FIU Honors College

Florida International University

INTERVIEW

Resource Guide

INTERVIEW GUIDELINES

Preparation

DO YOUR RESEARCH

- Make sure to do some research on the company, its values, projects, and mission, before going in for an interview.

PRACTICE

- Set some time aside for practice. Review the answers to common questions and relate them to your own skills and experiences. Record yourself doing this for extra practice.

EACH EXPERIENCE COUNTS

- To make it easier, you should have three to five experiences in mind that you can relate to career competencies throughout your interview.

Presentation Matters

To make the best impression on the employer, you must wear the correct attire. The attire expected of you is business professional attire. Only wear business casual when specified.

WOMEN

WHAT TO WEAR:

- Dress pants with blouse or button down OR Business skirt or dress (NOT above the knee)
- Basic flats or pumps no taller than 3”
- Minimal makeup/neutral nail color
- Minimal perfume and simple accessories

DO NOT:

- Wear strappy sandals, open-toed shoes, or platforms/wedges
- Wear excessive makeup or perfume

MEN

WHAT TO WEAR:

- Suit pants and suit jacket
- Long-sleeved button down shirt (tucked in)
- Simple-patterned tie
- Business shoes
- Trimmed fingernails
- Minimal cologne

DO NOT:

- Wear sandals, sneakers, or open-toed shoes
- Wear excessive cologne

The NACE Career Competencies

The NACE Career Readiness Competencies are qualities that employers look for in candidates. It is important to familiarize yourselves with them before interviewing. You may also refer to the NACE Career Readiness Competencies page under Resources for a more in-depth review.

CAREER & SELF-DEVELOPMENT

- Proactively develop oneself and one's career through continual personal and professional learning, awareness of one's strengths and weaknesses, navigation of career opportunities, and networking to build relationships within and without one's organization.

COMMUNICATION

- Clearly and effectively exchange information, ideas, facts, and perspectives with persons inside and outside of an organization.

CRITICAL THINKING

- Identify and respond to needs based upon an understanding of situational context and logical analysis of relevant information.

EQUITY & INCLUSION

- Demonstrate the awareness, attitude, knowledge, and skills required to equitably engage and include people from different local and global cultures. Engage in anti-racist practices that actively challenge the systems, structures, and policies of racism.

LEADERSHIP

- Recognize and capitalize on personal and team strengths to achieve organizational goals.

PROFESSIONALISM

- Knowing work environments differ greatly, understand and demonstrate effective work habits, and act in the interest of the larger community and workplace.

TEAMWORK

- Build and maintain collaborative relationships to work effectively toward common goals, while appreciating diverse viewpoints and shared responsibilities.

TECHNOLOGY

- Understand and leverage technologies ethically to enhance efficiencies, complete tasks, and accomplish goals.

SARA Framework

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SITUATION
- Explain a situation/problem/conflict you dealt with in te workplace

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ACTION
- Concisely describe the actions you took and the tasks that needed to be completed to respond to the situation

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RESULTS
- Share the positive outcome that resulted from the actions you took in that situation

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APPLICATION
- Describe the lessons you learned and the skills you gained throughout the experience and how the situation is applicable to the role/organization

HOW TO PROPERLY UTILIZE THE SARA FRAMEWORK

To better your understanding, analyze the example below of how to frame a SARA response during an interview.

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During my international internship last summer, I was a marketing and social media inter at a non-profit art gallery based in Beijing. One of my primary tasks was to create and implement a marketing plan for the gallery. Because I was new to the company, I was not familiar with their current practices in this area

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To get started on the project, I met with several of my colleagues to understand what they felt was best to include in the marketing plan as well as to gauge the level of knowledge of technology used in the office for the purposes of social media and other web-based marketing. After meeting with others and completing research on marketing best practices, I created a marketing plan in Excel which was broken down by marketing deadlines, who was responsible for the marketing, and the type of marketing.

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I provided my recommendations to my supervisor and then to upper-level management. They appreciated the marketing plan and were able to implement it soon after I finished my internship. I still stay in touch with my former colleagues at the organization and they have verified that there has been a 10% increase in people viewing the website. They believe this increase in viewers is partially due to the marketing plan that I was able to create.

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I learned the benefit of conducting due diligence before beginning a project and how to create and implement a plan while working alongside a team. It is evident that based on the job description, these transferable skills will be incredibly beneficial to the role in which I applied.

The Interview Process

BEFORE

- Before the day of your interview, make sure to follow all the steps under the Preparation section to make the interview flow easier.
- If you would like to be more specific with your preparation, you can generate a list of probable questions based on the job description and qualifications the employer has listed.
- Make sure you have the appropriate professional attire, you should be dressed in business attire to make the best impression on the employer.
- Another step you may take to facilitate the process is to generate a list of questions relevant to the role to ask the employer (e.g. question about the specific responsibilities you will have to undertake once you start with the position).
- Ensure that you bring a viable ID, a copy of your resume, a pen and notepad to write notes, and the information (name, position etc.) about the employer.
- Finally, it is best to arrive at least 5 to 10 minutes earlier to the interview appointment in order to ensure timeliness.

DURING

- Greet the employer, thank them for their time, and have the open body language (e.g. make eye contact, do not cross your arms, etc.).
- Ensure that when mentioning previous experiences, to relate them to both the role and career competencies. Utilize the SARA Framework.
- Once the employer asks if you have any questions, you can ask thoughtful questions about the role and its responsibilities. It would also show more interest if you asked about the employers own growth within the company.
- Once you leave, make sure that you know the timeframe before the recruitment process and how to contact the employer.

AFTER

- Once you have left the interview with the employers contact information, send them a tailored thank you note. This note should include:
  - A “thank you” to the employer for their time and consideration.
  - A continuing discussion of qualities and traits that will help the employer remember you.
  - Minor elaboration on points you were not able to cover completely, or at all, during the interview.
  - An expression of continued interest in the role that you applied for.

Resources

If you need more assistance, there are various resources available.

- **VMOCK**
  - Florida International University partners with VMock SMART Career platform to help students create a strong profile and accelerate their career readiness journey. VMock leverages technologies like data science, machine learning, and natural language processing to provide instant personalized feedback based on criteria gathered from employers and global best practices – from anywhere, at any time of the day.
  - This platform provides students with 24/7 access to receive feedback on their resume, LinkedIn profile, elevator pitch, and interviewing skills.
  - To access this platform, please use the following links depending on your major:
    - Non-business students: https://www.vmock.com/fiucareer
    - Business students: www.vmock.com/fiucms

- **FIU CAREER & TALENT DEVELOPMENT**
  - The Career and Talent Development center at FIU offers numerous services, such as interviewing workshops
  - Interviewing Skills Workshop(s): FIU students can go on the Handshake platform at any time to see which workshops are available at their earliest convenience
  - To access these services, you can visit FIU's Career & Talent Development site:
    - FIU Career & Talent Development

- **FIU HONORS COLLEGE CAREER CENTER**
  - FIU's Honors College also offers its own Career Center. It provides services ranging from a Interview Tips to a list of the Top Ten Interview Questions.
  - Interview Tips: This service is a page where students can view a short summary of what the interview process should be like.
  - Top Ten Interview Questions: This a page FIU students can access to familiarize themselves with some of the questions typically asked in interviews
  - For more information, you can access FIU's Honor College Career Center site here:
    - FIU Honors College Career Center

- **CAREER READINESS COMPETENCIES**
  - There are certain skills and qualities that employers look for in their applicants, which are: Career & Self Development, Communication, Leadership, Critical Thinking, Equity & Inclusion, Technology, and Teamwork.
  - All these career readiness competencies should be shown through your bullet points.
  - To learn more about this, you can access the following document:
    - NACE Career Readiness Competencies

- **GOOGLE INTERVIEW WARMUP**
  - Google's Interview Warmup is an interactive online tool that can help you prepare for career-specific interviews using key practice questions and feedback on your answers
  - To access this resource, you can use the following link:
    - Google Interview Warm-up