**Master of Commerce Series: Ace the Interview!**

*Effective Interview Preparation*

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Careers & Employment

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**Key Marketing Tools**

- Resume / On-line applications
- Cover letters
- ‘Elevator Pitch’
- Networks
- Phone contact
- Interviews
- Be organised and keep track!!!

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**Activity: First Impressions Count**

**Step 1:** Introduce yourself to somebody (that you don’t know) - shake hands

**Step 2:** Have a chat to find out the other person’s . . .
- Career goals
- Preferred employers

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**First Impressions Count!**

- Presentation
- Tone of Voice
- Confidence
- Small talk
- Handshake
- Body language
- Eye Contact
- Smiling

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**Why Interview?**

For the interviewer(s):
- Confirmation of their impressions
- Accuracy of resume
- Will you do the job?
- Attitude, Interest, Motivation
- Can you do the job?
- Competency in key areas
- Technical and transferable skills
- Do you fit?
- Culture, Values, Personal Attributes

For the interviewee:
- To present your abilities, knowledge, aspirations, experience
- To gain a further insight into position, employer, organisation

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**Types of Interviews**

- Structured or Unstructured
- One to one
- Panel
- Telephone
- Case Study

**Assessments**

- Assessment Centres
- Group Activities
- Presentations
- Psychological Assessments
What are employers looking for?

- Work experience
- Academic Results
- Positive attitude
- Enthusiasm
- Communication
- Teamwork / Leadership
- Initiative
- Industry Awareness
- Flexibility

Interview Preparation

- Prepare a portfolio of your transcripts, references, work samples
- Research the position and the organisation
- Target the key competencies
- Find out names (pronunciation) and roles of interviewers
- Practice answering typical questions
- Prepare questions for the interviewer(s)
- Personal presentation – what are you going to wear?

Interview Question Types

Open questions
- What attracted you to apply to our organisation?
- What are your strengths? And your weaknesses?

Situational questions
- How would you handle a difficult customer if your boss was away?
- What would you do if you thought your manager gave incorrect information in a staff meeting?

Behavioural questions
- Describe a complex problem which you have solved recently
- Give an example of when you have contributed to a successful team

Preparing ‘Behavioural’ Answers

- Use specific examples to demonstrate your skills
- Highlight your achievements in your work, study and extra-curricular activities
- Be positive
- Use the STAR Principle
Describe a time when you have worked as part of a team. What was your contribution? What was the outcome?

S I volunteered for the marketing team for the first UNSW Vacation and Internship Careers Expo this year.

T Our task was to come up with cost effective ways to market the event to students.

A I attended meetings with Careers and Employment staff, contributed ideas, and designed a flyer to market the event. As a team, we distributed over 600 flyers and put 100 posters around the university. I also volunteered at the event, assisting employers and Careers and Employment staff on the day.

R The event was very successful, over 1300 students attended and I received a certificate and special thanks from the Manager.

Preparation ‘Behavioural’ Answers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Communication</th>
<th>Teamwork / Leadership</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Uni presentation</td>
<td>- Uni project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Customer liaison</td>
<td>- Part time work</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Adaptability / Learning</th>
<th>Innovation / Creativity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Learnt new software program at work in first week</td>
<td>- New service at work</td>
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Questions for you to ask

- What attributes are you particularly looking for?
- Growth plans for the organisation?
- Can you tell me a bit more about the structure of the team?
- Opportunities for career progression, training and advancement?
- What are some of the current projects being undertaken? What could my first project be?
- What do you see as the immediate goals of the position? How will you measure performance?
- Daily routine, specific demands and challenges for a graduate employee (day in the life)?

During the Interview

- First Impressions
- Handshake
- Eye contact
- Show enthusiasm and confidence
- Understand the question
- Draw on a range of experiences
  - Study
  - Work
  - Extra curricular activities
- Structure your answers – STAR
- Focus on positive

Activity: Practice makes perfect...

Prepare Answers to these Questions

- Tell me a bit about yourself and why you are interested in this role?
- Describe a team project you have been involved in. What made the team work and what was your role?

In pairs (i.e. person A and person B)

Interview 1: A interviews B
Evaluation 1: A gives feedback to B - who listens!

Interview 2: B interviews A
Evaluation 2: B offers feedback to A - who listens!
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Need a Job?</th>
<th>Need Career Help?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Jobs Online</td>
<td>• Web info</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Fortnightly e-list</td>
<td>• Daily workshops + Guest Presenter Program (employers)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Employer talks on campus</td>
<td>• Individual Assistance</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Careers Expo March 2007</td>
<td>• Mock Interview</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Graduate recruitment</td>
<td>• Careers library / computer access</td>
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<td>• Graduate Destination Survey</td>
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