light nail polish.
- Consider not wearing perfume.
- If you carry a purse, keep it small and simple.

All clothes should be neatly ironed. Suits usually have tacking stitches to hold vents in place before purchase; make sure these are removed. You should also carefully inspect for dangling threads, lint, and missing buttons. Avoid carrying a backpack or large purse to the interview. Bring a portfolio with copies of your resume, transcript, a notepad, pen, and a list of questions for the employer.

A warning: If you smoke, avoid doing so in your interview outfit. Cigarette odors cling to your clothes for several hours and smoking to most employers is an undesirable habit.

If you still have questions or need more ideas, observe well-dressed men and women in your industry on the job, at career fairs, information sessions, etc.

Dressing conservatively is always your best bet. You want to be remembered for your skills, not your clothing!

FIRST IMPRESSIONS COUNT

When meeting someone for the first time, people often form opinions about others during the first 30 seconds or less! Your image and appearance are important factors that contribute to that first impression. When interviewing for a professional position most interviewers expect you to wear business clothing. A conservative well-tailored suit, shoes and accessories are considered appropriate business attire for an interview.

When meeting the person you are interviewing with for the first time you should:

- Smile and look alert! Nothing leaves a better first impression and communicates enthusiasm.
- Give a firm hand shake
- Introduce yourself with confidence

Example: "Hello, Mr. Jones, I'm Sue Smith. It's very nice to meet you."

Question and Answer - Interview Styles and Strategies

The interview is an opportunity for an employer to gain more information about you through a question and answer exchange. Some interviewing styles may include behavioral interview questions, open-ended questions, problem and puzzle questions and the case interview process.

Behavioral Interview

During the behavioral interview the interviewer asks questions that are aimed at getting the applicant to provide specific examples of how he or she has developed the required skill set for the job. Interviewers rely on this method to evaluate the candidate's experiences and behaviors and use them as indicators of the applicant's potential for success.

What employers are looking for :

- **Work Specific Skills** – Examples might include computer programming, CAD or
- **Functional or Transferable Skills** – Skills that are transferable from one job to another, such as good communication or math skills.
- **Adaptive or Self-Management Skills** – Interviewers want to know... Are you dependable, a team player, a self-directed worker, a problem solver, a decision maker?

To provide the interviewer with the information needed, apply the technique as outlined below:

SITUATION OR TASK Describe the situation that you were in or the task that you needed to accomplish. You must describe a specific event or situation, not a generalized description of what you have done in the past. Be sure to give enough detail for the interviewer to understand. This situation can be from a previous job, from a volunteer experience, or any relevant event.

ACTION YOU TOOK Describe the action you took and be sure to keep the focus on you. Even if you are discussing a group project or effort, describe what you did – not the efforts of the team. Don't tell what you might do, tell what you did.

RESULT YOU ACHIEVED What happened? How did the event end? What did you accomplish? What did you learn? Wherever you can, quantify your results.

EXAMPLE:

Situation (S): Advertising revenue was falling off for my college newspaper, *The Beacon*, and large numbers of long-term advertisers were not renewing contracts.

Action (A): I designed a new promotional packet to go with the rate sheet and compared the benefits of *The Beacon* circulation with other ad media in the area. I also set up a special training session for the account executives with a School of Business Administration professor who discussed competitive selling strategies.

Result (R): We signed contracts with 15 former advertisers for daily ads and five for special supplements. We increased our new advertisers by 20 percent over the same period last year.



Interview Quick Tip

In behavioral interviews make sure you provide specific examples of situations. You will want to provide proof-by-example descriptions of your capabilities.

Example Behavioral Interview Questions

1. Describe a situation in which you were able to use persuasion to successfully convince someone to see things your way.
2. Describe a time when you were faced with a stressful situation that demonstrated your coping skills.
3. Give me a specific example of a time when you used good judgment and logic in solving a problem.
4. Give me an example of a time when you set a goal and were able to meet or achieve it.
5. Tell me about a time when you had to use your presentation skills to influence someone's opinion.
6. Give me a specific example of a time when you had to conform to a policy with which you did not agree.
7. Please discuss an important written document you were required to complete.
8. Tell me about a time when you had to go above and beyond the call of duty in order to get a job done.
9. Tell me about a time when you had too many things to do and you were required to prioritize your tasks.
10. Give me an example of a time when you had to make a split second decision.
11. What is a typical way of dealing with conflict? Give me an example.
12. Tell me about a time you were able to successfully deal with another person even when that individual may not have personally liked you (or vice versa).
13. Tell me about a difficult decision you've made in the last year.
14. Give me an example of a time when you tried to accomplish something and failed.
15. Give me an example of when you showed initiative and took the lead.
16. Tell me about a recent situation in which you had to deal with a very upset customer or co-worker (or group member).
17. Give me an example of a time when you motivated others.
18. Tell me about a time when you delegated a project effectively.
19. Give me an example of a time when you missed an obvious solution to a problem.
20. Describe a time when you anticipated potential problems and developed preventative measures.
21. Tell me about a time when you were forced to make an unpopular decision.
22. Describe a time when you set your sights too high (or too low).

Open-ended Questions

When beginning an interview a typical first question might be an open-ended question such as "Tell me about yourself". You should be prepared to tell an interviewer about yourself on a professional/career level.

- Think about what you have done that has prepared you for the job. Do not discuss personal issues such as age, children, family, or religious affiliation.
- Be concise with your answer. Prepare a brief description of your education and previous experiences that will highlight how you would be a good match for the job.
- Accentuate the positive.

Commonly Asked Questions

1. Tell me about yourself.
2. What are your long range and short-range goals and objectives, when and why, did you establish these goals and how are you preparing yourself to achieve them?
3. Why did you choose this major? this career?
4. How would you describe your ideal job?
5. Describe a situation in which you were successful.
6. What do you think it takes to be successful in this career? in a company like ours?
7. Tell me about some of your recent goals and what you did to achieve them.
8. Are you a team player?
9. What motivates you?
10. Why should I hire you?
11. How would you describe yourself?
12. How do you think a friend or professor who knows you well would describe you?
13. What do you see yourself doing five years from now?
14. Where do you want to be ten years from now?
15. Do you handle conflict well?
16. How do you determine or evaluate success?
17. What major problem have you had to deal with recently
18. In what ways do you think you can make a contribution to our company?
19. Do you handle pressure well?
20. How much training do you think you'll need to become a productive employee?
21. What two or three accomplishments have given you the most satisfaction? Why?
22. Describe your most rewarding college experience.
23. What qualities do you feel a successful manager should have?
24. What is your greatest strength?
25. What is a weakness you have?
26. What led you to choose your field or major study?
27. What college subjects did you like least? Why?
28. Why did you choose to attend your college?
29. How has your education prepared you for your career?
30. Do you have plans for continued study? An advanced degree?
31. Do you think that your grades are a good indication of your academic achievement?
32. What have you learned from participation in extra-curricular activities?
33. What were your favorite classes? Why?
34. Why is your GPA not higher?
35. How familiar are you with the community that we are located in?
36. Are you willing to travel? How much?
37. Why did you decide to seek a position with this company?
38. What do you know about our company?
39. Is money important to you?
40. Are you seeking employment in a company of a certain size? Why?
41. What criteria are you using to evaluate the company for which you hope to work?
42. Do you have a geographical preference? Why?
43. Will you relocate? Does relocation bother you?
44. What kind of salary are you looking for?
45. What have you learned from your mistakes?

Problem or Puzzle Questions

A handful of employers make a practice of asking problem or puzzle questions during an interview. These are usually done to test a candidate's logical thinking skills, intelligence, ability to think on one's feet, and ability to solve problems under stress. The effectiveness of these types of interview questions is in doubt and they are rarely used.

Problem or puzzle questions usually fall under three categories:

- Those with a correct answer
- Those with no correct answer but with recommended ways to approach them
- Those that have no correct answers but tend to test the imagination

Questions with a correct answer

EXAMPLE: There are three ants at the three corners of a regular triangle. Each ant starts moving on a straight line toward another, randomly chosen corner. What is the probability that none of the ants collide? (The correct answer, by the way, is one in four. Can you figure out why?)

Questions with no correct answer but with recommended approaches

EXAMPLE: How many gas stations are there in the United States? Design a spice rack for a person who is blind. For these types of cases the interviewer is looking at how you approach the question. Does your approach provide a reasonable way to view the problem and lead to an approximate solution? On the gas station problem you might start with the population of the U.S., estimate the number of vehicles, estimate the number of vehicles served by the average gas station, and come up with an answer.

Questions with no correct answers or approaches

EXAMPLE: If you could be a breakfast cereal, what would you be? What would you like to be the epitaph on your gravestone? Responses to these questions would be difficult for a psychologist to interpret. The best advice in handling them is to try to show some imagination or positive attributes. For example, my breakfast choice would be Special K because it's part of a good nutrition team.

These types of questions are not common but, when asked by an interviewer, they can be very important to one's prospects with that employer. It is recommended that the candidate do the following.

1. Don't start talking right away. Think the question through and organize your thoughts.
2. Ask clarifying questions. Make sure you get as much information as you can.
3. Don't be frivolous or make wisecracks about the question.

Case Interviews

The case interview process is typically used by management consulting firms, law firms, counseling and social work organizations and police departments. Employers use the case interview to help them understand your thought process and to evaluate how you might handle certain situations under pressure. In a case interview, you will likely be presented with a dilemma and will be asked to analyze the situation, identify the main issues, and discuss how you would solve the problem. Interviewers ask case questions to see how well you:

- Listen
- Think and use logic behind your thoughts
- Articulate your thoughts under pressure.

Your job during the case interview is to become the “professional” in the situation presented to you by the interviewer. You must ask questions to clarify the facts, explore the bigger picture, think about all the issues, and then come to a conclusion. There is really no “right” or “wrong” answer, but you are being evaluated on the process you used to structure a competent approach and come up with an appropriate solution.

Make Your Case

1. **Listen to the question.** While the interviewer is presenting the question listen carefully. This can be one of the most important skills you will need to demonstrate.
2. **Establish that you have understood the question.** Summarize the highlights of the problem aloud.
3. **What are the objectives?** Make sure you have a clear understanding of the objectives. Verify these aloud.
4. **Ask Questions!** You will want to ask question to obtain additional information and demonstrate to the interviewer that you are capable of asking inquiring questions under pressure.
5. **Lay out the framework.** Make sure you explore the bigger picture and formulate actions that will help you implement a strategy.
6. **Manage your time.** You may only have about 15 minutes to state your answer so don't get bogged down in the details.
7. **Show your enthusiasm.** Interviewers want employees who are excited about problem solving.
8. **Summarize and bring closure to the case.** At this point you will want to review your findings and make recommendations.

Make the effort to practice extensively before participating in a case interview. For more information about case interviews visit:

www.quintcareers.com

www.wetfeet.com

www.casequestions.com



Interview Quick Tip

Don't forget to ask the interviewer for a business card before you leave the interview. You will need this information when you follow-up after the interview.

After The Interview

Follow-up

Send a thank you note as soon as possible after your interview. A hand written letter on appropriate stationary or email is acceptable. The following is a good example of a thank you letter:

Michael Smith
2521 Kingston Pike
Knoxville, TN 37919
(865) 555-5555

October 22, 2011

Ms. Sara Jordan, Director
Campus Recruiting
Acme Corporation
1000 Peachtree Road Atlanta, GA 30340

Dear Ms. Jordan:

I want to thank you for the opportunity to interview with Acme Corporation for the District Sales Representative position. I enjoyed meeting you and learning more about the position.

I would like to stress my interest in the position and my enthusiasm for working with Acme Corporation. I believe my education and internship experience in the Marketing and Sales industry fits ideally with the job requirements outlined.

I feel that I could make a significant contribution to your company. Thank you again for your time and consideration. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (865) 974-5555 or msmith@utk.edu. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

Michael Smith

Evaluation

After the interview, take some time to evaluate. Ask yourself these questions:

- Is this the job for me?
- Is this a good fit for both parties involved?
- Was I prepared for this interview?
- Would I do anything differently next time?

If the answer is yes to most of these questions then pat yourself on the back. You prepared and hopefully “Aced Your Interview”.

The Telephone Interview

The telephone interview can be an excellent way for an employer to do initial screening of applicants or conduct a full interview. The telephone interview enables the interviewer to evaluate your communication skills, knowledge and interest of a specific position. This type of interview can present a challenge if you are not ready. Being organized and well prepared is the key to success for this type of interview. In most cases you will be initially contacted to schedule a time for the telephone interview. This allows you time for research and preparation.

Preparation

Because we often use the telephone for chatting to friends, it is important to restructure your attitude and adopt a professional manner when answering or using the phone during the job search process. It is suggested that you answer the phone in a pleasant or professional manner and not say "City Zoo, Mr. Lion speaking." This won't impress a potential employer. Also, talk with roommates or others who may answer your phone about this concern as their behavior reflects on you.

Posture while on the telephone can affect your voice. Slouching in a chair or laying on the bed or floor can cause your voice to be more casual and hard to understand. Sit as you would in an actual interview or at a desk with your notes in front of you.

Take the call in the privacy of a room, if possible. If the telephone is in a noisy location, ask the interviewer to wait a moment, then quickly move to a quieter location, turn off music, ask roommates to be quiet, etc. You want to be able to totally focus on the telephone interview and not be distracted. If you have call waiting and you receive a call during the interview, do not stop to take the other call. If the beeping continues, apologize to the interviewer and ask them to continue. Avoid chewing gum, eating, drinking or smoking while on the telephone interview. These actions are rude during an interview and the sounds are actually amplified on the telephone. Consider using a land line as it will typically give you a better connection.

Energy and enthusiasm need to come across in your voice. Occasionally smile as you talk as this will come across in your voice. Talk slowly and clearly during the telephone interview. Avoid using a speakerphone for an interview. NOTE: consider doing a mock telephone interview with a friend and taping the session to identify areas where improvement can be made.

Materials - There are several things you will want to have handy for telephone interviews:

- A copy of your resume/list of references
- Paper/pens/pencils for taking notes
- A copy of your transcript
- Any correspondence you have had with the employer including company literature
- Notes you have on the organization
- Your personal calendar and course schedule for the semester in case you need to schedule a company visit or another interview

Ending on a positive note - At the end of the telephone call, the interviewer will usually explain what you can expect to happen next. Before the telephone interview is ended, be sure you have the interviewer's name, title, company and telephone number.

After the telephone interview it would be appropriate to send a brief thank you note. Refer to the telephone interview, refer to one or two items that were discussed and reiterate your interest in the position.

The Video Interview

While telephone interviews are still common in the hiring process, video interviews are gaining popularity. Video interviews are a simple, cost and time effective way of interviewing over long distances. Compared to a phone interview, however, there are a few extra things to keep in mind.

Well Before the Interview:

- Download and register on the program you will be using. (Very often this will be Skype or one of a few others.)
- Use an appropriate username. Just like an email address, it should be something professional.
- Test and check the hardware you will be using. Do your webcam and microphone work?
- Consider your background. This means no inappropriate or distracting items in view of the camera. Ask roommates or others to stay out of the room on interview day. Secure pets in another room.
- Check room lighting to make sure you're easily visible in the camera. Look for dark shadows or excessive brightness.
- Practice using the program (with appropriate background, etc) with a friend to make sure everything is ready.
- If you're interviewing on a program like HireVue, you may not actually be talking to a person. HireVue uses text questions which you read and then are given an allotted time to respond. Know the time limit (usually three minutes) and practice keeping your answers to that length.
- Practice using InterviewStream at UT Career Services or through Hire-A-Vol.

On Interview Day:

- Choose professional attire that will show up well on camera. Dark, subdued colors do better than light and bright ones
- Take just as much care for your appearance as you would for an in person interview. New technology allows for life-like video quality, so attention to detail is important.
- Close all nonessential programs and processes to make the most of your computer's speed.
- Keep a notepad handy so you can easily write notes during the interview.

During the Interview:

- Use your notes when need be, but do not rely on them more than you would in a live interview.
- Talk and look into the camera (instead of the computer screen). Especially while answering questions. Do not look around your room or away from the camera.
- Do not do anything else on the computer while interviewing. If you're doing something else on your computer, it will be obvious to the employer.
- Make sure to use the picture-in-picture so you can see how you will look to the interviewer.

The Company Visit

Introduction

Most companies which recruit on college campuses include a company visit as a major part of the hiring process. The company visit is generally a full day of interviewing and related activities, at the company site. After the company visit is completed and an evaluation conducted, an offer may be made.

The company visit is given many names. It can also be referred to as a plant trip, second interview, site visit, or office visit.

Just as the company visit has many names, it also has a variety of faces. There is no way to describe every aspect of what you can expect in a company visit because employers vary greatly in how they arrange them. The length of the trip, number of people involved, levels of people interviewed, types of tests conducted, and degree of informality can differ from one company to the next.

As a result, this section focuses upon information that is fairly consistent for most companies. We have tried to present information that will help you understand the nature of the company visit, how to prepare for it, and how to conduct yourself most effectively during the visit. We hope you find the information helpful.

The Purpose of the Company Visit

The company visit serves two primary purposes:

1. Allows the company to get a more in-depth assessment of the candidate prior to making a job offer.

The company visit is time-consuming and expensive for employers, so they screen a large number of applicants down to a few who are invited to visit. The company visit is generally the last step in the selection process before an offer is made.

The company is confident that the candidate who is invited to visit for a day has the technical skills and intelligence to do the job. The company visit becomes their opportunity to confirm that there is a good match between the candidate's goals and the career opportunity. They also attempt to see that there is good "chemistry" between the candidate and the company's culture.

2. Allows the candidate an opportunity to see the company and some of its people first hand in order to make a wiser decision if an offer is made.

The company visit provides the candidate with an opportunity to learn more about the position, the long-term career opportunities, the company's employees, the company itself, and the local community. The company will usually be doing as much "selling" as evaluating because this is the information the candidate will use in deciding whether to accept or decline an offer. The candidate, like the company, is trying to determine whether or not there is a good fit between the two.

Preparing for the Visit

Considering the importance and purpose of the company visit, it is imperative that the candidate prepare for the day. Preparation for the company visit should not be taken lightly since the visit is the final step for most companies in deciding whether to make a job offer.

Candidates should attempt to learn as much about the company as possible. Items of preparation should include:

- Notes taken after the initial campus interview
- Company website
- Annual report
- Promotional material on the company
- Industry and business publications containing information about the company
- Talking with former students who are now employed by the company
- Talking with current employees in the line of work for which one is interviewing
- Talking to people who have had direct dealings with the company or its products

Candidates should prepare so that they can present themselves as being knowledgeable about the company, its products or services, and the career opportunity being discussed. The better prepared the candidate, the more probable it is that the company will recognize enthusiasm, drive, motivation, maturity, and thoroughness as assets possessed by the candidate.

The candidate should use the information obtained to develop insightful questions designed to show interest in the company and the position. These questions should demonstrate the candidate's thorough preparation for the visit, but should also provide the types of information that will support an informed decision to accept or decline an offer. In order for the candidate to prepare these insightful questions they should investigate the following company characteristics:

- Mission and long-range goals
- Business philosophy and management style
- Community in which the company is located

The questions should be well positioned during the interview process. Recent hires of the company might be asked about training, promotion, performance evaluation and community life. More experienced interviewers can be asked about corporate culture, long-term plans, company history and other topics where experience enhances the value of a response. Good questions will cover a wide range of topics including:

- Corporate goals and direction
- Career enhancement
- Market growth opportunities
- Company's competitive environment
- Research & development
- Evaluation system
- Career paths of recent hires
- Commitment to training
- Community lifestyle

Questions such as: "So what do you all do?" or "What are the benefits?" do not sit well with most interviewers. These questions show shallowness and a lack of concern for the key criteria which are being judged during the visit. The first type of questions begs information that should have already been discovered, and the second reflects an over-emphasis on matters that will be explained in good time.

Candidates frequently overlook personal preparation. While knowledge, good insightful questions and a sharp business outlook will go a long way toward succeeding in the company visit, a lack of personal preparation can detract from a candidate's positive image.

What factors constitute good personal preparation? They include:

- Leaving personal problems at home
- Taking appropriate business dress (for the type company involved)
- Having a well-groomed appearance (hair, face, skin, nails, etc.)

These are some areas of personal preparation often overlooked by the candidate, yet extremely important. Candidates often put themselves at a disadvantage by packing carelessly, neglecting to take grooming aids, leaving for the visit with pressures from school deadlines, etc. These all can contribute to a poor company visit.

Arranging the Trip

An invitation to a company visit will usually come from a contact person at the company. This person becomes the candidate's source of information about all aspects of the trip. Any questions prior to the trip can be addressed to the contact person.

The majority of company visits are one full day in length. This generally necessitates an overnight stay in the city where the company is located. Travel will be either by flying or driving, depending upon the candidate's preference and distance away. Usually trips of more than 200 miles will justify flight.

In cases where the candidate is flying in, it is a good idea to use a travel agent to handle the flight arrangements. The candidate need only give the agent desired travel dates and times. The agent will search for the best times, report to the candidate, then book the flight. This is done at no extra cost to the consumer.

Some companies are prepared to schedule all the arrangements for the company visit. They will reserve and pre-pay the hotel room and schedule and pre-pay the flights, but might offer these conveniences only when requested by the candidate. If the company is not pre-paying the flight, the candidate should have a method of payment for the travel agent.

The candidate should confirm his hotel reservations with the contact person and make sure he knows up front how payment will be handled. Arrangements for ground transportation should be discussed with the contact person so the candidate is prepared in advance to handle this part of the trip.

After receiving confirmation of his travel arrangements, the candidate should call or send a note to his contact in the company, confirming reservations and travel plans. It is important that the candidate contact the company regarding travel plans to avoid any last minute mix-ups or confusion.

Candidates who are married sometimes request that their spouse accompany them on the visit. Some employers may include spouses on the visit, although many others will offer a later visit for the spouse, after an offer has been made. The candidate can ask about the spouse also taking the trip, but should expect the company to offer this trip later, if at all.

If a spouse is accompanying the candidate on the visit, any arrangements for the spouse need to be discussed with the company contact person. These include transportation, activities during the day, hotel reservations, etc.

The candidate should get all directions ahead of time. If anything at all is unclear (dates, times, locations) he should call the company contact person prior to departure to clear things up. The candidate should leave knowing how to get from airport to hotel to interview site, and how he will get to the first meeting of the day.

Arrival

It is usually a good idea for the candidate to plan to arrive in the city the night before the company visit. The wise candidate tries to avoid very late flights or the last flight into the city. This will help avoid the problems that can arise from airline delays, cancellations or related difficulties.

Once in town, the candidate goes to the hotel and checks in. Many hotels have courtesy vans from the airport. In other cases, the candidate may take a taxi. In any case, receipts for ground transportation expenditures should be kept for later reimbursement.

When checking into the hotel the candidate should ask for any messages (the company may have left information for her) and verify any pre-payment agreement. Most hotels will ask to imprint a credit card for any charges not covered by the company.

Some items the candidate should be aware of include the following:

- Schedule a morning wake up call with the front desk allowing plenty of time to get cleaned and dressed and set the alarm on your cell phone.
- If the initial room is unsatisfactory for any reason, particularly a noisy location, don't hesitate to ask the hotel to change it.
- Local calls often are not free. They often cost anywhere from 50 cents to over \$1.00 per call.
- Do not bill any long distance calls to the room. Call collect, use a credit card or your personal cell phone.
- Review the bill upon checkout to ensure its accuracy.

Evening Before

Many companies arrange for an employee to meet the candidate for dinner on the evening of arrival. The dinner is designed as an opportunity for the candidate to relax and meet an employee while getting a casual flavor for the next day's schedule, the company, the city and any other pertinent topics.

The dinner companion might be a line manager, the candidate's key contact, a recent hire at the company, or an alum of the candidate's school. The degree of informality and nature of conversation at dinner can vary but they are usually quite relaxed. Any dinner companion can serve as an evaluator so the candidate should always reflect maturity and professionalism.

To a degree, the candidate is being interviewed during this dinner. The dinner host may be evaluating the candidate's:

- Social graces
- Manner of speech
- Ability to converse
- Ability to mix business/pleasure
- Maturity

The candidate is advised to dress appropriately for a social dinner. She should eat moderately, avoid alcoholic beverages (beyond a glass of wine, a beer, or a single drink) ask good, penetrating questions revolving around the particular topic of discussion, and relax. The dinner is generally very social in nature and the candidate should be herself, although it should be her professional self that comes through.

The candidate should leave a wake-up call for morning, use a travel alarm clock or cell phone, and have a parent or friend call in the morning to make sure she wakes up with plenty of time to prepare. No mistake is worse than tardiness.

The candidate should check out of the hotel upon leaving for the company site. If this is forgotten it can result in the company's being charged for an extra night. She should take any baggage with her, as it may be out of the way to return to the hotel at the end of the day.

Interview Day

The day of the interview is generally a very busy one. It is impossible to write exactly what to expect because different companies set up different types of schedules.

Many companies will schedule three to five hour-long interviews with various levels of management in a one-on-one setting. These interviews may, however, be shorter or longer, fewer or more numerous.

Some employers schedule group interviews with four to twelve candidates visiting at one time. The candidates engage in some group sessions, and at other times are involved in one-on-one interviews. The group visit is more difficult for the company to arrange but allows them the opportunity to see each candidate among his peers. It permits the candidate a chance to see some of those who might be a part of his training group.

Most employers are well prepared for company visits by candidates. Many companies conduct formal interview training for their managers and these companies usually provide very good interview sessions with candidates.

Interviewers have scanned the resumes of their visitors and will be familiar with the backgrounds of the candidates. The interviewers attempt to assess the motivation and drive of the candidates - to see what makes them strive for success. Each interviewer knows what he is looking for in a candidate and will probe for strengths and weaknesses.

Candidates may be asked the same questions by three or four different people during the day, yet must give as good an answer to the fourth as to the first. This can be tiring, but may indicate an area of particular concern to the company.

Some employers, however, may not be well prepared. Candidates are sometimes called upon to carry the interview with their questions and observations.

In the one-on-one setting, candidates will speak with department managers and first line supervisors of the area in which the position is available. Additionally, the candidates may meet with a second or third level manager who has had experience in many different areas of the company. Finally, the vice president of human resources or a director level manager may meet with the candidate to round out her exposure to the company's personnel.

If the candidate is interviewing at a plant-trip location it is probable that an employment manager or plant manager will conduct a tour of the plant at some time during the day. While this is usually a relaxed tour, the candidate should be aware that she is still being interviewed, even in this setting.

Companies will usually try to structure the itineraries to meet the candidate's schedule, and many will design the day so as to provide a friendly and relaxed atmosphere for the candidate. It is important to the company that the candidate feel as comfortable as possible about the visit so that she may accurately assess her feelings about the job, company, location, etc. A host/guest relationship is fostered to afford the optimal opportunity for proper selection techniques on the part of both the company and the candidate. Remember the company is selling itself to the candidate as the reverse is taking place.

Anyone the candidate meets for even a few minutes is a potential evaluator. Considering this, the candidate must remain sharp and confident at all times. At no time can the successful candidate reflect a lack of professionalism and expect a positive response.

Departure

The last meeting of the day will often be with the contact person or personnel manager. This session is to answer any final candidate questions, explain follow-up procedures, discuss reimbursement and take care of any similar details.

After the visit the candidate will be directed back to the airport for the flight home. Most companies will structure the day to allow her to depart the facility between 3:00 to 5:00 p.m.

Candidates should be sure that all their questions have been answered prior to leaving. They need to understand both their and the company's responsibility regarding follow-up. These should be discussed during the last session of the day.

Interview Insights

As mentioned earlier, most day long company visits are packed with interviews. Under the pressure of numerous back-to-back interviews it is easy for the candidate to grow weary and ignore some points which are important to his survival in the process.

The candidate will be speaking with a variety of managers at differing levels of the corporate hierarchy. It is important that the candidate be himself, maintain a positive attitude, and relax as much as possible.

The wise candidate takes the opportunity to ask a lot of questions and to get a feel for the company's operating environment. He relishes the opportunity to speak with as many workers as possible at the company location. This gives the candidate a better understanding of the people and environment in which he might eventually be employed. Candidates sometimes obtain valuable information in unexpected settings.

- Waiting for an interviewer to come pick him up at a reception area
- In the company cafeteria during lunch
- Speaking with a secretary in a manager's office

Most interview questions are geared toward assessment of candidates' communication skills, teamwork, leadership capabilities, interpersonal skills and desires as they relate to the position open and to long-range career goals.

It is very important for candidates to understand that they are being probed during the company visit. Candidates must take a long range view when preparing their responses and assessing their qualifications prior to a visit.

In some instances, companies will assign each interviewer a specific quality or skill to probe during the interview. One interviewer will probe for leadership ability, another for analytical ability, still another for communication skills and so on. After the process is complete, all the interviewers will meet to discuss the candidate and a decision will be reached.

In other companies, each interviewer will determine independently the nature of her questions. This approach might appear less coordinated to the candidate. Again, the interviewers will share the impressions they have reached after the candidate's departure.

Salary

This is a touchy topic and students are often caught off guard when the topic comes up in an interview. If questioned about salary expectations the candidate can respond in one of two ways:

- Give a broad range: "I would hope with my background and qualifications to be making between \$35,000 and \$40,000." The range given should be realistic and based upon prior research of starting salaries in the industry and for the position being discussed.
- Sidestep the question: "I'm sure that if you make me an offer it will be commensurate with my qualifications and the current salary structure for your industry."

The candidate should try to avoid giving an exact figure in response to this question. If pressed on the issue by the interviewer, it is best to give a range.

Candidates are often tempted to bring up the salary issue themselves. As a general rule, it is best not to mention salary until the company brings it up. Salary will usually not be a topic of conversation until an offer is made.

Testing

Many companies test candidates prior to extending offers to visit the company of during the visit itself. This testing may consist of standard mathematical and verbal tests similar to the SAT or ACT, but much briefer. The candidate should be aware that this type of testing may be conducted and should understand that no preparation is possible. The candidate should, however, get plenty of rest the evening before a test to aid clear thinking.

Some companies administer personality tests. These tests involve numerous questions for which there are no right or wrong answers and candidates must answer them honestly or risk a result showing very unusual profiles. There is no benefit to trying to "psych out" a personality test. Go with your initial reaction to each question.

A very high percentage of companies also test candidates for use of illegal drugs. This encompasses testing for all controlled substances and usually takes the form of a urine specimen analyzed for appearance of a substance. Candidates should be aware of the possibility that this test may occur and should be advised that failure to submit to a drug test may end further employment consideration.

Community

Candidates should also make an effort to learn about the company's surrounding territory. It is a good idea for the candidate to check out the web site of the local chamber of commerce and view information on the area. Additionally, an apartment guide or home guide is probably available through the chamber or the realty association for use in selecting a residence.

If an eventual job offer is made and accepted, the candidate will be relocating to that city. During the company visit day the candidate should question people, particularly those closest to his age, about housing, entertainment, cost of living, and other personal concerns.

Expenses and Follow-Up

Expense handling and reimbursement varies from company to company but nearly all will handle this part of the process with a sensitive eye toward the candidate's needs. If possible, both for the company interviewing and later business travel, it is a good idea for the candidate to secure a major credit card. This will provide the ability to pay expenses when the need arises and will help to avoid any potentially embarrassing situation.

If a major credit card is not an option, and cash flow is low, many companies are willing to pre-pay expenses. A candidate should never turn down a company visit because his funds are low! By talking to the contact person in the company he may find that they can help. Companies can assist students in ways such as:

- Pre-pay airline tickets
- Pre-pay the hotel room
- Provide cash up front for use by the student in travel
- Arrange for ground transportation

Generally, most major expenses (travel and lodging) will either be pre-paid by the company or put on a credit card by the student and reimbursed by the company at a later date. Incidental expenses to be paid by the candidate and reimbursed later include:

- Parking
- Cab fares
- Business phone calls
- Meals enroute
- Tips

Other incidental expenses fully borne by the candidate include:

- Room service snacks
- Newspapers or magazines
- Personal phone calls
- Gifts
- In room movies
- Other personal items

The candidate should always collect receipts for expenses. She should also have resources to pay hotel expenses, even when pre-payment has been agreed upon. Mistakes are sometimes made.

While not an overriding issue, it is important that the candidate use common sense and good judgment regarding expenses. Companies will see an expense report and receipts after a visit, and unusually high expenditures for ordinary items or unnecessary expenditures are generally frowned upon. Meals need not be at a fast-food restaurant, but should be reasonable and items such as expensive wine or very high priced menu items should be avoided. The hotel's own restaurant (or comparable prices) is usually a good measure of how much to spend. The company wants the candidate to enjoy the visit but not to be extravagant.

After the Visit

Following his visit the candidate should send a personal letter of thanks to all the people met and talked with that day. Emailing the thank you is appropriate if you have the contact's email address. While this may not affect the probability of getting an offer, it is a common courtesy and will definitely be remembered if he ends up working there.

Additionally, a letter of thanks to the main contact person is mandatory. This letter or email should reaffirm interest in the position, highlight qualifications one last time or, if applicable, indicate no further interest in the position. This short note should reflect the candidate's aggressiveness, highlight his understanding of etiquette and show his continued interest. The letter provides the candidate one last opportunity to stand out above his competition and position himself for potential hiring.

Many companies will get back to candidates within two weeks of the actual visit with an offer or a rejection. This is an average. Some companies offer jobs on the spot while others take up to a month to respond. It is, therefore, a good idea for candidates to find out how long they can expect to wait to hear from the company regarding an employment decision. The candidate should feel free to contact the company to check on delays if the estimated decision date passes with no response.

Finally, candidates are advised never to be afraid to turn down a job offer if, after careful consideration, they consider it to be right for their future. After all, long-term career satisfaction is the goal of the whole process.

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