

INTERVIEWING INSIGHTS



**How to Shine in
Interviews Every Time**

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Interview Checklist

Interviewing can feel intimidating. It's helpful to break it down into manageable parts. **You don't have to do all of these, and there is no specific order.** Put in the work that makes sense for your industry and the level of job you are applying for.

Support for every phase of job searching is available in the Office of Career and Professional Development (OCPD)...and you don't have to do it all during business hours. Start by checking our website (www.wtamu.edu/career).

Know yourself.

	Identify personal strengths. (www.wtamu.edu/buffstrong)
	Meet with a Strengths coach to learn how to share personal strengths during the job search. (Schedule an appointment at www.wtamu.edu/career → Handshake)
	Complete the YouScience assessment to learn more about personality, work style, and values. (bit.ly/WTyouscience)
	Meet with a career coach to explore YouScience results and possible careers
	Understand and identify personal marketable skills. (www.wtamu.edu/career → Professional Development → Marketable Skills)
	Identify professional values using the Dare to Lead values worksheet.

Get to know the company or organization.

	Review the mission, vision, organizational chart, and strategic plan and spend some time exploring the company's general website. Take note of projects that relate to the position you are interviewing for or that are of particular interest to you.
	Search for the company on social media to understand how they interact publically.
	Read reviews of the company on GlassDoor, Google, and the Better Business Bureau.

Prepare for the interview

	Prepare an elevator pitch to use for the most commonly used question: Tell me about yourself. Practice it out loud!
	Review other commonly asked questions in this packet and prepare answers.
	Review the job description and prepare 5-10 examples that demonstrate key skills using the CAR method.
	Prepare a portfolio or gathered work samples to highlight experience, skills, and talents.
	Print 10 copies of your resume on nice paper.
	Write or type up notes that include major points from your research, the strong examples you would like to share, and questions to ask.
	Compile resume copies, notes, a pen, business cards, and anything else you want to have with you in the interview in a padfolio.
	Practice answers to interview questions with a friend or colleague. Answering out loud is important as it helps you identify verbal ticks and gaps that you may need to address.
	Complete a mock interview. (www.wtamu.edu/career → Professional Development → Mock Interview Program)
	Shop for interview clothing that is appropriate for industry. (Schedule a visit to the Professional Clothing Closet for 1 free outfit per semester at https://bit.ly/wtcareerappointment)
	Wear your full interview outfit; practice walking, sitting, driving, etc. Then, wash and press everything to be ready to go.
	Complete market research to identify salary range and your walk-away offer.
	Confirm interview location and other instructions. Map and plan travel, taking note of what time to leave to allow yourself time in case of traffic or unforeseen hiccups OR prepare virtual account and background for online interviews.

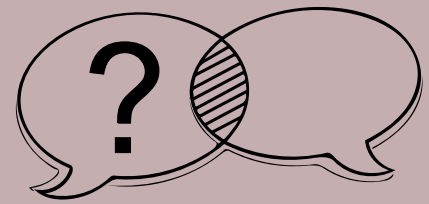
After the interview

	Take business cards for all interviewers if offered; write electronic thank yous for online interviews and hand-written for in-person.
	Take time for reflection - write down questions you struggled with and other notes for improvement

COMMONLY ASKED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS



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1. TELL ME ABOUT YOURSELF. (PREPARE AN ELEVATOR PITCH AND KEEP TO PROFESSIONAL HISTORY)
2. WHAT IS YOUR BIGGEST STRENGTH/WEAKNESS?
3. TELL ME ABOUT A TIME ... (EXAMPLE QUESTIONS ARE OFTEN ABOUT INTERPERSONAL SKILLS, I.E. ADDRESSING CONFLICT)
4. WHY SHOULD WE HIRE YOU?
5. WHAT SKILLS DO YOU HAVE THAT RELATE TO THE ROLE?
6. WHERE DO YOU SEE YOURSELF IN 5 YEARS?
7. WHAT SHOULD I KNOW THAT IS NOT ON YOUR RESUME?
8. HOW DO YOU PRIORITIZE YOUR WORK?
9. HOW DO YOU DEAL WITH PRESSURE OR STRESSFUL SITUATIONS?
10. HOW WOULD YOUR BOSS OR COWORKERS DESCRIBE YOU?

WHAT INTERVIEW QUESTION IS MOST CONCERNING TO YOU?

REASONS BEHIND THE QUESTIONS - 3 FILTER QUESTIONS

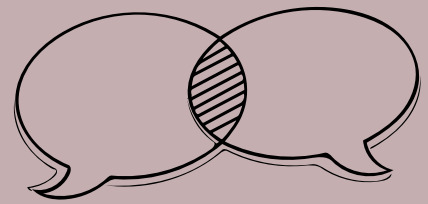
1. CAN YOU DO THE JOB OR EASILY LEARN TO DO IT?
2. DO YOU HAVE PASSION/PURPOSE/DRIVE FOR DOING THIS JOB?
3. WILL WE LIKE HAVING YOU ON THE TEAM?

CAR METHOD

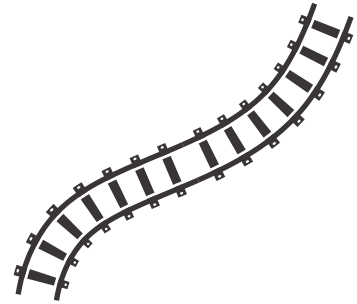
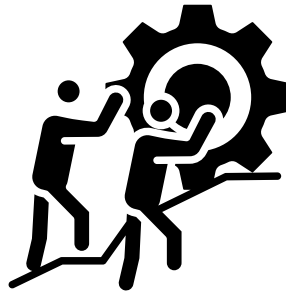
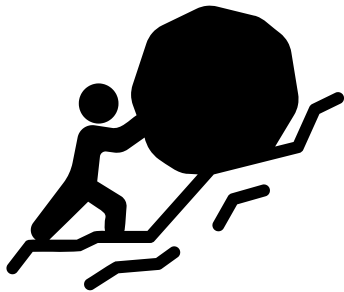
IMPACTFUL EXAMPLES



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DEVELOP IMPACTFUL ANSWERS TO ANY INTERVIEW QUESTION BY INCLUDING STRONG AND SPECIFIC EXAMPLES. MAKE SURE EACH EXAMPLE INCLUDES:



**CHALLENGE/
CONTEXT/
CIRCUMSTANCE**

INCLUDE THE WHO,
WHAT, WHEN, WHERE
DETAILS

ACTION

FOCUS ON *YOUR*
ROLE AND ACTIONS

USE I AND ME, NOT US
AND WE

RESULTS

WHAT WAS THE END
RESULT?

WHAT DID YOU LEARN?

WHAT WOULD YOU DO
DIFFERENTLY AND WHY?

**THINK OF AN EXAMPLE THAT DEMONSTRATES HOW YOU HANDLED
PROFESSIONAL CONFLICT. OUTLINE CAR METHOD ELEMENTS FOR IT.**

Be Prepared: Research Resources for Interview Prep

KNOW THE INDUSTRY

Resource	Link	Helpful tips
YouScience	SignIn.YouScience.com	Use Buff student email to create account. Must complete assessment; then browse Find Best Fit Careers .
O*NET Online	OnetOnline.org	Search by job title or browse by career cluster. On a career summary page, select custom, then choose skills, abilities, knowledge, and wages & employment trends .
Occupational Outlook Handbook	bls.gov/ooh	Search by job title or browse by career cluster. Read What [Positions] Do for core job qualifications. Read Pay for median wage info.
Career OneStop: Competency Model Clearinghouse	CareerOneStop.org/CompetencyModel	Browse under Industry Models . Interactive – click the competency for specifics.
Career OneStop: Professional Association Finder	CareerOneStop.org/Toolkit/Training/find-professional-associations.aspx	Think of industry and occupation as synonyms to cast a wide net. Review recent industry news stories, major conferences available, etc.

KNOW THE COMPANY

Resource	Link	Helpful tips
Organization's website!	Google it	Read through the mission, vision, and strategic plans.
Better Business Bureau	BBB.org	Read reviews and look at ranking.
Glassdoor	GlassDoor.com	Read reviews from current and previous employers.
LinkedIn	LinkedIn.com	Follow the company profile. Look for WTAMU alumni that work[ed] there and consider requesting Career Conversations. Browse profiles for current employees.

WHAT IS A CAREER CONVERSATION?

A career conversation, also known as an informational interview, is a meeting or discussion where a person seeks insights, advice, and information about a particular career field, industry, or organization from someone already established in that area.

The primary purpose is to gather **first-hand knowledge and perspective** rather than to secure a job. These conversations allow the inquirer to:

1. Learn about day-to-day responsibilities in a specific role
2. Get a realistic view of the work environment and culture
3. Understand industry trends and challenges
4. Gain advice on career paths and skill development
5. Expand their professional network

These interviews are typically informal and can occur in person, over the phone, or via video call. They're valuable for career exploration, decision-making, and building professional relationships.

To schedule a career conversation:

1. Find relevant people in the company or organization through:
 - Existing in-person network
 - LinkedIn network and searching
 - Other social media
2. Make a list of professionals with the experience and connections you are interested in
3. Contact: prioritize phone calls if possible, then email, then DMs
 - Introduce yourself and include your connection to the person
 - Ask for a 15-minute meeting
 - Share why you are interested in learning from them
 - If they don't respond, following up once is okay. Then move on.
4. Prepare questions ahead of time
5. Dress professionally and be on time
6. Follow up with a thank you note and add them to your contacts and LinkedIn network

PAST

Internships/Part-Time Jobs/Full-Time Jobs/Summer Jobs/Campus Involvement

PRESENT

What are you currently pursuing and what value does it add, what skills are you honing?

FUTURE

Short- and long-term goals professionally

STRENGTHS, ATTRIBUTES, VALUES

CliftonStrengths:	YouScience:	Values:

PASSION

What excites you about your future professional field?

PURPOSE

What drives or motivates you to pursue a degree in your industry?

PERSONALITY

Hobbies, interests, etc.

DRAFT YOUR PITCH

Strengths Language for Interviewing

Find your strengths at wtamu.edu/BufStrong

	Descriptors		Who am I?
	driven	laborer	
Achiever	diligent	worker	
	self-motivated	producer	
	productive	doer	
	ambitious	completer	
Activator	independent	finisher	
	influential	catalyst	
	action-oriented	initiator	
	initiating	starter	
Adaptability	fast	originator	
	dynamic	influencer	
	flexible	early adopter	
	responsive	follower	
Analytical	easygoing		
	present		
	in the moment		
	spontaneous		
Arranger	agreeable		
	objective	measurer	
	number-oriented	counter	
	data-driven	fact-finder/user	
Belief	questioning	observer	
	scientific		
	flexible	orchestrator	
	interactive	coordinator	
Command	collaborative	multi-thinker	
	multi-thinking	enlister	
	configuring		
	resourceful		
Belief	certain	contributor	
	stable	believer	
	principled	altruist	
	passionate		
Command	committed		
	decisive	leader	
	clarifying	driver	
	driven	clarifier	
Belief	persuasive	persuader	
	assertive		
	candid		

	Descriptors		Who am I?
	presenting	presenter	
Communication	transparent	conversationalist	
	interactive	storyteller	
	conversational	writer	
	expressive		
Competition	captivating		
	entertaining		
	winning	winner	
	measuring		
Connectedness	aspiring		
	driven		
	goal-oriented		
	integrating	integrator	
Consistency	seeking	bridge-builder	
	comforting	unifier	
	perceptive	social advocate	
	counseling	seeker	
Context	listening		
	fair		
	compliant		
	consistent		
Deliberative	practical		
	efficient		
	orienting	framer	
	perceptive	reorder	
Developer	highlighting		
	collecting		
	studious		
	careful	risk-assessor	
Developer	conservative	planner	
	thoughtful		
	serious		
	confidential		
Developer	observant		
	vigilant		
	patient	coach	
	perceptive	mentor	
Developer	effective	encourager	
	encouraging		
	investing		
	observant		
Developer	growth-oriented		
	helpful		

Discipline		Descriptors	Who am I?
Discipline		detail-oriented	organizer
		organized	planner
		efficient	self-controller
		meticulous	structurer
		structured	
		neat	
		timely	
		planned	
Empathy		listening	confidant
		expressive	expresser
		aware	sage
		intuitive	listener
		confidential	resonator
		helpful	
		goal-oriented	concentrator
		persevering	director
Focus		driven	guide
		efficient	goal setter
		progress-aware	
		selective	
		distraction-averse	
		creative	forecaster
		inspiring	visionary
		vivid	predictor
Futuristic		anticipating	imaginer
		imaginative	anticipator
		expressive	
		communicating	
		perceptive	
		future-oriented	
		practical	mediator
		concrete	negotiator
Harmony		collaborative	arbitrator
		agreeable	ambassador
		task-oriented	diplomat
			pragmatist
			peacemaker
		spontaneous	inventor
		creative	creator
		innovative	designer
Ideaion		collaborative	artist
		artistic	innovator
		insightful	brainstormer
		resourceful	novelist

	Descriptors	Who am I?
Includer	accepting	acceptor
	tolerant	inviter
	interactive	assimilator
	perceptive	barrier-buster
Individualization	others-oriented	
	welcoming	
	integrating	
	aware	customizer
Input	perceptive	observer
	people-oriented	acceptor
	strengths-oriented	
	fair	
Intellecion	accurate	
	insightful	
	diverse	
	resourceful	collector
Learner	collecting	absorber
	inquisitive	curator
	utility-aware	circulator
	generous	
Maximizer	well-read	
	knowledgeable	
	investigative	
	introspective	thinker
	intellectual	philosopher
	philosophical	discussant
	in-depth	writer
	reflective	blogger
	thinking	
	driven	
	curious	student
	interested	explorer
	inquisitive	discoverer
	open-minded	self-helper
	studious	continuous-improver
	passionate	expert
	competent	
	selective	leader
	strengths-oriented	driver
	quality-oriented	clarifier
	results-oriented	persuader
	discriminating	challenger
	sorting	quality controller

	Descriptors	Who am I?
Positivity	fun	energizer
	optimistic	optimist
	hopeful	encourager
	generous	influencer
Relator	enthusiastic	performer
	energetic	celebrator
	joyful	recognizer
	influential	enthusiast
Responsibility	lighthearted	promoter
	friendly	friend
	caring	loyalist
	authentic	caretaker
Restorative	genuine	
	transparent	
	truthful	
	diligent	owner
Self-Assurance	conscientious	committer
	loyal	servant
	driven	responder
	dependable	volunteer
Significance	serious	
	committed	
	responsive	
	independent	
	problem-oriented	fixer
	driven	troubleshooter
	investigative	investigator
	responsive	rehabilitator
	insightful	
	independent	influencer
	certain	director
	confident	risk-taker
	self-aware	leader
	self-sufficient	
	instinctive	
	stable	
	persistent	
	credible	performer
	successful	seeker
	visible	
	influential	
	desirous	
	independent	
	professional	

	Descriptors	Who am I?
Strategic	creative	selector
	clear	thinker
	option-aware	strategist
	intuitive	sorter
WOO	future-oriented	evaluator
	anticipating	pathfinder
	selective	planner
	thoughtful	
	insightful	
	charming	socializer
	interactive	conversationalist
	socially proactive	greeter
	influential	engager
	outgoing	initiator
	gregarious	networker
	engaging	prospector
	initiating	
	socially energetic	

Take the **CliftonStrengths**
Assessment Today!
www.wtamu.edu/buffstrong



Common Interview Mistakes

1 We over Me

Focus on your own actions when answering questions rather than on group accomplishments. Use I and Me instead of Us and We.

2 Lack of thorough answers

Employers are trying to understand how you think and work. Use the CAR method and be thorough when answering questions.

3 Talking too much

On the other hand, you can over-explain. Consider the question they asked and answer it including all important elements. Then stop talking and allow silence.

4 Negative comments

No employer wants to hire someone who will badmouth them publicly. So, avoid criticism and negative comments about your current or previous employers.

5 Skipped research

Employers want to hire people who want to work for their company. *If you skip research and lack knowledge about their organization, this indicates selfish purposes and lack of interest.*

6 Lack of attention

It is easy to be distracted or worried in an interview and miss important information and cues. Practice active listening to remain engaged. Have your phone tucked away and avoid checking your watch frequently.

7 Clothing and grooming missteps

Look at the company website and social media to determine their normal clothing standards, then dress a step or two up from that level. Be careful of too much of anything (scents, jewelry).

8 Lack of confidence

Humbleness is generally positive but not useful in an interview. Before you go in, take a power pose and give yourself a pep talk. Avoid terms that prevaricate, i.e. just, only, I think. Consider your body language throughout the interview.

9 Arriving too late (or too early)

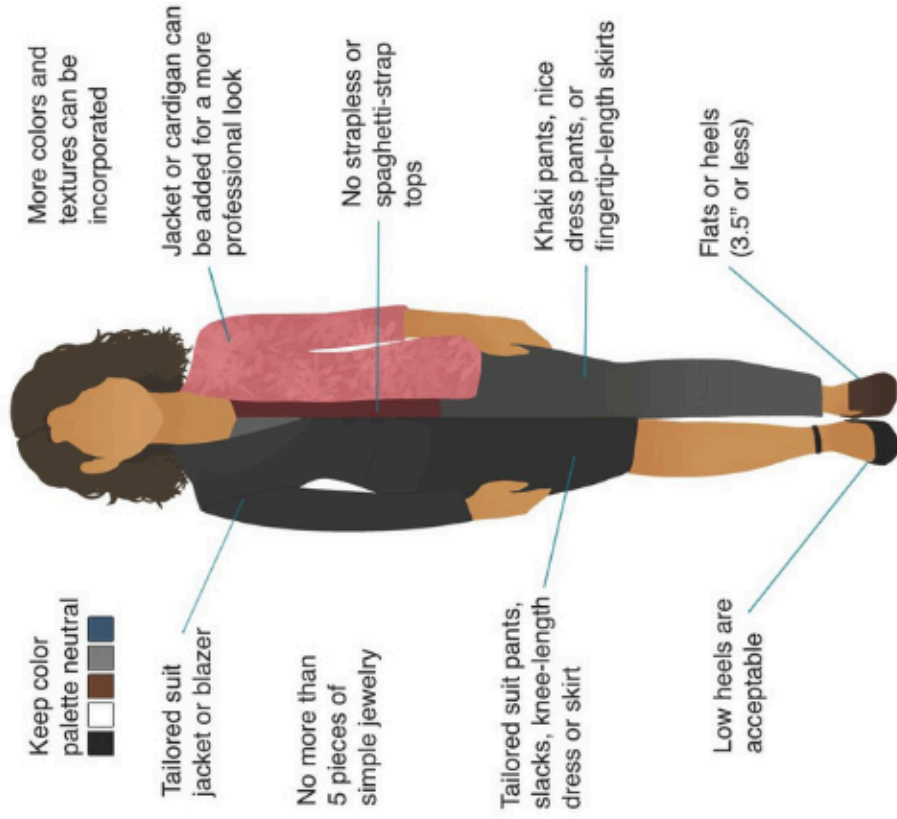
Plan ahead, know where you're going, and arrive 15-20 minutes early.

10 Having too much stuff

Bring a padfolio and, if need a portfolio. Avoid bringing large bags or too many things to juggle.

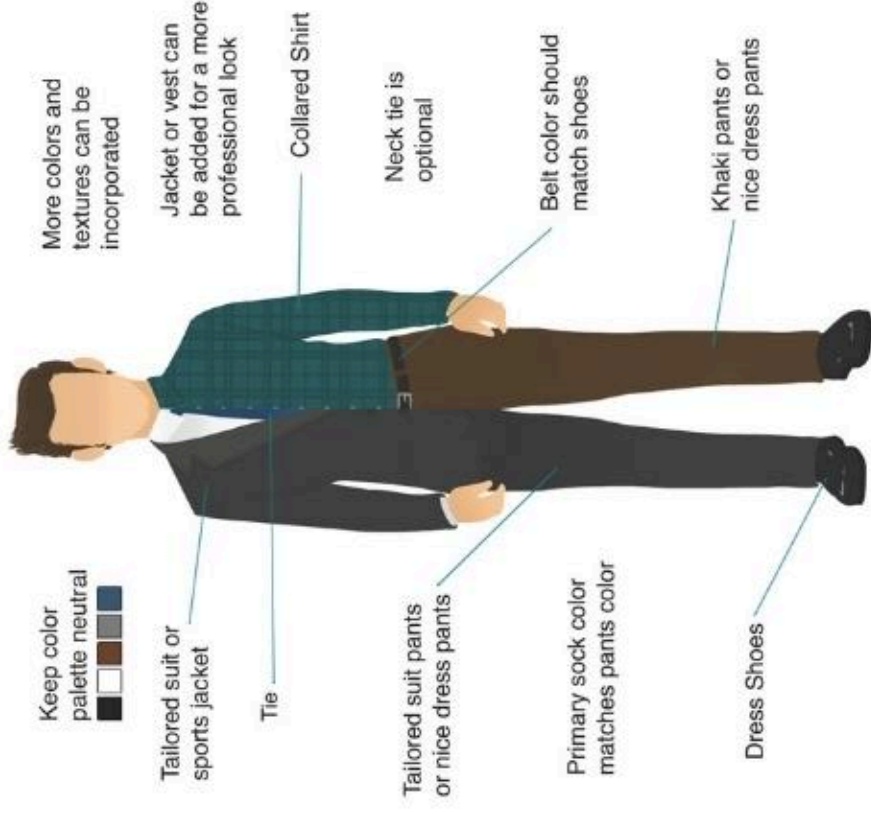
Women's Attire

Professional | Business Casual

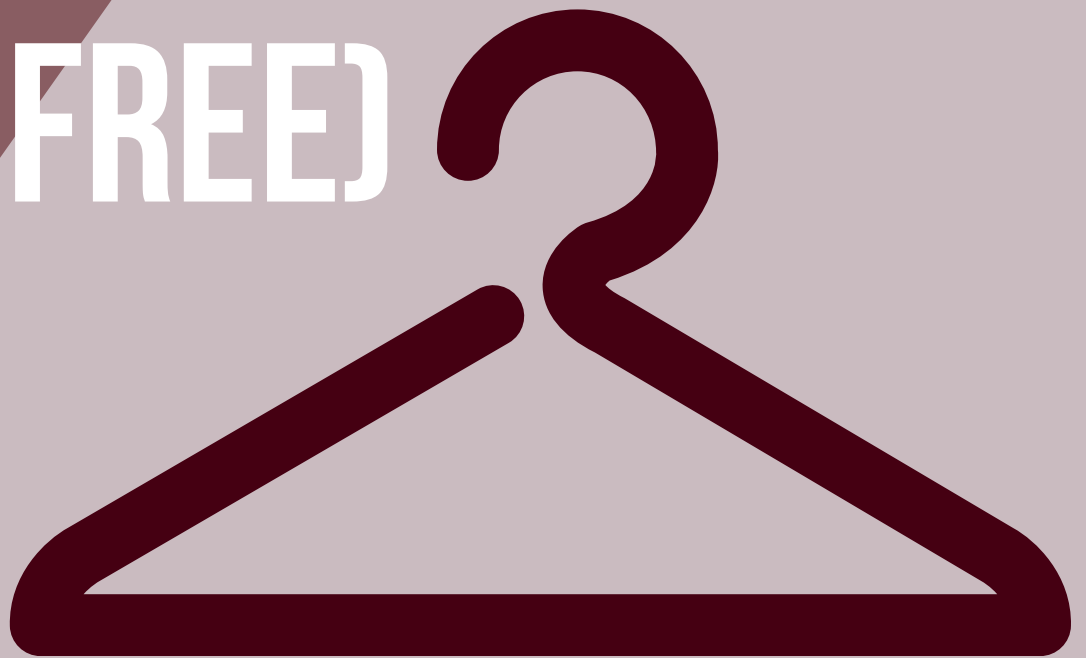


Men's Attire

Professional | Business Casual



NEED PROFESSIONAL CLOTHING? (FOR FREE)



Visit the Professional Clothing
Closet - schedule an appointment
today: wtamu.joinhandshake.com

806.651.2345

Professional Handshakes



Phone Interviews

1 Have a location plan

Plan ahead to have a quiet place with good cell phone reception or a landline. Shut off anything that will provide a distraction.

2 Consider device charge

Make sure you have a good charge before the call and bring a power cord just in case.

3 Come prepared

Prepare and bring notes and some water. Bring a pen and paper so you can take note of interviewer names and follow-up details.

4 Smile and be still

Smiling helps add warmth and tone to your voice. Pacing or lounging both affect the tone of your voice. Sit or stand still to add strength and steadiness to your tone.

5 Pace yourself

Take a deep breath before you answer and try to speak slowly and clearly. They may have you on speaker, which can cause audio interference.

Virtual Interviews

Plan ahead and choose a quiet place with a good wi-fi connection. Consider lighting and what will be in the background. Choose somewhere tidy and without visual distractions.

Charge your laptop or use a desktop computer. Have power cords and convertors with you, just in case.

Prepare and bring notes. Have a place to take notes to capture interviewer names and follow-up details. Check video and audio connections several hours before the interview to allow time for troubleshooting. Purchase a small ring light and set it up.

Smile and look directly at the webcam. Avoid fidgeting or plan for a quiet fidget option if needed. Sit or stand up straight.

Take a power pose, shake off nerves, and do some deep breathing before you log on. Speak slowly and clearly.

Mock Interview Process



wtamu.joinhandshake.com



Step #1: Develop a Resume

Get to writing! .

For guidance, watch videos available at <https://bit.ly/STPB-Resumes> and visit the Career and Professional Development website at wtamu.edu/career.



Step #2: Upload to Handshake

Next, you will upload your resume to your Handshake account. Click on your initials or profile picture and select **Documents**.



Step #3: Make a Resume Review Appointment

In Handshake, go to **Career Center** then **Appointments** and begin scheduling your appointment at a time that works best for you.

Handshake will **NOT** allow you to schedule a mock interview until you have completed a resume review appointment!

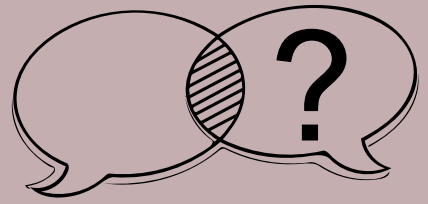


Step #4: Sign up for a Mock Interview

After you have had your appointment, revise and upload your newest resume to your account. Then go to **Jobs** and search **Mock Interviews**. Select the date you want to interview. Click **Apply** and drop in your newest resume.

Finally, select the time and company you wish to interview with!

QUESTIONS TO ASK INTERVIEWERS



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COMPANY-SPECIFIC QUESTIONS:

1. "WHAT IS [COMPANY]'S VISION FOR THE NEXT FEW YEARS IN TERMS OF GROWTH?"
2. "HOW DOES [COMPANY] SUPPORT PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND CAREER GROWTH?"
3. "CAN YOU TELL ME ABOUT THE TYPES OF PROJECTS THIS ROLE WILL LIKELY BE INVOLVED WITH?"
4. "WHAT DO YOU THINK SETS [COMPANY] APART FROM ITS COMPETITORS?"
5. "WHAT QUALITIES DO YOU HOPE TO FIND IN A SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATE FOR THIS ROLE?"
6. QUESTIONS INSPIRED BY RESEARCH, I.E. "I SAW ON YOUR WEBSITE ..." OR "IN MY RESEARCH, I FOUND ..."

CAREER-FOCUSED:

7. "WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE SOMEONE ENTERING THIS COMPANY?"
8. "WHAT'S THE MOST REWARDING PART OF YOUR JOB?"
9. "HOW DO YOU SEE THE ROLE AND THE TEAM EVOLVING IN THE NEXT FEW YEARS?"
10. "FOR SOMEONE IN THIS ROLE, WHAT IS A REALISTIC TIMEFRAME FOR ADVANCEMENT?"
11. "WHAT SKILLS DO YOU THINK ARE MOST VALUABLE TO DEVELOP TO PURSUE ADVANCEMENT?"
12. "HOW ARE EMPLOYEES IN THIS ROLE EVALUATED AND ASSESSED FOR PROMOTION?"
13. "WHAT GAPS DO YOU SEE ON THE TEAM THIS ROLE WILL BE PART OF?"

CULTURE & WORK-LIFE BALANCE:

14. "CAN YOU TELL ME MORE ABOUT THE WORK CULTURE AT [COMPANY]?"
15. "WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE THING ABOUT WORKING AT [COMPANY]?"
16. "HOW DOES [COMPANY] PROMOTE WORK-LIFE BALANCE?"
17. "ARE THERE ANY INITIATIVES FOR EMPLOYEE WELL-BEING THAT STAND OUT TO YOU?"
18. "HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE THE TEAMWORK AND COLLABORATION AT [COMPANY]?"
19. "HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE THE COMPANY'S PERSONALITY AND YOUR (THE SUPERVISOR'S) MANAGEMENT STYLE?"

INTERNSHIP/ENTRY-LEVEL SPECIFIC:

20. "WHAT ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT THINGS YOU LOOK FOR IN AN INTERN OR ENTRY-LEVEL EMPLOYEE?"
21. "WHAT CAN I EXPECT IN TERMS OF RESPONSIBILITIES AND LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES AT [COMPANY] AS AN INTERN OR ENTRY-LEVEL EMPLOYEE?"
23. "WHAT MAKES THE EXPERIENCE EMPLOYEES GAIN AT [COMPANY] UNIQUE?"
25. "CAN YOU DESCRIBE THE REST OF THE HIRING PROCESS FOR INTERNSHIPS OR ENTRY-LEVEL ROLES?"

Interview Follow Up: Thank You Notes

General Tips:

- It is best to send a handwritten, professional note and/or an email to say thank you **on the same day as your interview**
- Best practice: send an email for short screening interviews (phone or virtual) and an handwritten note for in-person interviews
- Be sure to thank **every person** that participated in your interview individually when possible, and personalize for each person
- Ask for business cards at the end of the interview so that you will have names and contact information
- The thank you does not have to be long or formal
- Use your own words, and mention something you found meaningful or interesting from your interview
- If you forgot to mention something important, or wish to elaborate or change an answer from your interview, you can include that information in the

Sample:

Dear [Ms./Mr. and interviewer last name]:

Thank you for taking the time to interview me for the [job title] position this morning. I enjoyed learning more about the work you do at [company name], and I am especially excited about the opportunity to [talk about something that excites you about the job opportunity].

After learning more about the position, I am confident that I could fulfill the job requirements effectively. I believe my [mention your most valuable skill(s)] could benefit your organization.

Please contact me if I can provide you with additional information. I hope to hear from you soon, and thank you again for your courtesy during the interview.

Sincerely,

Ima Thankful