Successful Interviewing
Before you Start Applying...

- Cell phone – ring back tone?
- Voicemail
- Email Address
- Social media presence
  - Google yourself!
- Know yourself and what you’re looking for
  - Cast too wide of net and you’ll come up empty
Ways to Show Value, Make an Impression

- Research the organization
- Understand the position
- Know your strengths & value
- Talk about your strengths
- Learn to answer different types of questions
- Practice your interviewing skills
- Create an interview portfolio
- INTERVIEW
- Send a thank-you letter
Research the Organization

How?
- Company / organization websites
- Informational interviews/Network connections
- Annual reports
- Articles, newspapers, trade journals
- Directories, financial sources and indexes
  - Moody’s Industrial Manual, Thomas Register
Understand the Position

Know what the employer is looking for

- Print the job description, highlight “skill” key words
- Identify at least the top 5 things they are most looking for
- If you don’t have a job description, ask questions about it early in the interview
  - What can you can tell me about this position?
  - What results do you expect to see from somebody in this position?
Know your Strengths and Value

- Skills, Accomplishments & Achievements
  - Extra-curricular activities, achievements, and good experiences are strong evidence to help in understanding the type of person you are
- Technical skills
- A strong academic record
- Also, your ability to...
  - Place problems in a wide but relevant perspective
  - Work efficiently with others in a team
  - Communicate effectively
  - Take initiative to get things done
Before the Interview

- Make a good first impression by being professional and considerate when you confirm interview appointments

- Email Response:
  - Greeting and Closing: Say “hello” and “thank you”
  - Body: Be concise. Spell and grammar check. No “texting” language and emoticons

- Phone Response:
  - Speak clearly and in a pleasant voice
  - If you leave a voicemail: say “thank you” and confirm the interview time and leave your contact information
From: Pete Carroll
Sent: Thursday, January 10, 2014 8:17 AM
To: cdawgydawg7@rocketmail.com
Subject: Invitation to Interview

Hello Mr. Kaepernick,
I would like to invite you to interview for the Orientation Leader position you applied for. Please select the times that work best for you: 2pm, 3pm or 4pm.

Look forward to hearing from you,
Pete

From: cdawgydawg7@rocketmail.com
Sent: Thursday, January 16, 2014 8:17 AM
To: Pete Carroll
Subject: Invitation to Interview

I want an intvw. at 2.
-Colin K.
Hello Mr. Wilson,
I would like to invite you to interview for the Orientation Leader position you applied for. Please select the times that work best for you: 2pm, 3pm or 4pm.

Look forward to hearing from you,
Pete

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Hello Mr. Carroll,
Thank you for the invitation. I would like to interview at 2:00 pm for the Orientation Leader position.

I look forward to learning about the position and meeting the team.

Sincerely,
Russell Wilson
What Employers are Looking for

- All questions employers ask are really the same question…
  - “How can you be valuable to me?”

You are trying to make a connection in the interview
Interviewing Basics

- Practice getting to your interview, arrive early
- Your interview begins the moment you pull into the parking lot
- Bring 3 copies of your resume and references, notebook and pen for taking notes
- Highlight 5 Key Skills Throughout Interview
  - Discuss strengths and experiences that match the job description
  - Tell about your strong points and back up your answers
- Dress to Impress – first impressions count
Interview Attire

**DO**

**Business casual**
- This interview look would be appropriate for these industries: IT, startups, teaching, entry-level government positions, environmental engineering, aerospace (non-management), architecture, health-care/life sciences, research, social media, advertising/PR and retail.
- Detail adds interest but doesn’t distract.
- Sweater and pants fit well.
- Casual, yet polished.
- Pants are appropriate length for heels.
- Could wear heels rather than flats to increase formality.

**Business professional**
- This more formal interview look works for these industries: Health-care management and sales, hospitality, administration, biotechnology, banking, personal financial services, academia, administration, hospitality, pharmaceutical sales and aerospace management.
- Blouse color, collar style go well with the suit.
- Minimal jewelry.
- Jacket not too short, not too long.
- Tip: Check yourself in the mirror before leaving the house.

**DON’T**

- Necktie too large.
- Tip: Avoid any bright or patterned clothing that may be distracting.
- Too tight.
- Cotton capris: too casual.
- Too informal; this would be a better outfit for shopping at Pike Place Market (with different shoes).

Meet the experts
- Local career experts Lisa Quast, CEO of Career Woman, Inc., and Josh Warborg, district president of Robert Half International, provided critiques of these outfits.

“Appropriate attire depends on the industry and company in which you will be interviewing, the geographic location and time of year.”

“Suits in conservative colors, such as black, gray or navy, paired with light, solid-colored shirts are a safe choice.”

Photos courtesy of Officeteam
Interview Attire

**DO**
- **Casual, yet polished**: A blazer can add a touch of formality.
- **Shirt**: Tie coordinate well with the suit.
- **Shirt cuffs**: Show only slightly at the wrist.
- **Shoes**: Polished.

**Tip**: To make the look less formal, the suit jacket can easily be removed.

**DON'T**
- **Untucked shirt**: Creates an unkempt, messy appearance.
- **Dress shirt and cotton khakis**: Are a mismatch.
- **Messy hair**: Too casual for any interview.
- **Tip**: Make sure your outfit is free of wrinkles and stains, your hair and nails are well-groomed, and your shoes are polished.

Shoes, socks not coordinated well with suit.

Photos courtesy of Officeteam.
Answering Questions

- Practice active and attentive listening
- Think through the answers you could give, don’t be afraid to ask for time to think
- Answer briefly and to the point - Be short and speak clearly - no more than 2 minutes
- Use only positive information
- Be yourself
- Seek clarification if you don’t understand question
- Keep your answers relevant to the question
Typical Questions

- Background Info – who you are
- Behavioral/Situational – tell a story
- Skill Based – technical
- Typical questions they like to ask you
- Questions you should ask them
- Glassdoor.com
- Legal and Illegal Questions
The First Question

- “Tell me about yourself”
  - The question that often starts the interview
  - Gives the first opportunity to outline your value
  - Remember to focus on the job description and your skills
  - The interviewer cares about the confidence, enthusiasm and passion with which you answer.
  - The biggest mistake you could make is pausing, stalling or fumbling at the onset of your answer, thus demonstrating a lack of self-awareness and self-esteem.
Tell a Story – Know Your Stories!

- Behavior Based Questions
  - Employers believe past actions predict future behavior
  - Think of examples/stories/scenarios

- Situational Questions
  - Interviewer describes a situation and asks how you would respond
  - Relate to real situation if possible (keep the STAR method in mind)
STAR – Situation, Task, Action, Result

- Use the STAR method when answering behavior questions
  - **Example:** Describe a time when you had to resolve a conflict in your professional life.
    - **Situation** – the context of what happened
    - **Task** – what you were supposed to do
    - **Action** – what you did to accomplish your task
    - **Result** – what you accomplished ***

During the interview:
- Respond to ALL questions with a positive answer
- Try to control nervous habits
Possible Interview Questions...

- What is your greatest weakness?
- Tell me of a time in which you offered a solution to a difficult problem?
- What motivates you most in a job?
- Where do you see yourself in 5 years?
- What can you offer us?
Create an Interview Portfolio

- How do I start making one?
  - Decide on a format (binder, online, etc.)
  - Start collecting artifacts that demonstrate the skills & accomplishments you might want to discuss in interviews
  - Websites, marketing materials, charts, flyers, certificates, awards, research papers, presentations, thank you notes, etc.
  - For each artifact, create a title and short description
  - Store artifacts in binder or electronic file
How do I use one in interviews?

- Review job description for key skills
- Choose 5-10 strengths and artifacts that demonstrate those
- Create targeted portfolio for each interview
- Include title page and table of contents
- When discussing a skill during an interview…show your proof!
Group Interviews

- Hiring managers utilize group interviews to see how candidates work with others
- Stay away from “stealing thunder”
- Share what makes you unique
- Listen and build on what others say
- Be yourself!
The Phone Interview...

- Smile - it comes through in your voice.
- Speak directly into the phone.
- Don't smoke, chew gum, eat or drink anything. Your interviewer can hear everything over the phone.
- Stand up. Your voice sounds stronger.
- Avoid ah, er, so, hum. This habit is especially noticeable on the telephone. Practice to avoid filler words.

- **A Suit for a Phone Interview?** The Chatty Professor – “You'd be surprised just how much your nonverbals can impact the words you say. In fact, nonverbal communication can "count" as much as 90% over the spoken word!”
The Skype Interview...

- Dress for success - Dress how you would for a face to face interview
- Clear any distractions - Position yourself in a quiet and de-cluttered room with good lighting so that you are visible
- Conduct a trial run - Test to make sure your audio and video are working properly beforehand
- Look at the camera - If you are looking at the screen and not the camera it will appear as though you aren’t looking at the employer
- Control body language - Over zealous gestures can appear distracting to the employer and may also distort the image to seem blurry as quick movements tend to lag during video calls
- Keep a professional profile - Avoid username and profile information that could give your interviewer the wrong impression as this will be the first detail they see before the interview
Closing an Interview

- Always ask a few questions at end of interview
  - Questions that show some forethought – a strategic question
  - Questions that show you’ve done your research
  - Questions that demonstrate your desire to work for the organization
  - What you should expect to have happen next in the hiring process – leave knowing when you should expect to hear the outcome of the interview, etc.

- Recap 2-3 of the main reasons why the employer should hire you
Other Things to Keep in Mind

- Don’t talk too fast
- Filler words, “um, uh, and”
- Think before you answer, pause
- Professional attire
- Tell and show
- Project self confidence, be confident in who you are and what you have done
- Know WHY you believe you are the best candidate for the job
- Update and edit your web presence and social networking sites.
What NOT to do.....

- Prepare at the last minute
- Arrive too early
- Underdress
- Ignore your interviewers
- Ask about the salary
- Come without questions
Send a Thank You Letter

- Sending a thank-you letter allows you to:
  - Express appreciation
  - Demonstrate professionalism
  - Writing sample
  - Restate your interest, skills, and match
  - Address an issue you forgot or want to emphasize
  - Stand out from the crowd

PRACTICE PRACTICE PRACTICE!!
Questions?

Career Services
Student Success Center, UW1 160
(425) 352-3706
careers@uwb.edu

SUCCESSFUL INTERVIEWING
HTTP://WWW.UWB.EDU/CAREERS