

# Interviewing

## ON-CAMPUS INTERVIEWING AT CONCORDIA COLLEGE

This guide is designed to assist you with the on-campus recruiting process. If you have questions contact the Career Center at 299-3020 or stop by Academy 101 weekdays between 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Remember, your readiness is a reflection of you and Concordia College.

### **Employers Recruiting On-Campus**

To let you know which organizations are coming to campus, updated lists are posted in the Career Center, on the Career Center website (<http://student.cord.edu/dept/career/>) and via C-News.

### **Sign-up for an Interview Appointment**

Prior to signing up for an interview, you must register with the Career Center. Registration includes on-line registration at the Career Center website and signing a release of information agreement form (available in the Career Center). Contact the Career Center to secure an interview appointment with an employer. Sign up is on a first come basis unless otherwise noted as a pre-selection schedule. You must submit a resume for each interview you schedule. Generally, interviews are held in the Career Center.

### **Appointment Changes/Cancellations**

If you must change a scheduled interview time, contact the Career Center as soon as possible. If there are openings on the schedule, we will try to change your time. All interview cancellations must be made at least 48 hours (two working days) prior to the interview. Late-date cancellations and /or failure to appear for an appointment constitutes a No-Show.

### **No-Shows**

If you have a No-Show violation you will be restricted from further on-campus interviews until you see the Director or an Assistant Director of the Career Center.

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AND SERVICES

### **Resume Referral**

The Career Center will keep your resume on file for six months following your graduation. Employers may request the Career Center to send resumes of students who may be interested in a position they have to offer. The Career Center will send the employer copies of the appropriate resumes on file. You may be contacted by an employer you have not personally contacted. Follow up with that employer if you wish, or indicate to the employer that you are non interested.

### **Tri-College On-Campus Interviewing**

Students registered with the Career Center may interview at Minnesota State University Moorhead or North Dakota State University on a space-available basis. If you meet the minimum qualifications you must send or bring your resume to the host career center. One day prior to the interview call the host career center (MSUM @ 236-2132 or NDSU @ 213-7111) to schedule an interview if a time is available.

### **Reporting Offers and Acceptances**

Please report any offers of employment you receive and let us know of the position you accept. Specific information will be kept confidential. General statistics are compiled which are very helpful to Concordia College.

## **Types of Job Interviews**

### **STRESS INTERVIEW**

Stress interviews are a deliberate attempt to see how you handle yourself. The interviewer may be sarcastic or argumentative, or may keep you waiting. Expect this to happen and, when it does, don't take it personally. Calmly answer each question as it comes. The interviewer may also lapse into silence at some point during the questioning. Recognize this as an attempt to unnerve you. Sit silently until the interviewer resumes the questions. If a minute goes by, ask if he or she needs clarification of your last comments.

### **ONE-ON-ONE INTERVIEW**

In a one-on-one interview, it has been established that you have the skills and education necessary for the position. The interviewer wants to see if you will fit in with the company, and how your skills will complement the rest of the department. Your goal in this situation is to establish rapport with the interviewer.

### **SCREENING INTERVIEW**

A screening interview is meant to weed out unqualified candidates. Providing fast facts about your skills is more important than establishing rapport. Interviewers will work from an outline of points they want to cover, looking for inconsistencies in your resume and challenging your qualifications.

### **LUNCH INTERVIEW**

The same rules apply in lunch interviews as in those held at the office. The setting may be more casual, but remember it is a business lunch and you are being watched carefully. Use the lunch interview to develop common ground with your interviewer. Follow his or her lead in both selection of food and in etiquette.

### **COMMITTEE INTERVIEW**

Committee Interviews are a common practice. You will face several members of the company who have a say in whether you are hired. When answering questions from several people, speak directly to the person asking the question; it is not necessary to answer to the group.

### **GROUP INTERVIEW**

A group interview is usually designed to cover the leadership potential of prospective managers and employees who will be dealing with the public. The front-runner candidates are gathered together in an informal, discussion-type interview. A subject is introduced and the interviewer will start off the discussion. The goal of the group interview is to see how you interact with others and how you use your knowledge and reasoning powers to win others over. If you do well in the group interview, you can expect to be asked back for a more extensive interview.

### **TELEPHONE INTERVIEW**

Telephone interviews are merely screening interviews meant to eliminate poorly qualified candidates so that only a few are left for personal interviews. You might be called out of the blue, or a telephone call to check your resume might turn into an interview. Your mission is to be invited for a personal face-to-face interview.

## SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

### BEHAVIORAL QUESTIONS:

**Ability to set priorities:** Describe a situation when you had several things to do in a limited time, such as study for exams. What led up to the situation? How did you handle it? What was the outcome?

**Ability to delegate:** Tell me about a time when you were in charge of something and had to let others help you. What were the circumstances? How did you assign work? What happened?

**Ability to deal with people at all levels:** Tell me about a time when you had to work closely with someone in a position above or below you.

**Ability to apply knowledge:** Tell me about a situation in which you had to apply some newly acquired knowledge or skill. What was the knowledge or skill? What were the results?

**Taking initiative:** Tell me about a time when you had to take charge and get a job done. What did you do? What happened?

**Ability to communicate:** Tell me about a time when someone misunderstood something that you said or wrote. How did you make yourself clear? What was the outcome?

### TRADITIONAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS:

- Would you classify yourself as more of a leader or a follower?
- Why should I hire you?
- How did you learn about us?
- What was your greatest failure? What did you learn from it?
- Explain an experience where you wanted to quit a company or team, but you stuck it out and are glad that you did.
- Have you had to deal with conflict in a team and how did you go about resolving the problem? What was the outcome?
- Explain a situation where your weaknesses showed through and you had to deal with them. Also, explain a situation where your strengths showed through.

### GRADUATE AND PROFESSIONAL SCHOOL QUESTIONS:

- Why do you want to be a \_\_\_\_\_?
- What qualities do you have that would make you a good \_\_\_\_\_?
- Who is one key person and/or event that make you strive to be a \_\_\_\_\_?
- What is your long-term career goal that you strive for after your schooling?
- What makes you interested in \_\_\_\_\_ (program/school)?

## **QUESTIONS YOU SHOULD ASK AT YOUR JOB INTERVIEW**

**WORK LIFE:** You seem very enthusiastic about this company. Can you tell me some of the reasons people like working here?

**FUTURE VALUE:** How will you judge my performance at the end of the first year? What qualities do you expect to see in me and what goals do you expect me to accomplish?

**IN A DAYS WORK:** I appreciate your taking time to be one of my interviewers this morning. Can you tell me what the rest of your day is going to be like? Since we would be in the same department your answer would give me a sense of what my day might ring in the future.

**JOBS IMPORTANCE:** What tips can you give me for making a contribution to your company from day one?

**THE JOBS NEGATIVES:** If there were something about this job that you could change, what would it be?

**ETHICS:** I was glad to read in the annual report that ethics is taken very seriously at your company. Can you tell me the procedure we should follow if a question about proper ethical conduct arises?

**BALANCE IN LIFE:** As you probably remember from your college days, students have a far more flexible life than we should expect once we start a career. Have you been able to devote the time you should to your job and still have time to enjoy your private life?

**THE RIGHT DECISION:** Can you tell me what experiences you have had that convinced you your decision to come to your company was the right one? Also, have you ever had any second thoughts?

**TEAM WORK:** I am interested in learning more about the way people work in teams at your company. Could you tell me what teams people from this department usually work on? Who else is on the teams?

**GROWTH IN EMPLOYEES:** It is good news when a company is growing. There were a number of rough years, though, just keeping your company afloat. Are your new employees integrating well with the veterans?

**WHAT IS A TYPICAL WEEK LIKE:** If you think about your typical week, what aspects of the job do you like most and what do you like least?

**QUALITIES FOR SUCCESS:** When you think about people who tend to do well in this job, what kind of qualities do they typically have?

## INTERVIEWING TIPS FOR LIBERAL ARTS MAJORS

Employers have identified the following problem areas they see most often when interviewing liberal arts students.

### **Lack of focus**

- ★ Not having a reason for not pursuing their discipline after graduation
- ★ No reason for deciding to major in their discipline
- \*Be prepared to explain why your major was chosen and how it relates to the job.*

### **Lack of Preparation**

- ★ Very little or no research
- \* Know the job, company, industry, and know yourself.*

### **Attire**

- ★ Not professional
- \*Tailor your dress to the company and lean toward conservatism.*

### **Responses to Questions**

- ★ Lack of support and substance in answers
- \*Support answers with specific examples and depth.*

### **Transferable Skills**

- ★ No connection between the skills gained and how those transfer to the skills required.
- \*Be prepared to demonstrate how what learned can easily transfer to the job.*

### **Marketing**

- ★ Failure to articulate their strengths and accomplishments
- \*Elaborate on class projects, group activities and extra-curricular activities*

### **Lack of Experience**

- ★ No practical working experience or business exposure
- \*Obtain an internship, practical work experience or take a business course*

### **Multiculturalism/Diversity**

- ★ Failure to elaborate on the courses and experience in this area
- \* Use this as a strength. Provide more detail on studies and experiences.*

## How a STAR is Born

### What is a STAR?



“**STARs**” are derived from the behavioral interview process. Behavioral interviews are different from traditional interviews in that behavioral interviews find out more about unique skills and past behaviors of the person interviewing that may or may not be good for the organization/position. Although the person who interviews you may only ask traditional interview questions, they are still asking for the most complete answer. The **STAR** format allows you to give the complete answer the interviewer is looking for.

Keep in mind that this interview experience is the first of many that you will encounter throughout the job search process. UTILIZE all that you will have learned from this interview and apply that knowledge to better prepare for interviews in the future.

#### Let's not forget the components of a STAR!

- ★ Situation or
- ★ Task
- ★ Action
- ★ Result

Here is an activity to help you start thinking about the **STARs** in YOUR life:

Think of some life experiences that you have had. How can you best represent the skills you have learned to an employer during an interview?

#### Some examples may include:

- ★ Former jobs that you have held
- ★ Past camp counselor experiences
- ★ High school leadership opportunities
- ★ College organizations that you have been involved with
- ★ Academic experiences – group work, communication, problem solving

Although your STAR experiences will help you to communicate clearly the pertinence of your past work and experiences, DO NOT get too carried away in your memories! Answer the question directly by utilizing the **STAR** format and you will be well on your way to success! One thing to keep in mind is that you do not always need to talk about your most successful experiences – your not-so-successful experiences may have taught you a lot about what you WON'T and DON'T want to do in the future.

## Handling Illegal Questions

Various federal, state, and local laws regulate the questions a prospective employer can ask you, the job candidate. An employer's questions- whether on the job application, in the interview, or during the testing process-must be related to the job you're seeking.

INQUIRY AREA	ILLEGAL QUESTIONS	LEGAL QUESTIONS
National Origin/Citizenship	Are you a U.S. citizen? Where were you/your parents born? What is your native tongue?	Are you authorized to work in the United States? What languages do you read/speak/write fluently?
Age	How old are you? When did you graduate? What's your birth date?	Are you over the age of 18?
Marital/Family Status	What's your marital status? With whom do you live? Do you plan to have a family? When? How many kids do you have? What are your child-care arrangements?	Would you be willing to relocate if necessary? Would you be able and willing to travel as needed for the job? Would you be willing and able to work overtime as necessary?
Affiliations	What clubs or social organizations do you belong to?	List any professional or trade groups or other organizations that you belong to that you consider relevant to your ability to perform this job.
Personal	How tall are you? How Much do you weigh?	Are you able to lift a 50-pound weight and carry it 100 yards, as that is part of the job?
Disabilities	Do you have any disabilities? Please complete the following medical history. Have you had any recent or past illnesses or operations? If yes, list them and give dates when they occurred. What was the date of your last physical exam? How's your family's health? When did you lose your eyesight? Do you need an accommodation to perform the job?	Are you able to perform the essential functions of this job? Can you demonstrate how you would perform the following job-related functions? As part of the hiring process, after a job offer has been made, you will be required to undergo a medical exam.
Arrest Record	Have you ever been arrested?	Have you ever been convicted of____? (The crime name should be reasonably related to the performance of the job in question)
Military	If you were in the military, were you honorably discharged?	In what branch of the Armed Forces did you serve? What type of training or education did you receive in the military?

## Dressing for the Interview - Women

### The Color Game:

Each of these colors creates a certain impression. Which one do YOU want to work for YOU?

- 1) Dark colors portray authority
- 2) Bright colors portray energy and assertiveness
- 3) Pastel colors create a comfortable sense that you are approachable.
- 4) White portrays purity and/or freshness
- 5) Tan or cream portrays wealth and class
- 6) Bright colors such as red or royal blue portray creativity

### The Style Game:

Certain categories of dress will define how you are perceived. Which one is right for YOU? The following categories are arranged from the "most powerful" to the "least authoritative".

- 1) Dark business suit
- 2) Colored business suit (the lighter, the less authoritative)
- 3) The jacketed dress
- 4) The long sleeved business dress (no ruffles or lace)
- 5) The short sleeved business dress
- 6) The unconstructed pant suit without shoulder pads (shoulder pads add power; leave the jacket on...once it is off the power is gone)
- 7) Skirt and blouse
- 8) Skirt and sweater
- 9) Pant and blouse
- 10) Pant and sweater

Remember to have absolutely no wrinkles in your suit. Gum chewing in public is unprofessional. Always have polished shoes.

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## Appearance - Men

### The 10 Point Dressing System

Each Color	1 point
Glasses	1 point
Red Hair	1 point
Watch	1 point
Shoes	1 point
Cologne (not heavy)	1 point
Ring (college)	1 point (wedding ring free)
Tie	1 point
Dress shirt	1 point
Socks (dark in color)	1 point
Earring	No Earrings

Start at your head and work down to your toes adding up your total points. If you scored more than 10 points, consider what can be removed to create the professional presence that you wish to achieve that is appropriate to dressing for your job and position. Stick to dark colors for interviewing ...for example; navy blue, black, brown or a pinstripe.