

# Interview Workshop



SOS Outreach April 2024

# Introductions

- Fernanda Landeros - SOS Alumni Liaison
  - [flanderos@sosoutreach.org](mailto:flanderos@sosoutreach.org)
  
- Alison Canavan - SOS Colorado Senior Program Manager
  - [acanavan@sosoutreach.org](mailto:acanavan@sosoutreach.org)

# What is an interview and when would one have an interview?

Interviews are described as “discussion or conversation between a potential employer and a candidate” (indeed). We often see them when applying for new job, scholarship, school, or in some programs.

The purpose is for an employer to learn more about the applicant and determine if they would be a good fit.



# Interview Do's

- Research organizations
- Bring hard copies of resume
- Use appropriate language
- Be clean and neat
- Maintain eye contact
- Use positive body language
- Take your time when answering questions
- Clarify/rephrase the question as needed
- Be honest
- Highlight your skills and experience that relate to the position you're interviewing for - include specific examples
- Make sure your answers are specific to the job you are applying for

# Interview Don'ts

- Dress too casually
- Swear
- Badmouth previous employers
- Slouch
- Arrive late
- Ramble
- Interrupt interviewer



# Before the Interview

- Practice questions and body language (look up commonly asked interview questions)
- Do some mock interviews
  - Ask for feedback
  - Reflect on past interviews: what went well, what didn't go well
- Research the company or school if you haven't already
- Update your resume

# During the Interview



- Pause and take time to reply
  - This gives you time to gather your thoughts and helps you avoid filler words like "like" and "um"
- Clarify/rephrase the question as needed
- Repeat their question when beginning your response
  - "What is my biggest achievement? Well, my biggest achievement is..." This helps you stay focused and also signals to the interviewer that you are a careful listener
- Keep it brief, but not too brief (1-2 mins)
  - Practice this (ideally you will have more information than can fit into a short length of time; ask an older mentor/teacher - this is important, since your peers will often NOT have the same perspective as an older hiring manager - to time you and determine if your answers feel too long/short)

# During the Interview

- Incorporate specific examples
  - This is where having a strong, problem-oriented resume makes it easy!
- Finish by asking "did that answer your question?"
  - sometimes you will not - that's okay! This allows you to salvage your answer by making the interviewer rephrase their question. It also demonstrates that you care about meeting the needs of other people (i.e. your potential boss).
- Save time to ask THEM questions
- ❖ This is important because:
  - Allows manager to better understand YOU (your priorities, your assertiveness, follow-through)
  - Gives you insight into the company (company knows about you, now you need to learn about them)
  - Redirect the interview (focus on what really matters to you)



# At the End and After the Interview

- Ask about next steps and timeline
- Get contact info from hiring manager
- As the interview ends, shake the interviewer's hand and say "thank you for your time today"
- Reach back out a few days later and follow up with a thank you

# Common Question examples

Answer these questions with the job and your professional experience in mind:

- Tell me about yourself
- How would you describe yourself?
- What makes you unique?
- Why do you want to work here?
- What interests you about this role?
- What motivates you?
- What are you passionate about?
- Why are you leaving your current job/program/organization?
- What are your greatest strengths?
- What are your greatest weaknesses?

# Difficult question examples

Answer these questions with the job and your professional experience in mind:

- What critical feedback do you most often receive?
- Tell me about a time you overcame an obstacle.
- How do you handle stress?
- What have been your most positive and negative management experiences?
- Why should we hire you?
- Do you have any regrets?
- What's your greatest achievement?

# Final Points

If you would like some help preparing for an interview, or if you have questions, please reach out to:

- Fernanda Landeros: [flanderos@sosoutreach.org](mailto:flanderos@sosoutreach.org)
- Alison Canavan: [acanavan@sosoutreach.org](mailto:acanavan@sosoutreach.org)
- The SOS Outreach program manager of the location you graduated from

# Resources

- [What is an Interview?](#)
- [20 Opening and Closing Interview Questions](#)
- [13 of the Most Common Job Interview Questions to Prepare For](#)

Questions, comments, or concerns?



Thank you for your time!