

PREPARING FOR THE INTERVIEW

TYPES OF INTERVIEWS, PREPARING FOR THE INTERVIEW, SALARY NEGOTIATION, AND INAPPROPRIATE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS



Practice makes perfect! Call Career Education at 814-332-2381 to schedule a mock interview with a Career Counselor.



After your mock interview is scheduled, send your Career Counselor a copy of your resume and the job description for which you are applying. The job description will help your Career Counselor develop tailored questions that you might experience in the actual interview.



Attend workshops, employer presentations, and career fairs each semester to stay connected to the job and internship search process and to build your network. Continue to visit Career Education to learn about dressing for success and job and internship search strategies.

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TYPES OF INTERVIEWS

THE BASICS

An interview is a meeting between an applicant and employer that allows an employer to get know you by assessing your skills and qualifications, and determining whether you are a “good fit” for the job/internship. The interview is also an opportunity for you to determine if the opportunity and company is a good fit for you.

There are different ways interviews can occur: in-person, via phone call, or over video-conferencing (Skype, Google Hangouts, etc.). These interviews may be structured using specific questions from a list, or unstructured feeling more like a conversation, where the interviewer may shape follow-up questions based on your responses. Regardless of the type of interview, preparation is the key to your success. Understand the type of interview you will encounter and be prepared to have more than one interview to get a job!

PHONE & VIDEO CONFERENCING INTERVIEWS

Phone interview:

Many companies screen candidates over the phone before conducting in-person interviews. Prepare for this as you would an in-person interview as this screening often leads to the second/in-person interview.

- Phone interviews typically last about 30 minutes
- If using a cell phone, make sure it is fully charged and has good service, or use a landline
- Consider using LinkedIn to find an image of the interviewer to help visualize the conversation

Video conferencing (Skype, Google Hangouts) interview:

Companies screen candidates in a video conference interview to determine which candidates to invite for face-to-face interviews. This type of interview can also be used for a second/follow-up interview to save on travel costs.

- Be sure to register with the video-conferencing program they are using in advance and test your connection with a friend
- Make sure the internet connection is smooth and audio is working, look directly at the camera, and make sure other computer notifications are turned off

Important tips for success:

- Clarify the time of the interview, especially if you are in different time zones, and make sure you know who is calling whom
- Find a quiet, clean place that is free from interruptions
- Wait a few seconds before you respond to make sure the interviewer has finished talking
- Have your resume and notes in front of you and a glass of water nearby
- Dress in proper interview attire for both phone and video-conferencing interviews; even if the employer can't see you, this will help get you in the right frame of mind



IN-PERSON INTERVIEWS

One-on-one/traditional interview:

- This is the most common type of interview
- The candidate meets with the interviewer, and sometimes others members of the search committee or team on the job site

Panel interview:

- You will meet with several people at once including your potential peers, supervisors, and sometimes people from other parts of the company that you may have to collaborate with in the position for which you are applying

Group interview:

- Group interviews can include you and other candidates being interviewed simultaneously by the employer; you may engage in some group discussion/activity with other candidates and then meet individually with the employer afterwards
- Interviewing potential employees in a group allows employers to see how well you “fit” within an already established team or how you work collaboratively

Meal Interview:

- The meal interview could be one-on-on with your future boss or with a group of potential colleagues
- As with a panel interview, interviewers will be evaluating how you interact within the group and what you are like outside of the office
- Do NOT drink alcohol during a meal interview, even if the employer says it is allowed or is planning to have a drink
- Chose a meal that will not make a big mess and is easy to eat; for example, chicken wings will create quite a mess and can be very distracting
- Take small bites so you are able to talk through the meal
- Although this might take place in a more informal environment, it is still an important part of the interview process so remember to dress and act professionally

Important tips for success:

- Dress in proper business formal attire for all rounds of the interview, even if the culture of the company is casual
- When interviewing with more than one person be sure to speak with all of them. Answer questions from the person who asked, but make eye contact with others around you
- Use good manners and be polite to everyone you meet, including the receptionist or custodian, employers often check with these individuals regarding their interaction with you





PREPARING FOR THE INTERVIEW

THE BASICS

Preparing for an interview takes time and practice. It is important to prepare in the same way for each new interview. Spend time researching the organization, developing your elevator pitch, practicing your responses to interview questions, mapping out your travel, preparing your outfit, and practicing your handshake. Taking time to work through each of these steps before the interview will help alleviate some of the most common stressors.

STEPS TO SUCCESS

Outline your day:

- When you get a call/email to set up an interview, try to find out as much information about the interview process as you can so you know what to expect and can better prepare yourself
- Ask the individual setting up the interview about the format of the interview (phone, Skype, in-person, etc.), approximately how long the interview last, and with whom will you be interviewing (if possible, get the names/position of the interviewer(s))

Do your research:

- Identify the mission, vision, and/or strategic plan of the organization
- Review annual reports, newsletters, news articles, and company reviews on websites like Glassdoor
- Familiarize yourself with company policies and understand who their competitors are
- Learn the interviewers' names and backgrounds (when possible) using LinkedIn and Gator Connect
- Draft a few questions to ask at the end of your interview, always ask at least one question before closing the interview
- Conduct informational interviews with individuals in your network to learn more about the company/opportunity

Update your social media:

- Ensure your LinkedIn profile is up-to-date and other social media accounts are appropriate
- Make certain that your personal social media profiles (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, etc.) are free of any inappropriate content

Plan your attire:

- Always dress in business professional attire for interviews, even if the company culture is casual. Review the "Dress for Success" guide in Career Education and view the photos on our website and social media for ideas on appropriate dress
- Try on your interview outfit ahead of time; make sure it fits, is clean and wrinkle free, and make sure your shoes are comfortable and that you can walk in them; have the entire outfit ready PRIOR to the day of the interview
- Dress for the weather – wear boots in the winter and plan to change

Practice your handshake:

- With most handshakes, the person who has the most authority takes the lead; therefore, in the case of an interview, the interviewer will generally be the one to offer their hand first
- If sitting, stand so that you are face to face with the person, smile, and make eye contact

- Accompany your handshake by stating your first and last name and providing a friendly greeting (nice to meet you, thank you for the opportunity, etc.)
- The pressure should be firm, not limp, and do not squeeze the opposite hand too hard
- Use the same technique regardless if the person is the same/opposite gender

Map out your travel:

- Map out the route and save the information in your electronic GPS
- Print out directions as a back-up in case your technology fails
- Know specifics about the location (parking information, building and office number, etc.)
- If possible, do a “practice run” and travel to the location to smooth out any nerves and locate the entrance to the building



Important tips for success:

- While it is good to practice, you don’t want to sound rehearsed
- If you are going to an interview that requires you to have a portfolio or work samples, prepare those ahead of time; make sure samples adequately reflect your work and “match” the position you are applying for
- Pick up an “Interview Survival Kit” in the Career Education Office to practice different types of interview questions or schedule a Mock Interview to get practice and feedback
- If possible, attend the meetings with employers on campus to help learn more about the company or contact alumni
- Do not pick the day before an interview to drastically change your look/hairstyle



QUESTIONS TO ASK EMPLOYERS

An employer will expect you to ask questions and not having any could make you look uninterested or unprepared. Write down questions ahead of time as you conduct your research on the company and also as you think of them during the interview. You do not always have wait until the end of the interview to ask questions, if you can work them into the interview, then go for it!

- What are the responsibilities and objectives of the position?
- What skills have you found to be valuable in this position?
- What improvements would you like to see in this area?
- Who will evaluate my performance? In what way?
- Why do you enjoy working for this company?
- Is there anything else about my application/qualifications you would like to discuss?
- Can I provide you with any other information to help you in the decision-making process?
- What is the timeline for hiring this position? When will I hear from you?
- What will a typical day in this role look like?



Important tips for success:

- Do not ask questions you could easily find the answer to or should already know after having read the job description
- When researching the company, click through the website instead of just reviewing the home page. You can often find valuable and interesting initiatives listed further into the website which can help formulate questions and expand your knowledge



INTERVIEW DAY

BEFORE THE INTERVIEW

Prepare for success:

- Set your alarm and get up on time
- Eat something prior to the interview, avoiding foods that will cause bad breath
- Plan to arrive early. Typically arrive: 15 minutes early = on time; on-time = late; late = not hired
- Go to the interview alone - if you have to get a ride to the interview, get dropped off away from the building
- Organize and carry only have the items you need in a professional bag including: several copies of your resume and references list, writing utensil, and padfolio or a notepad
- Bring business cards

Important tips for success:

- If you are having a phone/internet interview, make sure all technology is working
- For on-site interviews, leave early giving yourself extra time to get there in case your commute gets interrupted or slowed down by something unexpected
- Avoid bulky or multiple bags
- Bring breath mints that dissolve quickly, we recommend Listerine Pocketpaks
- Do not take coffee or other beverages that might make your breath smell unfavorable. If you plan to bring a drink, take only water in a clear, non-reusable water bottle and ask if the interviewer minds if you have it on the table



DURING THE INTERVIEW

Keep calm and...

- Take time upon arrival to use the restroom, double check your outfit, get a drink of water, and clear your head
- Give a proper handshake and introduce yourself to everyone you meet
- Make and keep good eye contact with everyone you meet throughout the interview
- Speak slowly and watch for interviewer facial expressions and body language
- Keep your posture open and sit up straight
- If possible, collect business cards from everyone you meet to ensure you have the correct the names and contact information so you can follow up

Important tips for success:

- Keep your energy and enthusiasm up! This is especially important for phone interviews, since the interviewer cannot see you or read your body language
- Make sure your cell phone is turned off – not just on vibrate



CLOSING THE INTERVIEW

You're almost there:

- The interviewer will leave time at the end for you to ask questions signaling the interview will be ending shortly
- Always ask questions, having none will make you look unprepared. If no one has addressed it yet, please ask, "What are the next steps in the hiring process and what is your timeline?"
- NEVER ask about salary or benefits at this stage. Talking about compensation prematurely signals that you are more concerned with the money than being a good fit for the company. Wait until the job has been offered before asking
- Shake the interviewers hand and thank them for taking time to talk with you, reiterating your interest in being hired

AFTER THE INTERVIEW

The thank you letter is an important part of the job interview process and should not be omitted. Interviewers may use this as another point of evaluation for each candidate. In addition to being polite, this is a good opportunity to reiterate your interest and reference a part of the job or organization that made a positive impression on you; thus, demonstrating to the employer that you are enthusiastic about the opportunity and were engaged in the interview process.

Take or review your notes:

- If you did not take notes during the interview, make a few notes immediately after while your thoughts are fresh, this can help when writing thank you notes and preparing for second interviews
- Jot down something about each person on the back of business cards

Write your letter:

- Send an e-mail or mail a typed letter or hand-written notecard (make sure it is legible)
- Send one thank you to each individual interviewer; try to make each one unique
- Follow up immediately within 24/48 hours after the interview
- Create a brief draft and proof read it several times before sending

Important tips for success:

- Evaluate the interview/ opportunity: Did the interview match your expectations? Do you have any concerns?
- If more than a week has passed beyond the date when you were told you would hear something from the employer, call or email to politely inquire about the status of the organization's decision-making process. Sometimes timelines get changed for reasons outside of anyone's control
- A polite email or call shows that you are still interested in the position and may encourage the employer to respond. In your inquiry, mention the following: name of the person with whom you interviewed, time and place of the interview, position for which you are applying, and ask the status of your application
- If you plan to withdraw from the interview process for any reason, alert the point of contact, interviewer, or human resources as soon as possible and plan to send a thank you to the employer for their time and consideration



SAMPLE THANK YOU LETTER

Your Name
Address
City, State Zip

Month Day, Year

Company Name
Address
City, State Zip

Write directly to the person you met. If you interviewed with a panel, you could write one letter to the chair of the interview committee and ask that your appreciation be shared with the group.

Dear Employer,

The first portion of the thank you letter expresses your appreciation of the time/energy of the individual(s) you met with or talked with at the interview. In this paragraph you should include specifics about what you appreciated in your conversation or meeting.

The second portion of the thank you letter reinforces your interest in the position and highlights more specific information about how you may fit into this position. This may be in regard to specifics of the job or of the personality/culture of the company/employer. You should include a few examples of your connection and potential areas of contribution.

The third portion of the thank you letter restates your interest/disinterest in this position. If you decide you are no longer interested in this position your letter should still reflect professionalism and appreciation, though it may be much shorter.

Sincerely,

Your Name



SALARY NEGOTIATION

THE BASICS

It is normal to feel nervous when talking about money, especially when a job is on the line. Approaching this phase of the job search is often overwhelming, but it can set the tone for your employment. More importantly, an aggressive approach could result in a retracted job offer and a timid approach could result in your not receiving enough compensation to meet your financial needs.

THE PROCESS

Have a point of reference:

- Employers decide their salary levels using a variety of benchmarking tools. Knowing these will help you determine the range of pay that is appropriate for your situation. Benchmarks include comparing pay rates with:
 - Average pay at other companies in their industry
 - Average pay for professionals with your level of experience and education
 - Average pay for professionals in your field in their area of the country

Wait for It:

- Try not to be the first person to give a number. There's an old saying "The first person to bring up money, loses." Offering too low of a salary could lock you in to that rate without ever knowing they were willing to pay more. Conversely, providing too high of a number could show you didn't do your research or make them think you cost too much
- This can lead to an uncomfortable back-and-forth banter between you and the employer as they will likely be employing the same tactic. The best approach is to be kind and appreciative, restate your interest in the company, and outline the skills you'll bring to the team
- If you have to provide a number, give the employer a range rather than a solitary amount. This will keep the negotiation open a little longer or push them to giving a firm amount based on your range

Negotiate perks:

- If the salary is not flexible, consider negotiating other benefits, such as:
 - Relocation assistance; tuition reimbursement for continued education; additional paid time off; training, professional development, and certifications; childcare; gym membership; and schedule flexibility (i.e. working from home or working on a different schedule)

Important tips for success:

- Don't forget that salary is made up of much more than just your net pay. Employers may also pay for health insurance and other fringe benefits, all which raise your cost of employment on their end allowing them less flexibility
- Know what your absolute minimum is and don't go below that amount. Calculate your expenses (rent, utilities, food, gas, transportation, student loan payments, etc.) and know what you need to make every month to cover these comfortably
 - If you are moving to a new location, take into account the cost of living in that area. A salary in New York City might sound attractive but you have to factor in the average cost of rent, food, etc. to make an informed decision





COMMON TYPES OF INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

THE BASICS

While preparation is key, it is impossible to anticipate every interview question that you may be asked. You will likely be asked a variety of questions and the format of the questions can change based on the industry in which you interview; however, the two most common types of interview questions are, “general or traditional questions” and “behavioral based questions.”

In addition to practice, one of the best ways to prepare for the interview is to get to know yourself. What is on your resume? What are you good at? Bad at? Interested in? When did you lead a group of people? Solve a conflict? Work under time constraints? The answers to these questions take a fair amount of reflection that many people don’t engage in prior to the interview, adding to the difficulty. It is important to understand your narrative!

GENERAL/TRADITIONAL INTERVIEW

These questions are designed to help the employer learn more about you, your interests, and what you have to offer a position. The goal is to build a rapport while getting to know each other in a low-stress environment. Answer each question thoughtfully and honestly. Do not try to make something up that you think the employer wants to hear.

Q: Tell Me About Yourself:

- Respond with a quick, about a 15-30 second, snapshot of who you are and why you're the best candidate for this position. This is often referred to as your “elevator pitch”.

Q: Why are you interested in/what attracted you to this position?

- The interviewer is trying to determine how you may fit the position and how motivated you will be once hired
- Explain why the position interests you, how it aligns with your current and future career goals, and describe what you will bring to the role
- Offer insight that shows you understand the company and job role
- Salary should not be included in your answer

Q: Why should we hire you for this position?

- Provide reasons why you are the best candidate and how you will “fit” in with the organization
- Think about how your skills match the needs of the job and what unique skills/characteristics/experiences will set you apart
- Mention if you have successfully done similar work before

Q: What are your strengths? What are you good at?

- The interviewer wants to know how your skills align with the needs of the role and how accurately you view your strengths
- Relate how the strength is important to the role you are seeking or to a skill outlined in the job description and provide an example of how you have used your strength
- Be proud but not arrogant, and don’t worry about sounding boastful, this is your opportunity to express what you know you are good at
- Do not choose cliché answers, such as, “I am a people person”

Q: What weaknesses do you have? What is something you want to improve about yourself?

- The interviewer is trying to determine how self-aware you are, whether or not you will be honest, and if you are willing to improve yourself
- Be honest, pick weaknesses you have, not what you think the interviewer wants to hear
- Talk about a skill you would like to develop and share an example of how you are already working on strengthening an area
- Do not select cliché answers, such as, "I'm a perfectionist"



Important tips for success:

- Employers consistently seek the same top skills from candidates. Take time to reflect on how your experiences and education can demonstrate these skills and find ways to show that in the interview process:
 - Verbal and written communication
 - Teamwork
 - Adaptability
 - Problem-solving
 - Organization
 - Analytical ability
 - Leadership

BEHAVIORAL BASED INTERVIEW

Behavioral based interview questions are designed to discover how the interviewee acts in certain situations. The questions are specific and require an example/story which outlines your skills and abilities. Questions will usually start with, "Tell me about a time when..." or "Give me an example of..." These questions require an interviewee to demonstrate they have a skill rather than list a skill. Utilize the STAR (Situation, Task, Action, Result) method to answer these questions.

SITUATION	TASK	ACTION	RESULT
Describe a specific situation that addresses the question. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who • Where • Why 	Outline the tasks associated with the situation. What tasks did you need to achieve? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What 	Explain the actions you took to address the situation. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How 	Provide the results of your actions (most important) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What effect • What changed or improved

Do your homework:

- Think of potential examples/stories ahead of time
- Analyze the description, responsibilities, and skills required; this may help you to anticipate interview questions in certain areas or for certain skill sets; connect the opportunity to your career goals

Practice your timing and narrative:

- A typical answer to a question using a STAR response will last one to three minutes.
- Be brief in your set-up (who, where, what) and give just enough background information for your example to make sense.



Important tips for success:

- The result is essential. Everything in your scenario builds towards helping the employer understand the purpose of why you are telling this story/using this example.
- Provide the interviewer with strong reasons to choose you over other candidates; be honest with your answers about your skills and abilities; show willingness to learn if there are gaps
- Utilize the STAR method handout in Career Education to practice your technique and formulate answers to the most common skills employers are seeking.



INAPPROPRIATE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Adapted from: "Do I Really Have to Answer That?" Washington State University - Vancouver

Inappropriate interview questions come in a variety of different forms. Federal and state laws prohibit interviewers from asking questions that directly or indirectly prompt information about an applicant's protected status, meaning they should not ask questions regarding your

- | | |
|--|---|
| • Race or ethnicity | • Gender identity, sex, or sexual orientation |
| • Age | • Marital or family status |
| • Religion | • National origin |
| • Veteran status | • Ability |
| • Medical conditions or health history | • Arrest record |
| • Appearance | |

RESPONSE STRATEGIES

There are many nondiscriminatory reasons why an interviewer might ask an inappropriate question and, although you may find it difficult, try to remain calm and utilize these tactics to guide your response:

Ask them to repeat or rephrase the question:

- This will give the interviewer time to pause and either restate the question or ask something completely different
- Asking for clarification may help you get a better sense of the interviewer's intention and what information they are trying to learn about you
- Attempt to approach the situation with sincere curiosity and not frustration or anger

Redirect the question back to the interviewer:

- Try to perceive what the underlying concern is and try to steer the question back to a conversation about your relevant skills
 - For example: if the employer asks, "do you have a boyfriend/girlfriend?" you might suspect they are trying to determine whether or not you are committed to the work schedule. Consider responding with, "Why do you ask? If you are concerned about my ability to work long hours, you should know that I am deeply committed to my work and I have long been able to balance my work life with my personal life."

Politely decline to respond:

- Remember that you have the right to politely decline to answer the question if you ultimately do not feel comfortable or asking the interviewer for clarification does not help

EXAMPLES OF LEGAL & ILLEGAL

National Origin or Citizenship	
<p>Legal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are you authorized to work in the United States? • What languages do you read/speak/write fluently? (Only appropriate if it is relevant to you being able to perform your job) 	<p>Illegal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are you a U.S. citizen? • Where were you or your parents born? • What is your native tongue?
Age	
<p>Legal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are you over the age of 18? • Are you over the age of 21? (only appropriate if it is relevant to you being able to legally perform your job) 	<p>Illegal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How old are you? • What is your date of birth? • When did you graduate high school?
Marital or Family Status	
<p>Legal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are you able to work the shifts necessary for this position? • Would you be willing and able to work overtime if necessary? 	<p>Illegal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is 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?
Ability and Health	
<p>Legal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As part of the hiring process, after a job offer has been made, employers can ask that you undergo a medical exam if results are kept confidential and the employer is only informed of necessary job accommodations based on the exam results. The employer should not ask about accommodations before a job offer has been made 	<p>Illegal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you have any disabilities? • Please complete the following medical history form • Have you had any recent or past illnesses or operations? • How is your health? How is your family's health? • If hired, would you need an accommodation to be able to perform this job? • How many sick days did you take last year in your previous job?
Religion	
<p>Legal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the employer's goal is to get a better sense of your availability they can ask if you are able to work specific days of the week and/or holidays 	<p>Illegal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What religion do you practice? • What religious holidays do you observe? • Do you believe in God?

Military	
<p>Legal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In what branch of the Armed Forces did you serve? (Only appropriate if the candidate has disclosed that they served in the military) • What type of training or education did you receive in the military? (Only appropriate to ask about training and education as it relates to the job and appropriate to ask if the candidate has disclosed that they served in the military) 	<p>Illegal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you have served in the Military, were you honorably discharged? • What is your current registration status?
Race	
<p>Legal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None 	<p>Illegal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is your racial background? • How do you identify racially / ethnically? • Comments about complexion and color are also inappropriate!
Sexual Orientation	
<p>Legal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None 	<p>Illegal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is your sexual orientation? OR any sort of inquiry into your sexual orientation.
Appearance	
<p>Legal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are you able to lift up to 50lbs and carry it 10 yards, as this type of physical activity is part of the job? (Only appropriate when there are minimum standards for employees to be able to safely perform their work) 	<p>Illegal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How tall are you? • How much do you weigh?
Arrest Record	
<p>Legal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is permissible to ask if an applicant has ever been convicted of a specific type of crime that relates to the job. • Companies can require applicants to pass a criminal background check prior to being hired. As a part of this, some companies will ask if there is anything the applicant thinks they should be aware of as they prepare to request a background check. 	<p>Illegal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have you ever been arrested? If so, for what? • Questions about pending charges and tickets, other than those that are substantially related to the particular job.



FINAL ADVICE

The company chose you for an interview because your resume and cover letter demonstrated the appropriate skills necessary to perform the essential functions of the job; now, they are simply trying to identify your fit within their team. You should use the interview as a chance to determine the same thing. Remember, interviews are not one sided; you are interviewing the company just as much as they are interviewing you.

- Always be truthful when answering questions
- Talk about your accomplishments with confidence, but don't brag
- Try to keep your examples related to academics, work, and related experiences
- Avoid vague responses (most of the time, usually, sometimes...), opinions (I think, I believe), criticism of other co-workers, supervisors, and past places you've worked
- Only share personal information if it is relevant and if you feel comfortable doing so
- Keep your answers brief, straight forward, and easy to follow
- Make sure you actually answer the question asked of you
- Don't zone out, pay attention throughout the interview and stay engaged in the process
- You may be asked a question that you are not prepared for or know how to answer. In this case, remain calm and try not to panic. Simply ask the interviewer for clarification or to restate the question and request a moment to reflect on the answer