

Tips for Interviewing in the U.S.

1. **Make a good first impression!** Arrive early to your interview appointment (at least 10-15 minutes). Arriving late is considered rude.
2. Treat everyone you meet with **respect**, regardless of their title or level in the company.
3. Be mindful of your non-verbal communication:
 - Give a **firm, yet short, handshake** to show confidence.
 - Keep a **positive, friendly attitude** throughout the interview, even if you are feeling stressed or tired.
 - **Don't fidget** – this means making small movements, especially with your hands or feet, when we are nervous. Often this is when we play with our hair, shake our leg, or move around in a chair.
 - Maintain good **eye contact**. Keeping eye contact shows that you are listening, while not looking at others is disrespectful. But be aware not to stare! 😊
 - Respect other people's **personal space**. Personal space is important and people do not like to get too close.
 - **Dress professionally** and appropriate for your career field.
4. Be **confident and enthusiastic** in marketing your qualifications for the position. Self-promotion may not be natural for you, but U.S. culture is highly individualistic and direct.
5. **Prepare questions to ask the employers:** The employer will expect you to ask questions that show you have done research on the company and the position.
6. **Emphasize your unique skill sets that you bring as an international student.** You have more than just your education and language skills to share! Your experience of studying in the U.S. has allowed you to develop a skill set that is highly sought after by employers, such as: international perspective, self-confidence, ability to cope with ambiguous situations, adaptable, learns quickly and tolerance for other opinions.
7. **Be aware of illegal questions** employers can't ask you. In the U.S., it is illegal for employers to ask questions about your immigration status, age, race, nationality, religion, sexual orientation, marital status or disability. See the back of this handout for more information (referenced from uwb.edu/careers/job-search-tools/interviews).
8. Ensure that you fully understand your **work authorization options** under your immigration status and respond accurately. If you are unsure, come ask CIE! Employers are allowed to ask you:
 - *Are you authorized to work in the US?* : If you are on CPT or OPT, you can answer “yes”.
 - *Do you need visa sponsorship in the future?* This question is about H1B work visa. You can answer “yes”.
 - Attend one of our CPT or OPT Workshops to learn more! uwb.edu/cie/employment
9. Practice, practice, practice!
 - **Practice with a Career Advisor** at UWB Career Services: uwb.edu/careers. You can also practice with your friends or classmates that you feel comfortable with.
 - Practice your public speaking skills through class projects and student organizations.
 - The more time you spend practicing and talking about your experiences, the more confident and articulate you will be in interviews. So, share, share, share!
10. **Send a Thank You message after your interview!** This can be a handwritten card, or if it is time sensitive you can send by email. See a sample at uwb.edu/careers/job-search-tools/coverletters/sample-thankyou



UW Bothell Center for International Education
uwbintl@uw.edu uwb.edu/cie/employment

Inquiry Area	Illegal Questions	Legal Questions
Age	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An employer may not require an applicant to state his/her age, date of birth, or ask that he/she produce records to prove his/her age An employer is also prohibited from restricting its application process to “young, college age, or recent college graduate “ applicants Asking for the applicant’s year of graduation from high school is illegal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An employer may ask whether an individual meets the minimum age requirement set by law. “Are you over the age of 18?” is an appropriate question Employers may also ask questions that relate to a bona fide occupation qualification.
National Origin/ Citizenship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are you a U.S. citizen? Where were you/your parents born? What is your “native tongue”? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are you authorized to work in the United States? What languages do you read/speak/write fluently? (This question is legal only if this ability is relevant to the performance of the job.)
Race/Color	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All questions regarding an individual’s race/color will be deemed illegal under state and federal laws. 	None!
Religion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any question regarding an applicant’s religious beliefs, denomination, or any questions about religious customs or holidays observed are illegal. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> After an individual is hired, an employer may inquire about religious accommodations. It should be noted that there are some exceptions to the general rule for religious institutions and organizations
Marital/Family Status	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What’s your marital status? With whom do you live? Do you plan to have a family? When? How many kids do you have? What are your child-care arrangements? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Would you be willing to relocate if necessary? Would you be able and willing to travel as needed for the job? (This question is legal if it is asked of all applicants for the job.) Would you be able and willing to work overtime as necessary? (This question is legal if it is asked of all applicants for the job.)
Sexual Orientation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An employer should not inquire with respect to an individual’s sexual orientation. 	None!
Affiliations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What clubs or social organizations do you belong to? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> List any professional or trade groups or other organizations that you belong to that you consider relevant to your ability to perform this job
Personal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How tall are you? How much do you weigh? (Questions about height and weight are not acceptable unless minimum standards are essential for the safe performance of the job.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are you able to lift a 50-pound weight and carry it 100 yards, as that is part of the job?
Disabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do you have disabilities? Please complete the following medical history. Have you had any recent or past illnesses or operations? If yes, list them and give dates when these occurred. What was the date of your last physical exam? How’s your family’s health? When did you lose your eyesight? How? Do you need an accommodation to perform the job? (this question can be asked only after a job offer has been made.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are you able to perform the essential functions of this job? (This question is legal if the interviewer has thoroughly described the job.) Can you demonstrate how you would perform the following job-related functions? As part of the hiring process, after a job offer has been made you will be required to undergo a medical exam. (Exam results must be kept strictly confidential, except medical/safety personnel may be informed if emergency medical treatment is required, and supervisors may be informed about necessary job accommodations, based on exam results.)
Arrest Record	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have you ever been arrested? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have you ever been convicted of __? (The crime named should be reasonably related to the performance of the job in question.)
Pregnancy- Generally Illegal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All questions specifically regarding pregnancy, future child plans, or the number of children an applicant has are illegal. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Questions as to duration of stay on job or anticipated absences if made to both men and women.
Photograph	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is illegal to request a photograph prior to hiring an individual. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> After hiring an individual, a photograph may be requested for identification purposes only.
Citizenship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Generally, an employer should not inquire as to the citizenship of an individual or require that an individual present proof of citizenship prior to the interview. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An employer may inquire as to whether an applicant is authorized to work in the United States
Military	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If you’ve been in the military, were you honorably discharged? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In what branch of the Armed Forces did you serve? What type of training or education did you receive in the military?

