

INTERVIEWING SKILLS for GRADUATE STUDENTS

Toi K. Tyson, Assistant Director for Alumni Engagement & Graduate Student Programs
University Career Services, Career & Interview Center

What we will cover....

- Purpose of / Preparing for Interviews
- Preparations particular to graduate students
- Interview Structure
- Interviewing Prep Services

WHAT IS AN INTERVIEW?

Two Way Communication



Interviewer

Candidate

- Be an attentive listener
- Be ready to communicate (verbal and non-verbal)
- Be relevant! – All questions lead to “Why should we hire YOU?”
- Identification of a good fit: from each participant’s vantage point

IDENTIFYING A “GOOD FIT”

Employer wants to identify:

Can you do the job?: *skills*

Will you fit?: *organizational culture*

Will you do the job?: *motivation*

Will you stay?: *investment*

The candidate needs to:

Learn about the organization

Determine fit in culture

Weigh pros/cons for overall career

Get the job offer

INTERVIEW TYPES

Phone



Video / (Skype)



In Person



Basic Points to Consider:

- Professionalism: dress in interview attire for all three (**Why??**)
- *Attire examples - See Career Guide, page 28 (also <http://careers.rutgers.edu/careerguide>)*
- In-person locations: employer's site, on-campus, conferences and more
- In-person formats: individual, group, panel, multiple back-to-back
- Academic vs. Industry, STEM vs. Humanities: nuances may differ
- Ask questions on what to expect in the interview: from the employer, from industry contacts

PRIOR TO THE INTERVIEW

- Find out what is happening in your career field – it will help to inform and populate conversation.
- Learn about the particular employer (academic institution or company) you will be interviewing with
- Identify what you have to offer the company as well as areas you may need to enhance (create a strategy to enhance them)
- Learn about the interviewer(s) if you can

JOB DESCRIPTIONS



Assistant Professor Agricultural Engineering

Academic Position

University of Wisconsin - River Falls



University of Wisconsin-River Falls College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences
 Department of Agricultural Engineering
 Assistant Professor Agricultural Engineering

The University of Wisconsin River Falls, a member of the University of Wisconsin System, is located in scenic west central Wisconsin, 30 miles from the multi-cultural, multi-ethnic cities of Minneapolis and St Paul. Year-round arts, cultural and recreational events are easily accessible from River Falls. UWRF's 6,500 undergraduate and graduate students pursue degrees in four colleges: Arts and Sciences, Education and Professional Studies; Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences; and Business and Economics

The University provides an excellent environment for learning, emphasizing the importance of faculty-student interaction in classrooms, laboratories, academic advising, and co-curricular activities. A favorable student-faculty ratio affords opportunity for meaningful interchange between faculty and students. Strong interests in teaching, research and community service are highly valued. More information about UWRF can be found at: <http://www.uwrf.edu/workhere/>.



The Position This is a full-time 9-month tenure-track Assistant Professor undergraduate teaching

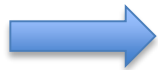
position in the Agricultural Engineering Department in the College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences (CAFES) at the University of Wisconsin River Falls (UW-River Falls). The ideal candidate will have strong knowledge and abilities in areas such as developing, maintaining and teaching basic engineering courses and upper level undergraduate courses in Agricultural Engineering (AGEN) and Agricultural Engineering Technology (AET), with a focus on machinery and instrumentation. The successful candidate will also be expected to work with department/college colleagues to expand a newly approved Agricultural Engineering program at the University. The successful candidate will also engage with the College Dairy and Meat Pilot Plant personnel, Laboratory Farm personnel, and industry partners to successfully complete research projects.

JOB DESCRIPTIONS (CONT.)



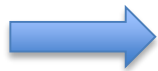
Specific Duties and Responsibilities (100% Teaching)

• Teach engineering courses and upper level undergraduate courses in Agricultural Engineering (AEEN) and Agricultural Engineering Technology (AET), with a focus on machinery and instrumentation plus additional courses depending on the department's needs and candidate's expertise. • Engage with the College Dairy and Meat Pilot Plant personnel, Laboratory Farm personnel, and industry partners to successfully complete research projects. • Modify existing courses or develop new courses, as needed, to create a dynamic curriculum that prepares students for professional careers. • Incorporate new pedagogies, active learning techniques, and technologies into courses, with the objective of creating strong, dynamic, and effective courses that engage students. • Engage in scholarly activity, which can include developing a research program, mentoring undergraduate research projects, and/or participation in professional organizations. • Participate in co-curricular activities including advising of students in curriculum and career planning, involvement in student organizations, internship supervision, and undergraduate research mentoring. • Establish collaborations with appropriate industry partners to facilitate internships and other learning opportunities for students and help ensure relevancy of programs and curricula. • Participate in faculty governance and service activities at the departmental, college, and university levels. • Engage in community service where academic expertise can be shared.



Qualifications Required:

Ph.D. in Agricultural Engineering, Biosystems Engineering, or a closely related field, completed prior to start date. • Demonstrated industry and/or research expertise should be in the area(s) of machinery engineering or agricultural machinery design and/or modeling • Proven ability to teach undergraduate courses in introductory engineering, thermodynamics, fluid dynamics, off-road machinery design and analysis, agricultural instrumentation systems and other courses that support the department's mission. • Demonstrated scholar as evidenced by research activities or involvement professional organizations. • Interest and ability to successfully participate in co-curricular activities including advising of students in curriculum and career planning, involvement in student organizations, internships, and undergraduate research mentoring.

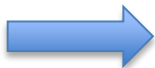


Qualifications Preferred:

Additional expertise in agricultural instrumentation and/or control system development • Experience related to curriculum development in higher education. • Established interest and/or experience in developing collaborations with industry partners.

JOB DESCRIPTIONS

Industry Position



Position Title: Research Analyst



Program/Dept.: ANDE

Position Location: Washington, DC

FLSA Status: Exempt

The **Aspen Institute** is an educational and policy studies organization based in Washington, DC. Its mission is to foster leadership based on enduring values and to provide a nonpartisan venue for dealing with critical issues. The Institute has campuses in Aspen, Colorado, and on the Wye River on Maryland's Eastern Shore. It also maintains offices in New York City and has an international network of partners.

Key Duties And Responsibilities



Research

- Support Research Director in managing the Global Accelerator Learning Initiative. He or she will implement an online annual global survey for accelerators, and be responsible for follow-ups to ensure a reasonable response rate.
- Responsible for cleaning the raw data, and collaborating with the Research Director to analyze the data for research reports and data briefs
- Assist in identifying and managing relationships with a subset of these accelerators, and connecting them to the Entrepreneurship Database program at Emory University.
- Identify and explore other data-driven research questions that would be relevant to the SGB sector.
- Support on other research and impact assessment activities as required.

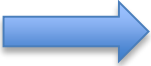
Administration and Operations

- Provide support in identifying and selecting vendors to develop an online data portal that can provide researchers and practitioners with access to data collected through GALI.
- Manage data portal on ongoing basis, in collaboration with research partners at Emory.
- Manage administrative functions related to the project funding (i.e. government time sheets)


Events & Communications

- Work with ANDE's Communications Coordinator to promote research produced by GALI to the academic and practitioner community
- Support the organization of research panels at ANDE events
- Work with Research Director and Impact Assessment Manager to summarize relevant research for quarterly research newsletter

JOB DESCRIPTIONS (CONT.)



Knowledge, Education and Experience:

- 
- Bachelor's degree (majoring in Economics or Statistics or similar) with 4-5 years of experience or (preferred) Master's degree in Economics, Public Policy or similar, with 2-3 years of experience
 - Experience in designing and implementing surveys using platforms such as Clicktools and Qualtrics
 - Experience working with large datasets in STATA, SPSS and/or R
 - Experience in producing data-driven analyses and insights for practitioners
 - Experience working with incubators and/or accelerators in emerging markets (preferred)
 - Strong interest in the work and mission of ANDE and the ability to represent the organization externally;
 - Strong interpersonal skills, experience managing partnerships with a wide range of stakeholders
 - High attention to detail and appreciation of detail-oriented tasks
 - Ability to handle multiple tasks with detail and precision;
 - Excellent communication, organizational and writing skills
 - Ability to work well independently and as part of a team.



To Apply

Visit the Aspen Institute's career page at www.aspeninstitute.org/about/jobs and follow the instructions to submit a cover letter and resume. The cover letter should highlight applicant's specific qualifications for this position. Applications without a cover letter may not receive full consideration.

INFO TO KNOW / PREPARE

Organization

- University's mission/focus/history, the programs & degree level(s) offered
- Industry: services, products, locations, divisions, target populations
- Flagship campuses, parent companies/organizations or subsidiaries
- Recent news: new product launches/emerging programs, mergers, organization strengths
- Organization website (*Note: "Good news zone!"*), periodicals/papers
- Vault Industry Guides careers.rutgers.edu and Kilmer Library

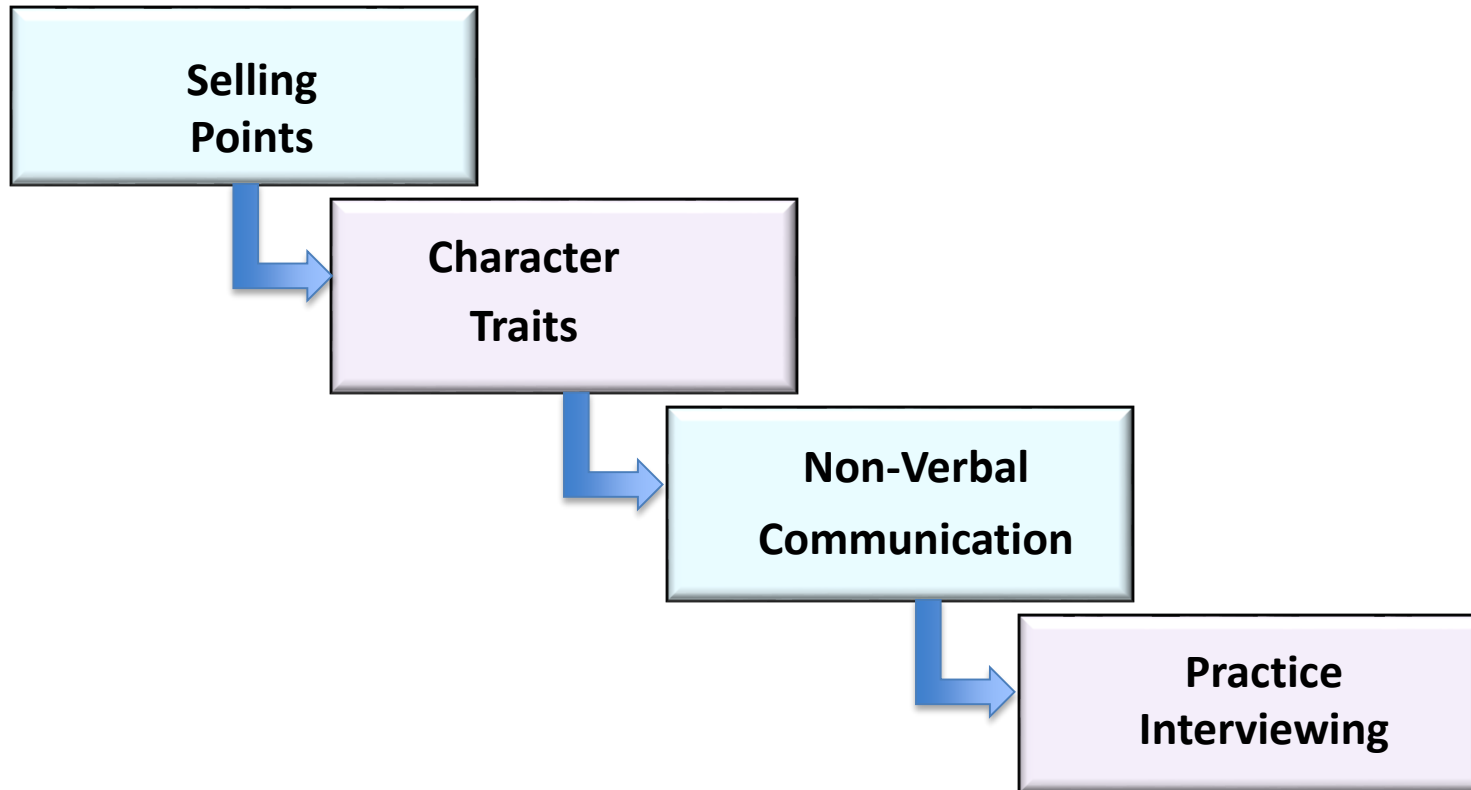
Trends in the Profession/Field:

- Career/Industry publications, professional organizations and networking

FURTHER PREPARATION

- Talk to your advisors and mentors
- Practice your two-minute introduction:
 - “Tell Me about Yourself,” Career Guide pp. 42-43: <http://careers.rutgers.edu/careerguide>
- Be confident & clear
- Coach them through your resume/CV
- Overcome the doctoral/masters stereotypes
- Get ahead of the questions: what are they trying to learn

YOU: A COMPLETE PACKAGE



SELLING POINTS

- Advance degree(s), certification or training, advanced or specialized coursework
- Present research / future research interests
- Published works, conference presentations, connection to the broader field
- Technical skills, laboratory skills
- Awards and honors
- Management/supervision experience
- Interpersonal / teamwork skills
- Special projects
- Internships, in-house training
- Volunteer, community service, activities



Why are YOU a unique hire? / What makes you stand out from the rest?

PREP YOUR SELLING POINTS

Be prepared by:

- Including concrete, quantifiable data in your content
- Repeating your key strengths at least three times during the interview
- Having five or more success stories ready to discuss
- Speaking as if you're already a member of their team.

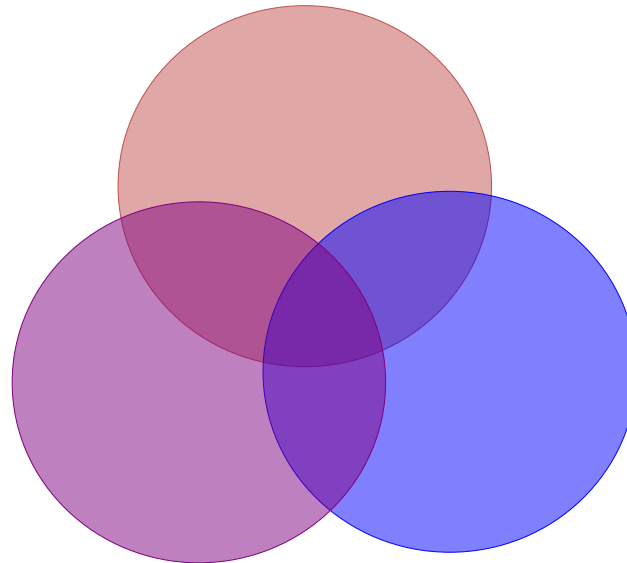
(ex. "As a member of the _____ team, I would....")

CHARACTER TRAITS

- Adaptable
- Analytical
- Attention to detail
- Communication: verbal & written
- Ethical
- Good judgment
- Leadership
- Team player
- Quick thinker

NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION


Attire/appearance



Hand gestures

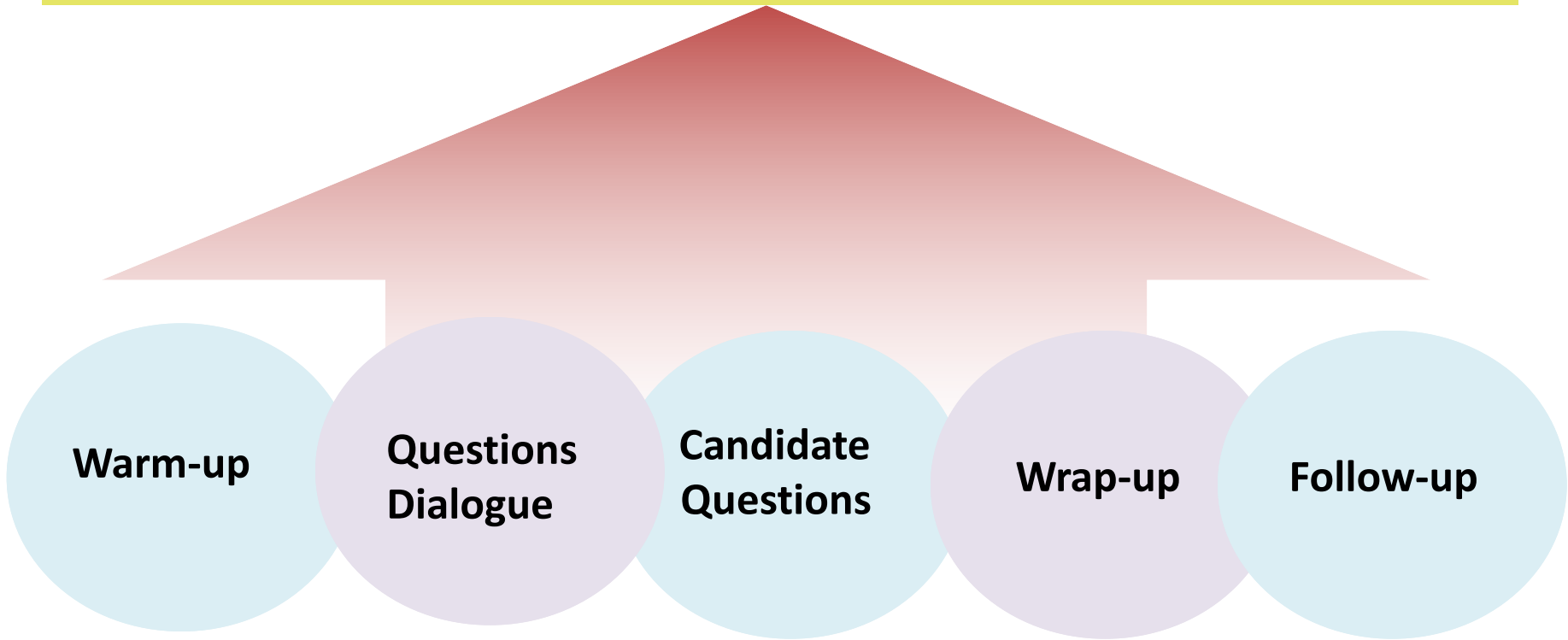
**Eye contact/
posture/hand shake**

PRACTICE INTERVIEWING

- Mock Interview: UCS / other professionals
- Mock Interview Module - CareerKnight icon:  [Mock Interviews: Practice Online](#)
- Career Planning Guide (practice questions)
<http://careers.rutgers.edu/careerguide>



FULL INTERVIEWING PROCESS



INTERVIEW DAY

BASIC INTERVIEWER QUESTIONS/DIALOGUE:

Warm-Up:

- Casual questions: weather/sports/travels

Traditional

- TELL ME ABOUT YOURSELF
- Traditional interview questions focus on hypotheticals, “What would you do if...”
- Questions about your research/experience
- Strengths/weaknesses

Behavioral

- Behavioral interview questions focus on specific past behaviors:
- “Describe a time when...”
- Past behavior is the best predictor of future performance

SEEK OUT INTERVIEW QUESTIONS SPECIFIC TO YOUR FIELD

PRACTICE EXERCISE

TELL ME ABOUT YOURSELF

- Reference guide, p.42
- Let's practice!



Present yourself as the perfect fit for the job

INTERVIEWER'S QUESTIONS

- Questions will vary by field/industry
- Basic interview questions: reference p.41 (guide)
- Prepare via researching typical questions asked by employers: online, advisors, colleagues, Vault, etc.
- **Strategy:** answer the question with thoughts of:
 - What they're trying to learn about me as it pertains to the job I've applied for
 - Qualifying "why should they hire me" with each response (indirectly)
- Avoid being too wordy: Think P.A.R. (**P**roblem, **A**ction, **R**esult), and welcome their interjections

CAUTIONARY QUESTIONS

An employer does have the ability to assess whether you meet minimum qualifications. It's important to pay attention to how the question is asked.

Topics of alert:

- Your age
- Children or plan for children
- Disabilities
- Gender and sexual orientation
- Religion
- Race or nation of origin
- Marital Status
- Spouse current job status
- *Citizenship status

If you unsure of whether a question is “illegal” while in the interview, you can ask ***“Can you tell me how you feel that that would be important for the position we’re discussing?”*** if you feel the question asked is far too personal, uncomfortable or off-track.

TRICKY QUESTIONS

- What is your greatest weakness?
- Tell me about the course you learned the least from?
- What will you do if you don't get this position?
- What happens when you don't have experience to match the question?

BASIC CANDIDATE QUESTIONS

You are **EXPECTED** to ask questions:

- What kind of assignments might I expect in the first six months?
- What skills are important for someone in this position?
- How would you describe the ideal candidate for this position?
- Is research/publishing a responsibility in this role?
- What are the professional development expectations? Is it built into this role?
- What do you like most about working for the organization?

Sample Article:

“22 Interview Questions That’ll Get You the Real Inside Scoop on Company Culture”

<https://www.themuse.com/advice/22-interview-questions-thatll-get-you-the-real-inside-scoop-on-company-culture>

NEXT STEPS

Wrap-up

- Express interest in the position
- Clarify next steps
- Get business card if possible

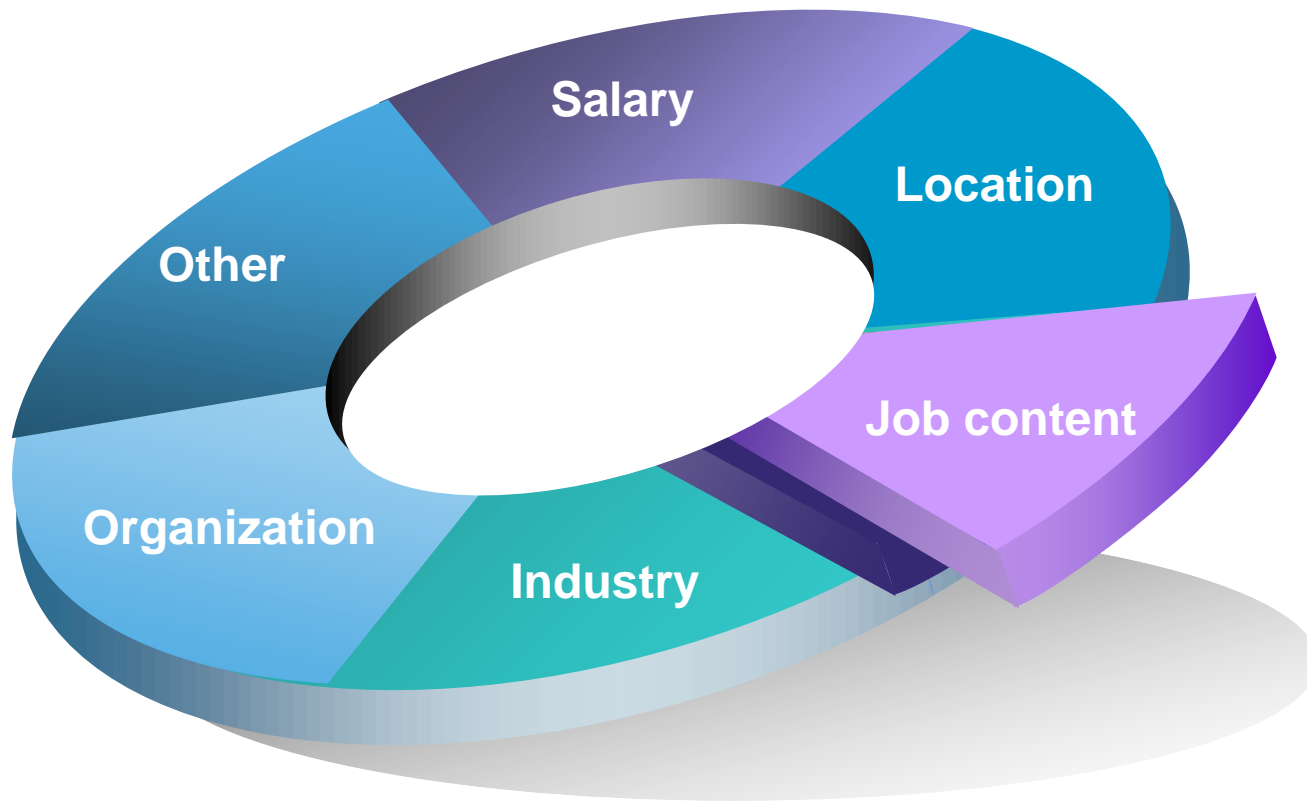
Follow-up

- Write down your impressions, notes, details – stay organized!
- Send thank you letter ***promptly*** (1-2 business days)
- Mark calendar for follow-up dates given

TIPS FOR SUCCESS

- Arrive early
- Dress appropriately
- Maintain professionalism
- Turn off your cell phone
- Listen carefully
- Think before responding: *don't ramble*
- **Stay positive!**

EVALUATING JOB OFFERS



NEGOTIATING THE OFFER

- Do not be pressured to accept an offer immediately
- Research salary information for the particular job and location
- Never undervalue yourself
- Follow up prior to deadline if renegotiating
- Friendly/cooperative tone: seek the win-win
- Consider the entire package, not just salary



DEVELOP & PRACTICE YOUR SKILLS

**Schedule a mock interview at
University Career Services via CareerKnight**

**Prepare for field-related content with your
networking contacts, academic advisor, department
representatives, colleagues in field**

Contact Us

University Career Services

College Avenue Campus:

Gateway Transit Village

106 Somerset St., 4th Floor

(848) 932 - 7997

Busch Campus:

Busch Student Center

(848) 445 - 6127

- Visit **careers.rutgers.edu** to learn more about our services such as:
 - Individual Appointments
 - CareerKnight:
Job/Internship Database
 - Upcoming Events and Seminars
 - Schedule Interviews with Employers (internship and full-time)
 - Utilize Free Online Tools
 - And more!

ONLINE CAREER GUIDE: <http://careers.rutgers.edu/careerguide>