Career Services for Graduate Students & How to Ace the Video Interview

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MASTER’S and PhD STUDENTS, and POSTDOCS (MPP)

CAREER SERVICES

icc.ucdavis.edu/mpp

UC DAVIS
INTERNSHIP AND CAREER CENTER

530 752-2855
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CAREER SERVICES FOR GRAD STUDENTS AND POSTDOCS

• 1-ON-1 confidential career advising appointments via phone & zoom
  - 30 minutes except where noted
  - Career exploration
  - Internship advising
  - Job search
  - CV/resume help
  - Cover letter help
  - Interview preparation
  - Job negotiation
  - Networking skills
  - Faculty job application

**Available up to 1 year after graduation

Schedule at https://ucdavis.joinhandshake.com/
CAREER SERVICES FOR GRAD STUDENTS AND POSTDOCS

Job search support group

- Outreach to classes, student groups, and events
- New ICC virtual services
  - YouTube channel: https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLQTTm0DzuqzuPnt3Ub3gjGofEt7RWmu
  - Document review: Document Review | Internship and Career Center (ucdavis.edu)
- Career fairs:
  Internship and Career Center - Internship and Career Fairs (ucdavis.edu)
- LinkedIn lunches
- Workshops and panels
- Job search support group
- Company info sessions
- Career treks (site visits) – gov./non-profit/industry
- Courses: AMS 298: Designing your professional life
Subscribe to receive event reminders, job postings, and more at:

https://signup.e2ma.net/signup/1927157/1918265/
UPCOMING EVENTS

• **Winter Internship and Career Fair**
  - Wednesday, February 24
  - 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.
  - Handshake platform

• **GCC PhD & Masters Virtual Career Expo**
  - Wednesday, March 3
  - 6 a.m. – 4 p.m.
  - CareerEco Platform

• **Leaders for the Future Recruitment**
  - Application Deadline: Monday, March 29, 9 a.m.

• **Future Program**
  - Applications deadline: Wednesday, March 10, 11:59 p.m.
TYPES OF VIRTUAL INTERVIEWS

Format:
• One-on-one
• Group
• Panel
• Informal vs. formal

Technology:
• Phone
• Zoom/Skype
• Recording answers to prompts
• AI
INTERVIEW STAGES

• **Screening**
  - Do you have the necessary qualifications?
  - HR professional
  - Phone/recorded answers/AI/video

• **First round**
  - One-on-one with hiring manager
  - Experience and skills, work history, availability, qualifications

• **Second round and above**
  - More in-depth one-on-ones, panel, or day-long interview
  - Meet with management and other employees
INTERVIEW PURPOSE

Employer:
• Are you who you say you are?
• Are you a good fit for the position/team/company?

You:
• Sell yourself (be yourself)
• Tell your story
• Demonstrate your fit for the position/team/company
• Determine if the position is a good fit for you
BEFORE THE INTERVIEW

- **Research** the organization and interviewers
  - Website
  - LinkedIn
  - Informational interviews
  - Past employees
  - Glassdoor
  - Handshake

CONNECT WITH PEOPLE IN YOUR NETWORK
BEFORE THE INTERVIEW

• **Draft a list of questions** that demonstrate interest in position/org
  - Write down specific discussion points/questions for interviewers
  - I saw your recent article on xyz...
  - I am very interested in your recent project on xyz

**Anticipate potential short notice between application and interview**
BEFORE THE INTERVIEW

Employer Questions

- Why is the position vacant?
- How would you describe the company culture?
- Can you name a favorite project you have worked on?
- What might training for this position look like?
- What are the opportunities for upward mobility?
- What are your favorite and least favorite aspects of your position?

***Focus on the job and company, not on specific benefits/what you may gain from the position (can save these questions for post-offer negotiations)***
BEFORE THE INTERVIEW

• Update your LinkedIn
• Record a professional voicemail message
• Print copies of your documents and have ready
• Send email confirming details (format, technology, duration, etc.)
BEFORE THE INTERVIEW

- Study the job description
- Review any technical knowledge they may ask about
- Develop SAR stories
  - Key hard and soft skills
  - Tailored to job description
- Practice SAR stories/interview questions **OUT LOUD**
  - Mirror
  - Other people
  - Record yourself and review
  - Dog/cat

**Schedule mock interviews**
Behavioral Questions

- Tell me about a time when.
- Describe a situation in which.

Use the S-A-R method to answer questions
Situation → Action → Result

- Prepare 5-10 SAR stories. Be specific!
- Touch on multiple skills
- Practice but don’t memorize or read - natural and conversational
S-A-R METHOD

SITUATION (OR CHALLENGE)
Think of a situation in which you were involved that had a positive outcome

ACTION
Specify the actions you took to complete the task and/or respond to the challenge

RESULTS
Communicate the positive result of your actions!
Example Question: Tell me about a time you had to complete a task within a tight deadline. Describe the situation, and explain how you handled it.

Example Answer: While I typically like to plan out my work in stages and complete it piece by piece, I can also achieve high-quality work results under tight deadlines. Once, at a former company, an employee left days before the imminent deadline of one of his projects. I was asked to assume responsibility for it, with only a few days to learn about and complete the project. I created a task force and delegated work, and we all completed the assignment with a day to spare. In fact, I believe I thrive when working under tight deadlines.
“VALUE ADDED” STATEMENTS

- These statements explain how your experiences align with the job
- Never assume that an employer will see the connection between the work described & the job
  - Make the connection for them
INTERVIEWING FOR FACULTY POSITIONS

• Main interview goal is to determine “fit” within the department
  • Teaching potential (teaching seminar)
  • Research potential
  • Collegiality
• Screening interview (virtual) followed by campus visit (usually in person but currently virtual)
DURING THE INTERVIEW

• Qualities interviewers look for
  - Confidence: speak clearly, loud enough to hear
  - Enthusiasm: smile, engage with the interviewer(s)
  - Communication skills: can you articulate your skills clearly?
  - Goals: Where do you want to be in 5 years?
DURING THE INTERVIEW

• Anticipate thesis talk
  - Have a brief overview prepared
  - Target to audience – HR/business/scientist
• Main question categories
  - What are your relevant skills?
  - How do you work individually and as part of a team?
  - How do you handle supervision?
  - Why did you choose this field?
  - What about this position will be the biggest challenge for you?
  - Why should we hire you?
  - Why do you want to work for us?
Tell me about yourself.

- Most frequently asked by employers
- “Elevator pitch”
- Keep response to 1-2 minutes
  - Cover educational background, relevant experiences and interests
- Wrap up with how your past experience has positioned you well for this specific role
DURING THE INTERVIEW

• Listen to questions carefully before answering
• Make sure you answer what is asked
  - Leadership vs. Teamwork
• Keep answers brief and bring answers back to position
• If not certain you’ve answered fully, ask if elaboration needed
• Can ask for a moment to think before responding

FRIENDLY SMILE
Be pleasant to everyone you meet; make small talk

GOOD EYE CONTACT
• Ask what next steps are and thank them
• Get contact info
• Send **personalized thank you emails** within 24 hours
  - Prep shell ahead of time
  - ASAP after the interview, jot down notes/what you discussed with each interviewer before you forget
PHONE and VIRTUAL INTERVIEW TIPS

• Personal
  - Look into camera to imitate eye contact
  - Turn off self view
  - Physical posture affects voice: sit up straight, smile
  - Have resume and other documents/notes handy
  - Don’t read scripted responses
  - Professional head to toe
PHONE and VIRTUAL INTERVIEW TIPS

• Surroundings
  - Quiet/distraction free
  - Prepare your background/use professional virtual background
  - Don’t sit in chair that swivels
  - Post notes on wall behind camera or on sticky notes around screen
PHONE and VIRTUAL INTERVIEW TIPS

• Technology
  - Test setup with family or friend
  - Put computer on stable surface so no shaky camera
  - Check lighting
  - Ensure camera at eye level
  - Use headphones/earbuds if needed for clear audio
  - Know backup options if internet fails – phone contact etc.
AI INTERVIEW TIPS

• Interacting with AI bot
• More common with large corporations, increases efficiency
• Software can analyze response
  - Match with job description
  - Measures voice, smiling, eye contact
  - Generates report and/or responses reviewed by human
  - Minimize um/like/you know – interpreted as lack of confidence

Question displays → time to think (e.g. 30 seconds) → records answer
KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Research organization and people
- Prepare SAR responses
- Practice interview question responses out loud
- Prep virtual space
- Test technology and have backup
- Send thank you emails

ICC YouTube Videos on Interviewing

https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLQTtMm0DzuqwA5QXIdjkvORFIMQqPWBWc
PRACTICE – Breakout Rooms

• Spend a few minutes drafting a SAR response to the below prompt
• Take turns sharing
• Provide constructive feedback

Give an example of a time when you were an effective team member.