Interviewing: an acquired skill

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Elevator Pitch

- Components:
  - Who are you?
  - Little Background (Education, Professional experiences, Important Skills)
  - Goal, Career aspirations
  - Make the Connection
  - Ask
  - Closeout

- While doing this:
  - Be yourself
  - Avoid hobbies/personal interests/cliché/jargon/ anything too personal

- Make your pitch adaptable
Elevator Pitch: Nonverbal Elements

- Smile
- Strong Handshake
- Eye contact
- Remember to Blink
- Don’t smoke
- Maintain personal space
- Be pleasant and approachable
- Be relaxed
- Don’t memorize too much. It’s a conversation. Let it flow

Elevator Pitch

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O7bCog-emRs

Hi, my name is ________ and I’m a ________ (year in school) at ________ (college or university) studying ________ (major) and ________ (minor, if applicable). I am interested in pursuing work in the ________ industry/field and have done ________ (extracurriculars, organization, volunteering) as a result. I have developed these skills by ________ (participating in an internship, working a particular job, etc.) ..................................................
An interview is an opportunity!

- to be able to see yourself as a product
- to offer your skills and strengths to match your future employer's needs
- to convince the interviewer there is a match and that you are the person for the job

http://www.nrc-cnrc.gc.ca/eng/careers/interview.htm
Stages of an Interview

- Before the interview
- During the Interview
- After the Interview

1. Before the interview

- Take an honest look at yourself to assess:
  - What are your strengths and weaknesses?
  - Why do you feel you are the best candidate for the position?
  - What relevant experience do you have that will help you succeed in this new role?
  - How can you demonstrate that in an interview?

- Try to anticipate the questions that could be asked during the interview and prepare replies

- Verify clearly the:
  - date and time (including how long it will last)
  - location and format
  - number of people (and names if possible) on the selection committee
  - additional items required from you (transcripts, contact information for references, journal publications, etc...)

- Prepare any questions that you may have about the institution, or the position that you are applying for

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2. During the interview

- Be on time
- It is natural to be nervous BUT try to relax
- Don't be surprised if the interview panel probes you for additional information
- Be polite, professional and personable
- Answer questions clearly and succinctly
- Ask for clarification if you don't understand a question or if you would like it to be repeated
- Be honest
- Provide any items that you were requested to bring with you (i.e. transcripts, contact information for your references, journal publications, etc…)
- Ask any questions that you may have about the position. You may also ask when you might expect to be notified of your status within the competition
- Thank the interview panel for the opportunity to be considered for the position

3. After the interview

- Take notes on the interview
- Write a thank-you letter
Don’ts

- memorize or over-rehearse your answers
- dress inappropriately
- use poor language, slang, and pause words (such as "like," "uh" and "um").
- chew gum during the interview
- rely on your application or resume to do the selling for you
- have a limp or clammy handshake
- fidget or slouch
- smoke, even if the interviewer does and offer you a cigarette. And don’t smoke beforehand so that you smell like smoke. And do brush your teeth, use mouthwash, or have a breath mint before the interview
- ever not ask any questions – it shows a lack of interest
- tell jokes during the interview
- be soft-spoken
- be overly aggressive

More Don’ts

- ever lie or over-answer questions
- act as though you would take any job or are desperate for employment
- say anything negative about former colleagues, supervisors, or employers
- offer any negative information about yourself
- answer questions with a simple "yes" or "no"
- bring up or discuss personal issues or family problems
- respond to an unexpected question with an extended pause or by saying something like, "boy, that’s a good question"
- answer cell phone calls during the interview
- inquire about salary or other benefits until after you’ve received an offer
- make assumptions about simple names – was it Jon or John – get the spelling
FAQs

? What aspect of research do you find most appealing?
? What type of research are you interested in?
? Why are you interested in this field of research?
? What research experience do you have?
? What are you hoping to learn from this experience?
? What was your GPA?
? What are your interests in science?
? Tell me about yourself?
? What are your strengths? What are your weaknesses?
? What leadership experiences have you had?
? What are your future goals?

Suggested Reading/Viewing

Handout 1 (http://www.uwgb.edu/careers/skills/interviewing-graduate-school.asp)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DHDJ0_bMq0
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51ucmkfPOBV8
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HAY4TXlvsZ8