



RESOURCES:

Gustavus Career Development

gustavus.edu/career

InterviewStream is a way to customize a practice interview and review your responses virtually.

gustavus.interviewstream.com

Vault is a great resource for all phases of interviewing.

access.vault.com/career-insider-login.aspx?aid=274953

Glassdoor is a great way to learn more about the organization and its culture and also get examples of actual interview questions.

glassdoor.com/students/index.htm



OVERVIEW

This resource is broken down into four sections to help you through the different phases of the interview process. Career Development highly encourages practicing your interview skills which can be done through InterviewStream or a practice interview with a Career Development Specialist.

- Section One: Preparing for the Interview
- Section Two: Making a Good Impression
- Section Three: Managing Difficult Questions
- Section Four: After the Interview

SECTION ONE: PREPARING FOR THE INTERVIEW

TYPES OF INTERVIEWS

There are many ways that organizations structure interviews. It is good to know about the different types of interviews to be best prepared when meeting with prospective organizations, graduate and professional schools, and service programs. You may experience multiple rounds of interviews with different or similar structures for the same opportunity.

Phone Interviews

Oftentimes, interviews – especially initial interviews – will take place over the phone as they can save time for both the interviewer and you. However, phone interviews do come with their own set of unique challenges. For example, you won't be able to see the other person's reactions and therefore must pay close attention to your verbal communication style and how you are coming across in the interview.

It is important to act your most professional during a telephone interview. Be mindful of your voice and word choice. Avoid the use of vocal crutches such as "Umm..." when you speak and be sure that your tone and inflection convey confidence and energy. Talk into the receiver and try to call from a space with limited background noise.

In addition, phone interviews provide an opportunity for you to take and use notes. Before the interview, make a list of topics you want to cover and any questions you might have for the interviewer. Be careful as to not create long lapses in the conversation with your note taking and remember that it is okay to tell your interviewer that you are taking notes. Your interviewer is likely to also be taking notes. This is important to remember especially when there are lapses in the conversation.

One-on-One Interview

There are many interviews where the structure will be you and one interviewer. A one-on-one interview is a great opportunity to build a friendly relationship and positive connection. It is unlikely that this will be the only type of interview you have, so do expect that you will have additional interviews in different formats.

Panel Interviews

More common than a one-on-one interview are panel interviews. Panel interviews could involve multiple members of the team or organization. The setting may be the group sitting around a table or you in front of a room with a group or the interviewers in a row facing you.

The question format could be either casual or very structured. The questions may come from multiple people or just one person. It is important to keep in mind that you need to look at and address each person in the room, not just the person asking the question.



NOTES:

Group Interviews

Organizations can structure group interviews in various ways, but the common theme in all group interviews is that there are multiple interviewees being interviewed at the same time, possibly in the same space. It is important that no matter what type of group interview you have to show respect to the other interviewees.

One type of group interview is where you are given a situation or case to solve with the other interviewees. The interviewers are observing and recording their impressions of your engagement, communication, teamwork, and problem solving abilities.

A second type of group interview is when multiple interviewees arrive at the same time, and proceed to individual or panel interviews. Interviewees would then be rotated between interview rooms.

The third type of group interview is structured where all interviewees and all interviewers are in one room. Interviewers ask questions that each interviewee is then asked to answer. Interviewees hear all other responses and must then work to differentiate their answers from the others in the room.

Job Fairs

The first type of interview that you may have at a job fair is a mini interview at the employer booth. When approaching the booth be prepared to introduce yourself and give a brief elevator speech. Be prepared to ask questions about opportunities and the company, demonstrating that you have done research on the organization (see section *Researching for the Interview*). Have résumés available, though some organizations may not accept paper copies and may ask that you submit through their online system. Recruiters talk to many candidates at the fair, so the conversation will be brief.

Some job fairs offer organizations separate space to conduct interviews. If you are offered an on-site interview, keep the recommendations in the previous sections in mind as you prepare to attend the job fair. The space may offer less privacy than you may find in other types of interviews and these are typically screening interviews.

RESEARCHING FOR THE INTERVIEW

It is expected to research the company or program/school before you go into the interview. Research is for your personal benefit and to aide you throughout the interview process. Interviewers commonly ask questions like **“What do you know about our organization?”** and **“Why do you want to work here?”** or **“How does this program fit in your career goals?”**

Research using the organization’s website or for graduate school look at the websites for both the program and the larger school. Use Glassdoor and Vault, provided by Gustavus Career Development, and use your personal network to learn more about the organization and its culture. Connect with current graduate students or alumni of graduate programs to find out more about the student experience. If the organization or program has an online social presence, make sure that you are following them through LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and other social media.