



JOB INTERVIEW TIP SHEET



You worked hard on your CV and cover letter and received an opportunity to interview with your perspective employer. Don't miss out on the position because you are not properly prepared for the interview. The information on this tip sheet will provide officers with steps to be well prepared before, during, and after the interview!

- **BEFORE for the Interview:**

- **RESEARCH:** the agency/division/branch (or similar structure) and the recent initiatives/ priorities of the agency/division, org structure, mission, and priorities.
 - Know something about the agency you applied to. The panel/interviewer will most likely ask you something about their agency and why you want to work there. You don't need to be an expert, but you should know something about the agency you want to work for.
 - Know something about the position for which you have applied. Why do you want to work there? Why did you apply for that particular job (leave out the fact that you really just need a job). If you are not sure which job they are calling you about, ask when they call to setup the interview. It is ok, and preferable, to ask for this clarification up front. They know you may have applied for multiple jobs. Make sure you ask so you can be prepared for the interview.
- **NETWORK:** to identify Officers who are presently in the same office or position or have had recent experience in that office
- **ANTICIPATE:**
 - Possible questions through your research; Search for the top 20 common interviewing questions online. Interviewing panels tend to utilize the same questions.
 - Time zones; Don't miss any interview because you forget to check the time zone/time of the interview.
- **PREPARE:**
 - Uniform; SDB should be standard for a formal interview in person or via video platform. Putting effort into your appearance will help the panel envision how you will represent them/their agency.
 - By practicing – do mock interviews with co-workers, mentors; eliciting feedback on responses and nonverbal questions

- Directions to location ahead of time and arrive at least 15 minutes early; or test your computer the day prior to ensure it is capable of video conferencing
- Copies of resume and reference list in individual folders for each of your interviewers (if you do not know how many interviewers, bring 3)
- Paper and pen to write down the names of the people who are on the interview panel. Write down everything you can remember immediately after the interview, especially requests made by the panel or promises you made in turn. Always be able to follow through on their first request.

- **DURING the Interview:**

- **POSITIVITY WINS:**
 - Be Authentic, Upbeat, Confident, Candid, and Concise! It is usually only 1 hour- you can do it!
 - If you are nervous, focus on answering in an intelligent, confident, and eager manner. The nerves will be overlooked.
 - Don't focus on the negative; find something positive about your current position, even if it is an unpleasant environment. People like people who are happy.
- **ARTICULATE:**
 - Provide clear examples/success stories (and challenges) you can point to from previous experience
 - Consider the S.T.A.R¹ method or similar approach when answering behavioral or situation based questions (S-Situation, T-Task, A-Action, R-Result)
 - For leadership roles, it is important to have examples of managing/resolving conflict, handling difficult personalities, understanding various leadership styles and varying visions.
 - Prepare 2-3 questions to ask interviewers; this shows investment in the job and makes you a more attractive candidate
- **EYE CONTACT:** Appropriate eye contact expresses confidence and self-esteem and shows respect.
- **FOCUS:** Remember to silence your phone/devices, do not chew gum, do not eat lunch/snack

- **AFTER the Interview:**

- **SHOW GRATITUDE:**
 - Within 24-36 hours of your interview write a brief email thanking them for their time and reiterate your interest.
- **PATIENCE:**
 - Being too pushy can backfire. Call-backs or additional follow-up emails should be done sparingly if you do not hear a response within a designated time frame.

¹ Simpson, Mike, "How to Master the STAR Method for Interview Questions", Last modified (n.d.), Accessed November 20, 2018, <https://theinterviewguys.com/star-method/>