

# INTERVIEWS

## INTERVIEWS:

- Are one of the most important components of your job search strategy
- Can be the strongest factor in the organization's decision to hire you
- Skills can be learned with thoughtful preparation and practice
- Involve a mutual exchange of information
- Are opportunities for candidates and employers to mutually evaluate the match between the candidate's qualifications and the organization's needs
- Are your best opportunity to evaluate the organization

## TYPES OF INTERVIEWS:

A **Traditional Job Interview** uses broad-based questions such as "why do you want to work for this company," and "tell me about your strengths and weaknesses". Interviewing success or failure are more often based on the ability of the job-seeker to communicate than on truthfulness or content of answers. Employers are looking for: does the job-seeker have the skills and abilities to perform the job; does the job-seeker possess the enthusiasm and work ethic that the employer expects; and will the job-seeker be a team player and fit into the organization

The **Behavioral Interview** is based on the theory that past performance is the best indicator of future behavior and uses questions that probe specific past behaviors, such as: "tell me about a time where you confronted an unexpected problem," "tell me about an experience when you failed to achieve a goal" and "give me a specific example of a time when you managed several projects at once." Job-seekers need to prepare for these interviews by recalling scenarios that fit the various types of behavioral-interviewing questions.

## STAGES OF THE INTERVIEW:

- **Prior to Interview:** You should have an excellent understanding of yourself and the specific job for which you are interviewing.
- **Breaking the Ice:** Always shake hands and introduce yourself. Relax! Be friendly and responsive to small talk.
- **General Information Sharing:** This is your opportunity to fill in the gaps and provide details that your resume did not. Know what characteristics about yourself that you want to stress.
- **Further probing of key characteristics:** The interviewer will be trying to gain a clearer understanding of your style and your potential for blending with the company/organization.
- **Solicit Questions:** In addition to the "excellent answers" you have given, you should have "excellent questions" for the interviewer. Ask questions that will clarify your understanding of the job and the company/organization.
- **Tying it together and closing:** Any loose ends are addressed and any other questions the interviewer or interviewee need answered in order to make a decision are asked here.
- **Follow-up:** Here is yet another opportunity to make a good impression. **Always write a thank you letter right after the interview.** Respect the employer's timeline, but if you are unsure of the timeline and if you haven't heard anything after one week, you might call to inquire as to the progress of the candidate search and ask about your current status as a candidate.

Contact [StudentLife@nccc.edu](mailto:StudentLife@nccc.edu) to schedule an individual interview review session, or to schedule a mock interview.