Guidelines - Before the Interview

1. Research, research, research
   - Self Assessment – Know yourself!
     • Skills, talents, abilities, strengths, weaknesses, interests, education, values, goals
     • Know your resume inside and out; have your stories ready
     • Career goals – What do I want to do?
     • Types of work you enjoy and types you do not enjoy
     • Work environments or conditions in which you are comfortable and those in which you are not comfortable
   - Employer Research
     • Use the internet and research the organization’s webpage
     • Contact your local library for additional research alternatives – business directories, annual reports, databases of newspaper and periodical articles
     • Ask those in your network who may be familiar with the company
     • Talk with current or former employees

2. Practice makes perfect
   - Familiarize yourself with common questions
   - Be prepared to give examples of your personal characteristics, accomplishments, failures, reactions under stress or difficult circumstances
   - Practice with friends and family or in front of a mirror. Also, contact Career Development to schedule a mock interview session.

3. Prepare employer questions

4. Choose professional attire

5. Call to confirm your appointment one (working) day in advance

6. Review directions & parking

7. Prepare copies of your resume and reference page (minimum of 3)

Guidelines - During the Interview

1. Beginning of Interview
   - Allow plenty of time to arrive five minutes early
   - Make sure that all cell phones are turned off
   - If brochures or additional company-related reading materials are available, read those while you wait
   - Bring extra resumes and reference pages
   - Bring pen, professional notepad or portfolio (with questions for employer)
   - Always be courteous, polite, and professional to everyone
   - Introduce yourself with a smile, eye contact, and a firm handshake
   - Use your interviewer’s name
   - Interviewer may begin with small talk (work to find something in common)
2. Middle of Interview
   - Maintain good posture and eye contact (avoid fidgeting)
   - Listen! (and give visual and verbal cues; use positive body language to show your interest)
   - Project your voice and speak clearly
   - Use correct grammar and diction (do not use slang)
   - Use your action verbs
   - Don’t “think,” “guess,” or “feel” about things (indecisiveness signals lack of confidence)
   - Give clear, concise answers that offer specific examples (do not ramble and do not give one word answers)
   - Sell yourself (be confident and enthusiastic)
   - Don’t forget to smile!
   - Do not dominate the interview (follow the interviewer’s lead)
   - Remain positive (negativity will leave a negative impression; do not whine, complain, gripe, or bad mouth)
   - Be honest (do not lie or exaggerate)
   - It's okay to pause and regroup if you are feeling flustered

3. End of Interview
   - Ask (3 – 5) insightful questions at the appropriate time
   - Phrase your questions so that you sound confident
     • For example, instead of asking “What do you do here?”, ask the interviewer “What does a typical day look like?”
   - Find out what happens next and reaffirm your interest
   - Thank the interviewer for her/his time
   - Ask for the interviewer’s business card

Guidelines - After the Interview
1. Write & carefully proofread a thank you letter
   - Send by email immediately following the interview
   - Additional thank you letters can be sent through the mail
   - If you decide to mail a letter, type and print it on quality resume paper
   - Address to the individual who interviewed you
   - If you have multiple interviewers, you should a customized thank you letter to each of them
   - Express appreciation for opportunity
   - Reaffirm things you liked and/or ways you'll meet their needs
   - Add important things that you forgot
   - If you decide to decline the job, please see sample withdrawal letter available from Career Development
   - If you want the job more than ever, show enthusiasm

2. Make follow-up call within 2 weeks if you have not yet received a response

3. Record notes about the interview including name of interviewer(s) and your analysis of the experience (what went well, what you could improve upon)