

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

UCDAVIS
INTERNSHIP AND
CAREER CENTER

530 752-2855
icc.ucdavis.edu
[@ucdavisicc](https://twitter.com/ucdavisicc)

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=PLQTtMm0DzuqzuPnt3Ub3gjfGofEt7RWmu>

- 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

WEEKLY GRADCAREERS NEWSLETTER

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

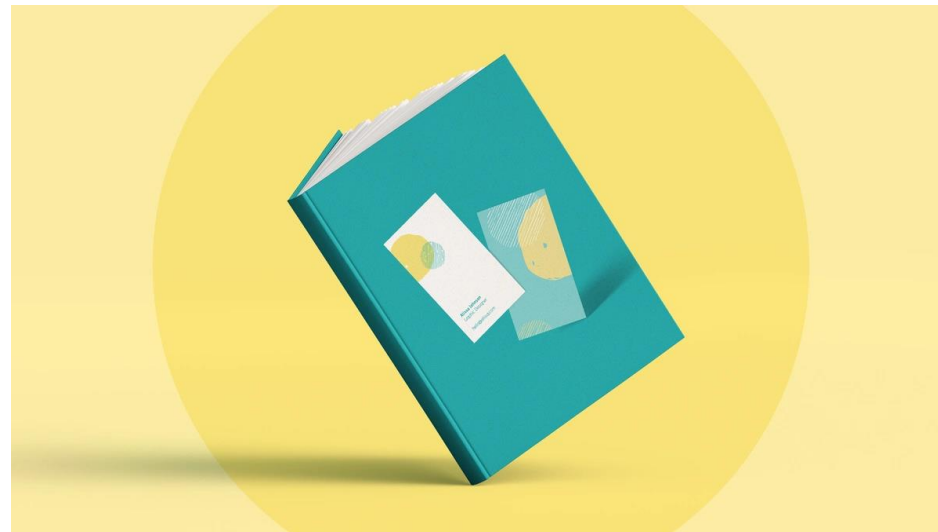
Employer Questions

- 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**



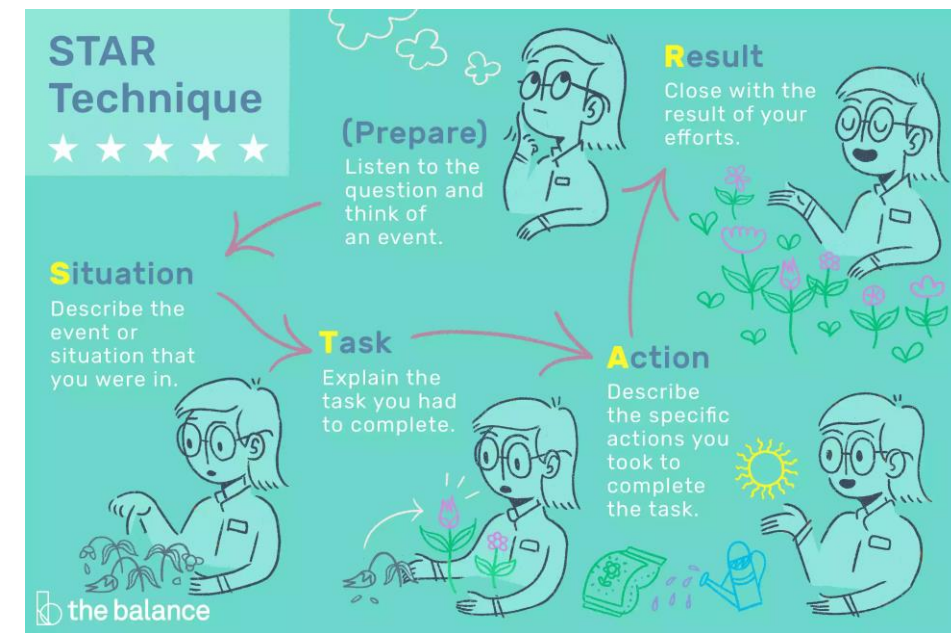
SAR RESPONSES

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!

SAR RESPONSES

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

END/AFTER THE INTERVIEW

- 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=PLQTtMm0DzuqWA5QXldjkvORFIMQqPWBWc>

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.