



Interview Tips & Techniques



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About Your Speaker

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Agenda

- Writing Samples
- Resume Tips
- The Job Search
- The Interview
- Wrap-up - Q&A



Writing Samples

Writing Samples

- Samples from previous jobs, internship projects, or on-campus jobs
- Class work
 - Technical illustrations and graphics
 - Lab work
- Volunteer work
 - Non-profit organizations
 - Church newsletter

Writing Samples

- Personal work
 - Download a shareware program from the Internet and create a user's guide
 - Task-based software instructions
 - Help file of recipes
 - Family history
 - Web sites
- Cover sheets and annotations can add bulk

Writing Samples

- Should I have a Web-based portfolio?
 - Advantages:
 - Demonstrates technical proficiency
 - Electronic items can be shown in their native format
 - Portable
 - Inexpensive and easy to distribute to many people

Writing Samples

- Should I have a Web-based portfolio? (continued)
 - Disadvantages:
 - Security of files and ideas
 - Demands specific design and Web site development skills
 - Requires that evaluators are comfortable with the medium
 - Growing trend
 - In addition to, not instead of hard copy

Writing Samples

- What about confidentiality issues?
 - Revise proprietary documents to generic version
 - Get permission from company to use original
- Have your samples reviewed by writers, professors, and peers
- Always secure appropriate permissions

Writing Samples

- Create a list of (or links to) Web sites you authored; make sure the content is professional
- Copy your writing samples to a CD-ROM and make several copies



Resume Tips

Resume Tips

- Your resume IS your writing sample
 - Spell check, spell check, spell check
 - Review margins, hanging indents, style and formatting consistency
- Skills summary — what you have to offer
 - Consider creating a chart that outlines your skill level
 - If you don't know it, don't include it. Your employer will eventually find out.

Resume Tips

- Work experience and internships
 - Include the applications you used and describe the projects (256-page multi-chapter manual using FrameMaker)
- Include professional affiliations (STC)
 - Describe your involvement such as officer, presenter, coordinator, volunteer

Resume Tips

- Leave out the following:
 - Age, race, marital status, religion (might result in discrimination)
 - Leave out your hobbies — your employer doesn't care
- Web sites you authored
 - Content must be professional
- Use strong action words
 - Developed, edited, streamlined, provided, managed

Resume Tips

- Tell the TRUTH!
 - Companies check your background, college degree(s), references, and so on. Don't take the chance of getting turned down for the job or getting fired later.



The Job Search

The Job Search

- Ways to find a job opening
 - Cold calling
 - Networking
 - STC mentoring
 - Search job-related Web sites
 - Recruiters

The Job Search

- How to market yourself
 - Create flyers of your skills on florescent paper
 - Market yourself as an intern to gain work experience
 - Post your resume on job-related Web Sites (be selective where you post to avoid hundreds of phone calls)
 - Create business cards with a summary of your skills

The Job Search

- Applying for the job
 - Keep a log of who you send your resume to plus the job description
 - Consider making the cover letter the first page of your resume so it doesn't get separated from your resume
 - Consider a T-letter that includes a chart of your skills and how they match the requirements of the job posting

The Job Search

- Applying for the job (continued)
 - Keep copies of everything you send
 - Make sure your e-mail and/or cover letter includes the job number, job title, and a summary of your skills



The Interview

The Interview

- Prepare for the interview
 - Research the company — most have a Web site
 - Develop your questions in advance
 - Practice practice practice answering questions in advance
 - Do your salary research in advance

The Interview

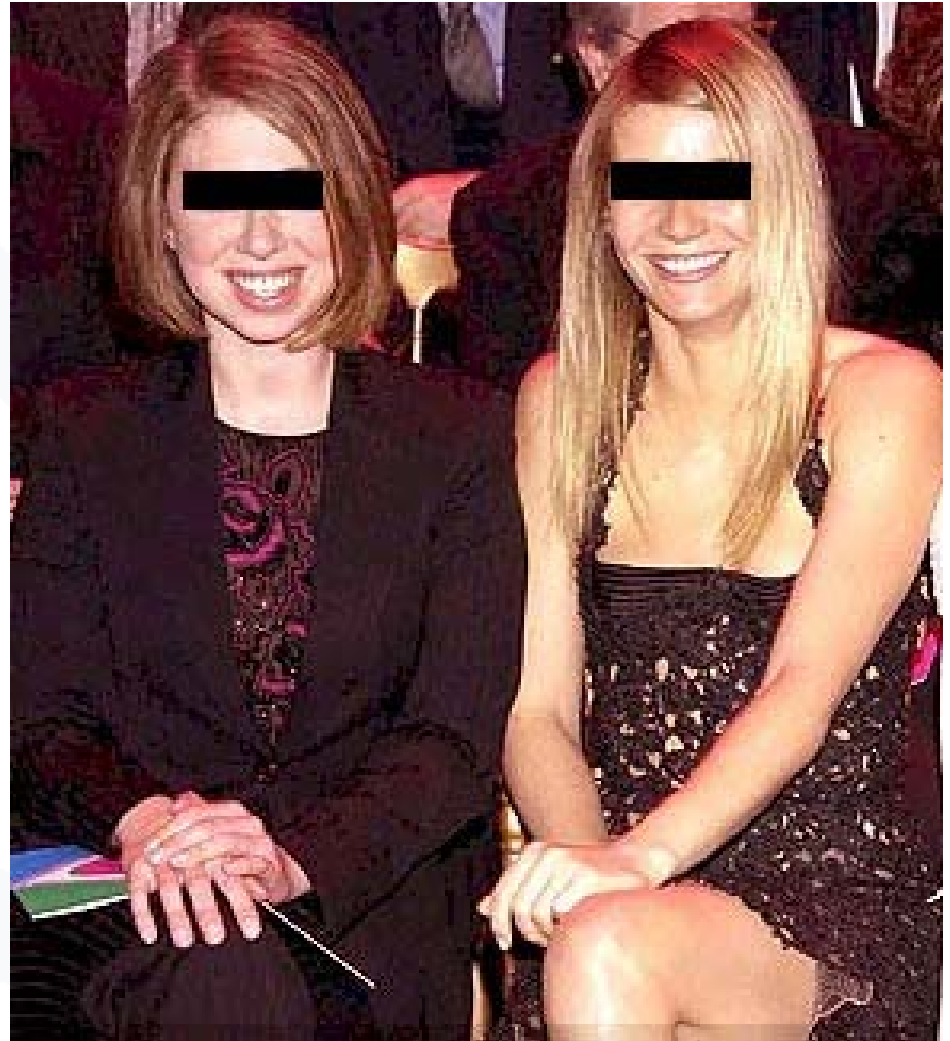
- Prepare for the interview (continued)
 - Prepare your list of references and ask permission to use their name. Discuss with them what they are going to say.
 - Get directions to the job site and drive there in advance of the interview
 - Know how to contact your interviewer in case of an unforeseen event

The Interview

- What to wear
 - Business attire — even if the company is casual. Your attire should be noticed as appropriate and well-fitting, but should not take center stage.
<http://howtodressforsuccess.com>
 - Your smile

The Interview

Which one of these women is dressed appropriately for the job interview?



The Interview

- What to bring to the interview
 - Writing samples you are prepared to leave with the interviewer. Bring no more than 3 of your best in print or portions thereof.
 - Additional copies of your resume
 - Your questions
 - “WOW” letters from previous employers, professors, etc.

The Interview

- What to bring to the interview (continued)
 - Names, addresses, and phone numbers of previous employers for the employment application
 - Pen and paper; a simple padfolio to stay organized
 - References on a separate sheet of paper, and only if they ask for it

The Interview

- Tips for the interview
 - Leave your cell phone and/or pager in the car
 - Be no more than 10 minutes early, but be early
 - Have a firm handshake (no one likes the dead fish handshake)
 - Make eye contact

The Interview

- Tips for the interview (continued)
 - Do not dominate the conversation. Adapt your style to the interviewer. Elaborate on your answers concisely, then pause for the next question
 - Don't mention salary until the interviewer does; it is perfectly acceptable to say "negotiable"
 - Never mention benefits unless the interviewer does (why?)

The Interview

- Tips for the interview (continued)
 - Write down the names of the people you interview with so you can send a thank you note later
 - Have your questions ready and ask them at the appropriate time—follow the interviewer’s lead. If the interviewer doesn’t provide adequate time, save them until the second interview or when they offer you the job.

The Interview

- Tips for the interview (continued)
 - Don't chew gum and don't smell like smoke.
 - Never, never, never criticize previous employers or co-workers. Stay positive about previous experiences.
 - Mind your manners and watch your mannerisms—all those things your parents drilled into you as a child; stand up straight, don't fidget, speak up, speak clearly.

The Interview

- After the interview
 - Ask the interviewer when they might reach a decision
 - Give a firm handshake (remember the dead fish?)
 - Say “Thank you” and “It was nice to meet you”
 - Write a thank you letter to everyone you interviewed with; handwritten is preferred

The Interview

- After the interview (continued)
 - Wait an appropriate period of time and send a letter or an e-mail describing your continued interest in the position
 - If the interviewer asked for your references, make sure your references are aware that the company may call
 - Thank your reference after each call and try to get feedback
 - Inform your references when you get the job



Wrap-up

Wrap-up

- For questions, assistance, copies of handouts
 - <http://www.leighrichardson.com>
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- Q & A