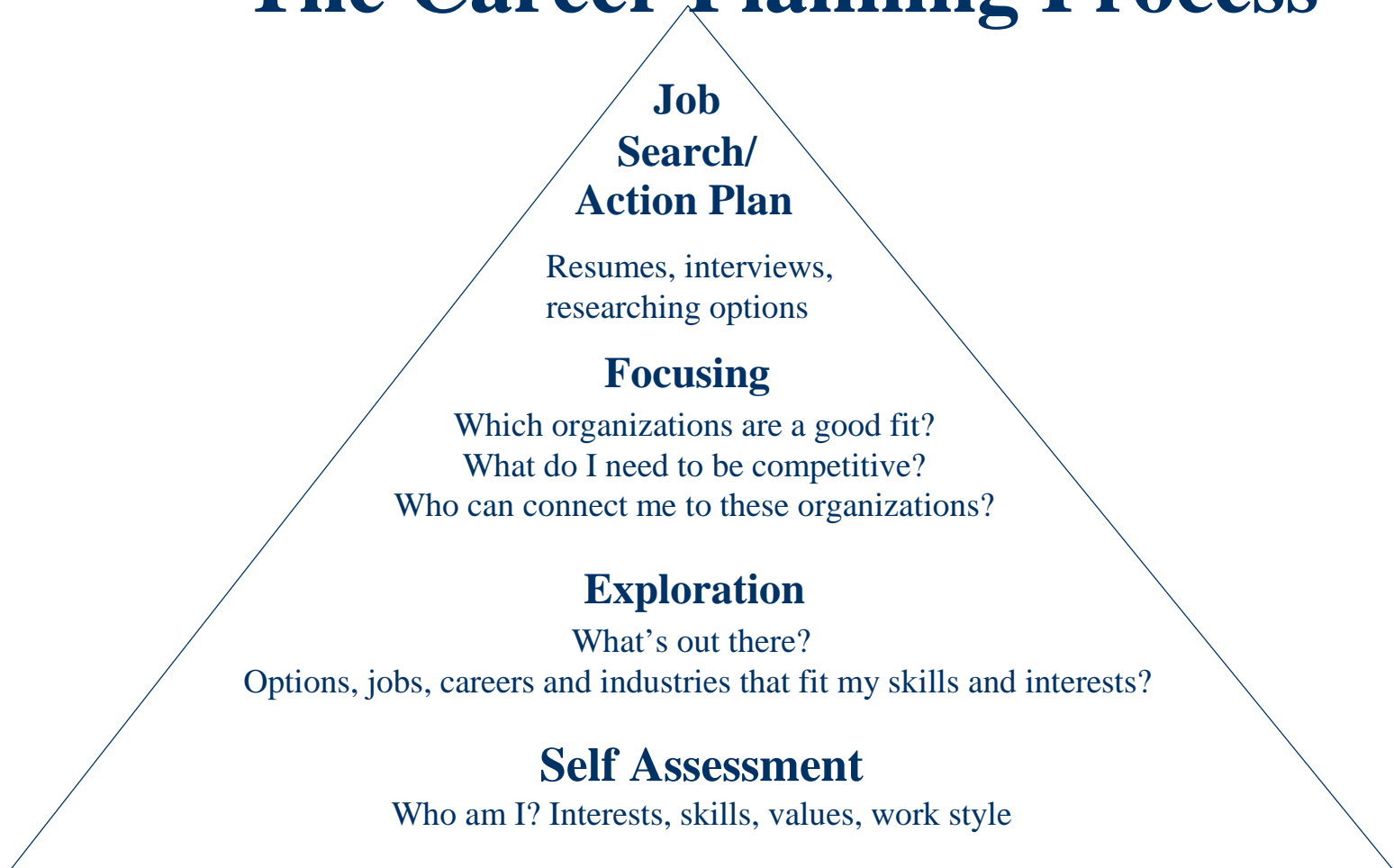


INTERVIEWING SKILLS FOR ESL STUDENTS

**Office of Career Services and
Preprofessional Advising**

<http://web.mit.edu/career/www/>
12-170, 253-4733

The Career Planning Process



Adapted from Peter Fiske: To Boldly Go: Practice Career Advice for Scientists, Workshop at MIT, April 1998

Modified from Stanford University Career Planning and Placement Office



PURPOSE OF THE INTERVIEW



- ◆ Sell your strengths and skills
- ◆ Learn as much as you can about the position and employer
- ◆ Assess if the company and position are a good fit

INTERVIEW DRESS CODE

Women

- ◆ Suit: preferably skirt suit
- ◆ Skirt length: reasonable, not overly short or tight
- ◆ Makeup: minimum, nothing too bold
- ◆ Perfume: lite application, if any
- ◆ Nylons/dress socks
- ◆ Shoes- not sandals

INTERVIEW DRESS CODE

Men

- ◆ Suit preferable, jacket, tie, & slacks acceptable
- ◆ Cologne- lite application, if any
- ◆ Dress socks
- ◆ Shoes, not sneakers

INTERVIEW DRESS CODE

General tips

- ◆ Clothing:
 - Pressed/ironed
 - Clean
- ◆ Shoes - reasonably good condition
- ◆ Combed hair
- ◆ Fresh breath

INTERVIEW INFORMATION

- ◆ Arrive at least 15 minutes early
- ◆ Bring your resume into the interview
- ◆ Length of interviews:
 - ◆ On-campus interviews are approximately 30 minutes
 - ◆ On-site interviews

INTERVIEW LAYOUT

Introduction:

- ◆ Shake hands and address interviewer- Mr. or Ms.
- ◆ Small talk

Interview:

- ◆ Interviewer Questions: behavioral,
- ◆ Applicant Questions: 2-4 specific questions
- ◆ Shake hands and thank the interviewer
- ◆ Maintain appropriate eye contact

TYPES OF INTERVIEWS

1. Traditional:

- ◆ Requires you to relay factual information
- ◆ Employer is taking your word at face value
- ◆ Sample Questions:
 - Tell me about yourself.
 - Why did you choose your major?
 - What is a weakness you have?
 - Why are you interested in this position?
 - Where do you see yourself in 5 or 10 years?

TYPES OF INTERVIEWS

2. Behavioral/Emotional/Story Telling:

- ◆ Requires you to offer concrete, specific examples to reveal skills.
- ◆ "STAR" framework to structure your responses
 - What was the SITUATION?
 - What was your TASK?
 - What ACTION did you take?
 - What was the RESULT?

TYPES OF INTERVIEWS

2. Behavioral/Emotional/Story Telling:

- ◆ Assumptions about your future work performance is based on past behaviors and attitudes.

Examples:

Tell me about a time when you exhibited teamwork.

Give me an example of a time you confronted a challenge.

TYPES OF INTERVIEWS

3. Case-Method/Case-Based:

- ◆ Analyze a problem/situation and present a solution
- ◆ Focus is on your analytical ability/thought process, as opposed to whether or not your answer is correct.

Example:

How many gas stations are there in the United States?

TYPES OF INTERVIEWS

4. Job Specific Cases:

- ◆ Write a program, show a Portfolio, or take a personality test.
- ◆ Resources for additional information:

Writing Programs

What to expect/how to prepare for interviews that test your technical skills. Microsoft is one example of a company that uses this in their interviewing:

http://www.microsoft.com/college/faq_interview.html

Personality Testing

Coaching for Success, Inc. provides various links to personality testing: <http://www.coach.net/personal.html>

TYPES OF INTERVIEWS

5. Site Visit/Second Interview:

- ◆ Careers Handbook article on site visits
- ◆ University of Maine Career Center 2nd Interview Questions

<http://www.umeais.maine.edu/~career/intques2.html>

6. Videoconferencing:

- ◆ "Hiring Managers Turn to Video," Computerworld:

<http://www.computerworld.com/home/print.nsf/all/9804274682>

TYPES OF INTERVIEWS

7. Telephone Interviewing:

Resources

- ◆ Taken from Martin Yate's "Knock ' Em Dead: The Ultimate Job Search Handbook":
<http://www.careercity.com/content/interview/during/telephone.asp>
- ◆ David Jenner, Search Masters Inc:
http://www.bio.com/hr/search/phone_interview.html

PHONE INTERVIEWS

Telephone Interviews:

- ◆ Cost effective
- ◆ Screening process, may be in-depth
- ◆ Judged by same criteria as in-person interview
- ◆ About past experience, skills, qualifications
- ◆ Conversation only
- ◆ Be: articulate, friendly, enthusiastic, motivated

PHONE INTERVIEWS

Preparation for the Interview

- ◆ Time of interview
- ◆ How long will it last
- ◆ Who will interview you
 - How many people? What are their positions?
 - Research the organization
 - Products, services, culture

PHONE INTERVIEWS

Phone Interview Tips:

- ◆ Smile
- ◆ Position phone 1 inch from mouth
- ◆ Take notes about questions being asked
- ◆ Keep answers succinct
- ◆ Defer questions about salary, benefits, vacation
- ◆ Ask questions in the end

INTERVIEW SUCCESS FACTORS

- ◆ Verbal and written communication skills
- ◆ Listening skills
- ◆ Analytical/logical thinking/problem-solving skills
- ◆ Interest in industry/company/function
- ◆ Enthusiasm
- ◆ Interpersonal comfort and skills
- ◆ Knowing what they want/having focus
- ◆ Leadership skill

INTERVIEW SUCCESS FACTORS CONTINUED

- ◆ Energy and enthusiasm
- ◆ Ability to work well in teams
- ◆ Professionalism
- ◆ Personal presence
- ◆ Projecting substance/credibility
- ◆ Personal "fit" with company
- ◆ Clear, concise answers
- ◆ Honesty

INTERVIEW SUCCESS FACTORS CONTINUED

- ◆ Speak positively about yourself and others
- ◆ Use body language to show interest
- ◆ Give non-verbal feedback to the interviewer
- ◆ Educate yourself about illegal questions
- ◆ Hold salary questions
- ◆ Good questions/making statements that show thought process
- ◆ Ability to think creatively
- ◆ Confidence

AMERICAN WAY

Leadership

- ◆ Challenge the process
- ◆ Always thinking.
- ◆ Inspired shared vision.
- ◆ Enable others to act.
- ◆ Leader makes the group a team.
- ◆ Model the way.
- ◆ Internally motivated.
- ◆ Be positive.
- ◆ Initiative

AMERICAN WAY

Communication

- ◆ Americans want to know exactly what to expect.
- ◆ Body posture → lean forward, eye contact, show interest.
- ◆ Shake hands with a strong grasp, keep “a safe distance.”
- ◆ Americans expect you to show confidence.
- ◆ Selling yourself.
- ◆ Assertiveness
- ◆ Americans are more direct in interviews than they are daily.

AMERICAN WAY

Language

- ◆ English is “the business” language- objective and to the point.
- ◆ The characteristics of the language are reflected in the general behavior of the Americans → very objective and to the point. So, when you are communicating you will:
 - ◆ Communicate what is expected
 - ◆ Be direct and concise
 - ◆ Show poise and confidence
 - ◆ Become “one of them”
- ◆ Ideal way to learn a language is to immerse yourself in it.

AMERICAN WAY

Language—Tips

- ◆ **Slow down your speaking speed**, organize your thoughts first.
- ◆ Never hesitate to ask or to confirm questions being asked.
- ◆ Practice rephrasing—don't be stuck by the lack of vocabulary.

AMERICAN WAY

Language – Resources

- ◆ English as a Second Language - MIT
<http://web.mit.edu/fl/ww/languages/English.html>
- ◆ MIT Sloan EnglishTown
<http://mitsloan.mit.edu/cdo/englishtown1.html>
- ◆ **Practice, Practice, Practice → MOCK INTERVIEWS**

REMEMBER:

- ◆ Motivation makes the difference.
- ◆ Always imply to the interviewer that “I will do everything in my power to improve my English... “ If you are the fit for the position, that statement will get you the job.

INTERVIEWING READINESS CHECKLIST

- Research the company and position
- Role play the interview
- Practice what you would say are your strength and weaknesses is.
- Prepare what you will wear for the interview
- Bring extra copies of your resume with you.
- Travel to the interview location prior to the interview
 - If you're at the Company location, use the time to observe the environment. Is this a place where you'd like to work?
- Research your worth - Salary Negotiation Workshop
http://web.mit.edu/career/www/workshops/negotiating/workshop_homeneg.htm

SCHEDULE A MOCK INTERVIEW

- ◆ Meet with a Career Counselor
- ◆ Review sample questions handout
- ◆ Practice out loud or with a friend
- ◆ Schedule a mock interview, call 253-4733